

Review of compliance

Parkcare Homes Ltd
Finn Farm Lodge

Region:	South East
Location address:	Finn Farm Lodge 2 Bathurst Road Folkestone Kent CT20 2NJ
Type of service:	Care Home service without nursing
Date the review was completed:	15/01/2011
Overview of the service:	<p>Finn Farm Lodge is care home for up to six younger adults who may have learning disabilities.</p> <p>The Provider organisation, Parkcare Homes Ltd is a subsidiary company of Craegmoor, a nationwide provider. The home is located close to the centre of Folkestone close to amenities and transport connections. People all have</p>

	private rooms with en suite facilities; there are communal areas and a garden.
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Summary of our findings for the essential standards of quality and safety

What we found overall

We found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting all the essential standards of quality and safety we reviewed.

The summary below describes why we carried out the review, what we found and any action required.

Why we carried out this review

We carried out this review as part of our routine schedule of planned reviews.

How we carried out this review

We reviewed all the information we hold about this provider, carried out an unannounced visit on 15th January 2011, observed how people were being cared for, talked to people who use services, talked to staff, checked the provider's records, and looked at records of people who use services.

We used information given to us by the service in their Provider Compliance Assessment (PCA). We referred to information held in the Care Quality Commission's records and in the Commission's Quality Risk Profile of the service

What people told us

People who use services said they were happy at the home. They said they felt safe and had everything they needed.

People made positive comments about the staff and said they trusted staff. They said took part in a range of activities and hobbies and felt part of the local community. People who use services were involved in the running of the home from keeping it clean to planning meals and meeting prospective staff.

They said the home was clean and suitable for them. They had access to care managers and other professionals and said staff helped them to keep in touch with their friends and family.

What we found about the standards we reviewed and how well Finn Farm Lodge was meeting them

Outcome 1: People should be treated with respect, involved in discussions about their care and treatment and able to influence how the service is run

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people were involved in making decisions about their care and support.

Overall we found that the Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 2: Before people are given any examination, care, treatment or support, they should be asked if they agree to it

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to make sure that issues of consent and capacity were understood and supported.

Overall we found that the Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 4: People should get safe and appropriate care that meets their needs and supports their rights

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place for the planning and delivery of care; and that management and care staff ensured that people received appropriate support and treatment.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 5: Food and drink should meet people's individual dietary needs

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people had a nutritious and varied diet and that people were involved in food planning and preparation.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 6: People should get safe and coordinated care when they move between different services

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to ensure that people received safe and coordinated care when they went into hospital or moved out.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 7: People should be protected from abuse and staff should respect their human rights

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people were safeguarded from harm and abuse.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 8: People should be cared for in a clean environment and protected from the risk of infection

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to prevent the risk of infection.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 9: People should be given the medicines they need when they need them, and in a safe way

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people had their medicine at the right time and in the right way. People had support to take some control over their medication.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 10: People should be cared for in safe and accessible surroundings that support their health and welfare

We found that Finn Farm Lodge was suitable, safe and accessible.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 11: People should be safe from harm from unsafe or unsuitable equipment

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to make sure that any equipment used was safe and suitable.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 12: People should be cared for by staff who are properly qualified and able to do their job

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that staff were fit and qualified.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 13: There should be enough members of staff to keep people safe and meet their health and welfare needs

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that there were enough staff on duty to meet the health and welfare needs of the people who use the service.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 14: Staff should be properly trained and supervised, and have the chance to develop and improve their skills

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that the staff were competent and supervised.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 16: The service should have quality checking systems to manage risks and assure the health, welfare and safety of people who receive care

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that peoples' health and safety was protected. There were systems to check and monitor the quality of the service.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 17: People should have their complaints listened to and acted on properly

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to listen and respond to complaints and comments.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 21: People's personal records, including medical records, should be accurate and kept safe and confidential

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that information about people was accurate and confidential.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Action we have asked the provider to take

Overall we found that the Registered Provider was compliant with 16 out of the 16 essential standards of quality and safety that we assessed. We have asked the provider to take no action.

What we found
for each essential standard of quality
and safety we reviewed

The following pages detail our findings and our regulatory judgement for each essential standard and outcome that we reviewed, linked to specific regulated activities where appropriate.

We will have reached one of the following judgements for each essential standard.

Compliant means that people who use services are experiencing the outcomes relating to the essential standard.

A **minor concern** means that people who use services are safe but are not always experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard.

A **moderate concern** means that people who use services are safe but are not always experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard and there is an impact on their health and wellbeing because of this.

A **major concern** means that people who use services are not experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard and are not protected from unsafe or inappropriate care, treatment and support.

Where we identify compliance, no further action is taken. Where we have concerns, the most appropriate action is taken to ensure that the necessary improvements are made. Where there are a number of concerns, we may look at them together to decide the level of action to take.

More information about each of the outcomes can be found in the *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety*.

Outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Understand the care, treatment and support choices available to them.
- Can express their views, so far as they are able to do so, and are involved in making decisions about their care, treatment and support.
- Have their privacy, dignity and independence respected.
- Have their views and experiences taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services told us they had been involved in making decisions about their care and support. They said they felt at ease expressing their views. One person said that their family had also been involved in decisions affecting them. People said they had support to make choices including what to eat, activities and holidays.
They said that staff treated them with kindness and respect. They said they had privacy in their rooms and could have private telephone conversations.

Other evidence
People who use the service, their families and representatives are consulted about the running of the home through annual surveys and meetings.
We saw information in pre-admission assessments that confirmed that the wishes of people who use the service are recorded and acknowledged as part of their plan of care.
Records showed that people who use services had been involved in planning their

care and support and staff spoke with knowledge of people's support needs and how people preferred to be supported.
Staff encouraged people using services to be as independent as possible and supported them to be part of the local community.

Our judgement

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people were involved in making decisions about their care and support.
Overall we found that the Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Where they are able, give valid consent to the examination, care, treatment and support they receive.
- Understand and know how to change any decisions about examination, care, treatment and support that has been previously agreed.
- Can be confident that their human rights are respected and taken into account.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they had been asked about consenting to medical examinations and treatment.

Other evidence
People had the opportunity to give meaningful consent. Peoples' ability to give consent was assessed and a review this decision made when necessary.
Records showed that capacity issues were discussed during the initial assessment process before a person moved in.
Staff spoke with knowledge of consent and capacity issues.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that issues of consent and capacity were understood and supported.
Overall we found that the Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Experience effective, safe and appropriate care, treatment and support that meets their needs and protects their rights.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services told us they had the care and support they needed. They said, “Staff take me to the shops, they help me get my shopping”
“We’re allowed to have pets here”

People who use the service told us that they are aware of their care plan and had been involved in its development. They told us that staff provide care and support in the manner that they wish.
People said that are happy with the way staff assist them with their personal care and healthcare needs.

Other evidence
Each person had a care plan that they had been involved in writing. They included the person’s personal goals and aspirations and recorded the people who were important to them and their life story. This was so that staff got to know them well and were able to support them in activities, managing their money, travelling on public transport, taking part in leisure and community activities and gaining employment. Any potential risks were assessed and managed.
Friendships and relationships with family members were supported and they were helped to remain healthy including a record of health appointments attended. Staff spoken with showed that they understood peoples’ support needs.

Our judgement

We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place for the planning and delivery of care; and that management and care staff ensured that people received appropriate support and treatment.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 5: Meeting nutritional needs

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Are supported to have adequate nutrition and hydration.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 5: Meeting nutritional needs

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they were involved in planning the menus and buying food. They said they had free access to the kitchen and made their own breakfast and packed lunches.
They said the food was good and that there was plenty of it.
Staff said people always had a choice and if someone requested a dish it would be provided.

Other evidence
The kitchen was accessible to everyone and was finished to an ordinary domestic standard. The menu was displayed so people knew what the meal choices of the day were. People were able to make drinks and have fruit and snacks between meals.
Any needs relating to food and drink, like special diets were supported. Staff said people could help with the cooking if and when they wanted to.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people had a nutritious and varied diet and that people are involved in menu planning and food preparation.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 6: Cooperating with other providers

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Receive safe and coordinated care, treatment and support where more than one provider is involved, or they are moved between services.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 6: Cooperating with other providers

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they had access to their care managers and other professionals including doctors and dentists. They said they had attended appointments with health professionals, friends and families and the records confirmed this.

Other evidence
We saw information on the records of people who use the service that confirmed people are supported with visits to healthcare professionals. Care plans contained information on visits to community nurses, general practitioners and dentists.

The provider told us that they worked with healthcare professionals, care managers and other services to ensure the needs of people who use the service are met. Staff knew how to make referrals for support from specialists when needed.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to ensure that people receive safe and coordinated care when they went into hospital or moved out. Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 7: Safeguarding people who use services from abuse

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Are protected from abuse, or the risk of abuse, and their human rights are respected and upheld.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 7: Safeguarding people who use services from abuse

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they felt safe. They said staff were available to talk to if they had any concerns. One person said, “Staff talked to me when I was upset and calmed me down”

Other evidence
There were policies and procedures for staff to follow about protecting people from harm and abuse. Staff told us they had training in how to recognise and respond to abuse and records confirmed this.
There were guidelines for staff to follow, for people who might show problem behaviour. These guidelines were clear and showed staff how to distract people and diffuse difficult situations. Referrals were made for extra support when necessary. We saw that staff talked calmly and positively to people which made people appear less anxious.
There were systems in place to safeguard peoples’ money with regular checks and audits carried out. People who use services had support to take control of their own money.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that people were safeguarded from harm and abuse.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 8: Cleanliness and infection control

What the outcome says

Providers of services comply with the requirements of regulation 12, with regard to the *Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 8: Cleanliness and infection control

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said the home is generally kept clean. They said, “I keep my room tidy and staff help me to clean it”

Other evidence
We found that the home was clean and smelled fresh. People who use services said that they were all involved in keeping the house clean and had support to clean their own rooms.
The bathroom and toilet we saw were clean. There was liquid soap, handtowels and bins near to wash hand basins. There were stocks of cleaning provisions and cleaning equipment and staff had training in how to prevent the risk of infections and how to control infection. The provider was aware of the Code Of Practice for care homes on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to prevent the risk of infection.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 9: Management of medicines

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Will have their medicines at the times they need them, and in a safe way.
- Wherever possible will have information about the medicine being prescribed made available to them or others acting on their behalf.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 9: Management of medicines

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services told us they had the medication they needed. They said that they preferred to have their medication stored safely in their rooms rather than in a central medication store.

Other evidence
People who use services had support to take control of their own medication. Records showed how people preferred to take their medication and this was followed by staff.
Staff had initial training and then six monthly competency assessments to make sure they were safe to give out medication. Staff spoke with knowledge of the medicines people were prescribed and the reasons for taking them.
There were policies and procedures for staff to follow as well as guidelines for medicines prescribed on a 'when needed' basis.
Medication administration records were in order and showed a record of the medication given and the receipt of all medication into the home.
The medication people needed was in stock and there were regular checks to ensure the storage temperature was correct.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that

people had their medicine at the right time and in the right way. People had support to take some control over their medication.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 10: Safety and suitability of premises

What the outcome says

This is what people should expect.

People who use services and people who work in or visit the premises:

- Are in safe, accessible surroundings that promote their wellbeing.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 10: Safety and suitability of premises

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they were happy with their rooms and that they were able to personalise them. All bedrooms had en suite facilities. One person said, 'I have a new bed that I'm happy with'. People who use services all had a key to their bedroom so they could lock it when they went out.

Other evidence
There were communal areas including a lounge and dining room. Pictures and photographs of people who use services were displayed making it look more homely. All bedrooms were single rooms with en suite facilities. There was a garden to the front and rear of the property and parking to the front. The garden and house were well maintained with suitable furniture and fittings. There was a system in place for staff to report any necessary repairs, and then a dedicated maintenance team would sort out the required repairs. There were security measures in place that ensured peoples' safety including a key coded entry system. Staff and people who use services took part in regular fire drills so they knew what to do if there was an emergency. Fire equipment was checked to make sure it was working and this included emergency lighting, the fire alarm and fire extinguishers. Risk assessments were carried out on the safety of the building, for example a risk assessment to look at the risks associated with fire. This was reviewed regularly to make sure it was up to date. There were plans in place for what to do in the event of

an emergency for example, an electricity or gas failure.

Our judgement

We found that Finn Farm Lodge was suitable, safe and accessible.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 11: Safety, availability and suitability of equipment

What the outcome says

This is what people should expect.

People who use services and people who work in or visit the premises:

- Are not at risk of harm from unsafe or unsuitable equipment (medical and non-medical equipment, furnishings or fittings).
- Benefit from equipment that is comfortable and meets their needs.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 11: Safety, availability and suitability of equipment

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they were happy with the bathrooms, toilets and other facilities and that they were suitable.

Other evidence
Bathrooms, toilets and facilities were of an ordinary domestic standard. People who use services were a younger, fully mobile group of adults so this suited their needs. Staff were aware of the need to make requests for support if any equipment was assessed as necessary. People had equipment in their rooms like televisions and computers and there was also a television in the lounge. All electrical equipment, including kitchen appliances were tested to make sure they were safe to use. There was a car that staff could drive to help people access the wider community. The car was regularly serviced and maintained so it was fit for use. If needed a risk assessment was completed about travelling in the car to make sure that everyone was safe. Equipment had been provided where needed to make the home safer including covers for radiators.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to make sure that any equipment used was safe and suitable.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by staff who are fit, appropriately qualified and are physically and mentally able to do their job.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said the staff were 'good'. They said, "I get on with staff. I trust staff"

Other evidence
There were recruitment procedures in place that meant staff had to complete an application form, give two references and sign a health declaration to say they were fit and well.
Staff were checked before they started work and this included a check of their identity, gaining references and a Criminal Records Bureau check.
Staff looked around the home, had an interview and met people who use services before they started work there and were subject to a three month probation period.
Staff were given a job description so they knew what was expected of them and issued with terms and conditions of employment. Staff had a thorough induction and were trained in subjects related to peoples needs including alternative communication and how to support problem behaviour in a positive way. The induction of staff included a week of attending courses including basic first aid, equal opportunities, equality and diversity and how to safeguard people from abuse.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that staff were fit and qualified.

Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 13: Staffing

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by sufficient numbers of appropriate staff.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 13: Staffing

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said there were enough staff on duty to support them when they needed help.

Other evidence
There were two staff on duty supporting five people living at the home. There was a plan for each shift that staff followed so that peoples' day activities were supported and staff knew what to do. The manager worked Monday to Friday so was not there when we made a visit and was on call for emergencies.
There were staff available on the premises at night and extra day time staff were available when needed to support peoples' hobbies and interests. Relief staff could be called on from other services to cover shortfalls due to sickness or leave.
We observed staff communicating effectively and respectfully with people who use services.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that there were enough staff on duty.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 14: Supporting workers

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by competent staff.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 14: Supporting workers

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services made positive comments about staff. They said they liked and trusted the staff and the manager.

Other evidence
We spoke to staff during our visit to the home. Staff told us about their induction and ongoing training. Staff were trained in subjects including health and safety, fire awareness and safeguarding people from abuse during their initial induction period. Staff skills were then checked at regular intervals and refresher training courses attended if needed. This included subjects reflecting the needs of the people who use services.
Staff told us they attended regular staff meetings and had the opportunity for one to one meetings with the manager and records confirmed this.
There was a training plan to ensure staff had the training they needed. Staff also had the opportunity to gain National Vocational Qualifications.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to make sure that the staff were competent and supervised.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Benefit from safe quality care, treatment and support, due to effective decision making and the management of risks to their health, welfare and safety.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they attended 'Your Voice' meetings which were held at the home on a monthly basis. A representative from the home also attended area 'Your Voice' meetings when people who use services had the opportunity to voice their opinions and views about the service.

Other evidence
Regular quality checks were made to make sure the home was running smoothly and well. This included monthly audits carried out by the manager and a senior manager as well as a yearly audit by the provider organisation. People who use services had the opportunity to air their opinions and suggest improvements through regular meetings and annual surveys.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had procedures in place to make sure that peoples' health and safety was protected. There were systems to check and monitor the quality of the service. Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 17: Complaints

What the outcome says

This is what people should expect.

People who use services or others acting on their behalf:

- Are sure that their comments and complaints are listened to and acted on effectively.
- Know that they will not be discriminated against for making a complaint.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 17: Complaints

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services said they would talk to staff if they were not happy about something and said “staff would sort it out”.

Other evidence
There was a complaints policy and a procedure for dealing with complaints that was also produced in an easy read version so more people could use it.
Staff knew how people preferred to communicate so they could tell when something was not quite right and the ways people preferred to communicate were recorded in individual care plans for reference.
The home maintained a clear record of any complaints and concerns and the action they had taken in response to these. Audits of the service included a review of compliant, any investigations and outcomes to enable the service to learn from the complaint and improve.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to listen and respond to complaints and comments.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 21: Records

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services can be confident that:

- Their personal records including medical records are accurate, fit for purpose, held securely and remain confidential.
- Other records required to be kept to protect their safety and well being are maintained and held securely where required.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 21: Records

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People who use services were aware that records were kept about them. They said, “staff keep them (the records) locked away”.

Other evidence
Records relating to people who use services were up to date, relevant and kept in a locked cupboard. Staff were observed accessing records and returning them to their proper place throughout our visit.

People were asked for their permission before information about them was shared with anyone, for example, with doctors.
There was a cordless telephone that was used to maintain confidential conversations.

Our judgement
We found that Finn Farm Lodge had good procedures in place to make sure that information about people was accurate and confidential.
Overall we found that Finn Farm Lodge was meeting this essential standard.

What is a review of compliance?

By law, providers of certain adult social care and health care services have a legal responsibility to make sure they are meeting essential standards of quality and safety. These are the standards everyone should be able to expect when they receive care.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has written guidance about what people who use services should experience when providers are meeting essential standards, called *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety*.

CQC licenses services if they meet essential standards and will constantly monitor whether they continue to do so. We formally review services when we receive information that is of concern and as a result decide we need to check whether a service is still meeting one or more of the essential standards. We also formally review them at least every two years to check whether a service is meeting all of the essential standards in each of their locations. Our reviews include checking all available information and intelligence we hold about a provider. We may seek further information by contacting people who use services, public representative groups and organisations such as other regulators. We may also ask for further information from the provider and carry out a visit with direct observations of care.

When making our judgements about whether services are meeting essential standards, we decide whether we need to take further regulatory action. This might include discussions with the provider about how they could improve. We only use this approach where issues can be resolved quickly, easily and where there is no immediate risk of serious harm to people.

Where we have concerns that providers are not meeting essential standards, or where we judge that they are not going to keep meeting them, we may also set improvement actions or compliance actions, or take enforcement action:

Improvement actions: These are actions a provider should take so that they **maintain** continuous compliance with essential standards. Where a provider is complying with essential standards, but we are concerned that they will not be able to maintain this, we ask them to send us a report describing the improvements they will make to enable them to do so.

Compliance actions: These are actions a provider must take so that they **achieve** compliance with the essential standards. Where a provider is not meeting the essential standards but people are not at immediate risk of serious harm, we ask them to send us a report that says what they will do to make sure they comply. We monitor the implementation of action plans in these reports and, if necessary, take further action to make sure that essential standards are met.

Enforcement action: These are actions we take using the criminal and/or civil procedures in the Health and Adult Social Care Act 2008 and relevant regulations. These enforcement powers are set out in the law and mean that we can take swift, targeted action where services are failing people.

Information for the reader

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Author	Care Quality Commission
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