

CQC Information

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulates all health and adult social care services in England, including those provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies or voluntary organisation. It also protects the interests of people detained under the Mental Health Act.

The CQC makes sure that essential standards of quality and safety are being met where care is provided, from hospitals to private care homes. It has a wide range of enforcement powers to take action on behalf of people who use services if services are unacceptably poor.

The CQC's aim is to make sure better care is provided for everyone, whether that's in hospital, in care homes, in people's own homes or elsewhere. Read more about CQC's vision and values

Involving people

The CQC makes sure that the voices of people who use health and adult social care services are heard by asking people to share their experiences of care services. It makes sure that users' views are at the heart of its reports and reviews. In some cases patients and their carers work alongside inspectors to provide a user's view of services.

Registration

By law all NHS providers (such as hospitals and ambulance services) must register with the CQC to show they are protecting people from the risk of infection. The registration system applies to NHS provider trusts (acute, ambulance, mental health and primary care) and the NHS Blood and Transplant Authority.

From October 1 2010 all health and adult social care providers must be registered and licensed with the CQC to show they are meeting essential standards of quality and safety. Without registration, providers will not be allowed to operate.

Enforcement

The CQC has been given a range of legal powers and duties. It will take action if providers don't meet essential standards of quality and safety, or if there is reason to think that people's basic rights or safety are at risk.

The CQC can be flexible about how and when to use its enforcement powers, such as fines and public warnings. It can apply specific conditions in response to serious risks. For example, it can demand that a hospital ward or service is closed until the provider meets safety requirements or is suspended. It can take a service off the register if absolutely necessary.

Improvement

The CQC also carries out periodic and special reviews in order to improve health and social care in the UK. The CQC's priority is to improve the public's experience of health and social care.