



# What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your care home

Your guide to what to expect from  
the regulation of care homes in  
England

## About this leaflet

This guide is for you if you (or a member of your family or a friend) receive care, treatment or support in a care home in England.

Care homes provide residential care for people with long or short-term health conditions, older people, disabled people, people with learning disabilities, or people with drug or alcohol problems. Some care homes may also provide nursing care.

This guide helps you understand what standards of care you have a right to expect in a care home and what you should do if you experience poor quality care.

We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England.

This guide explains how we work to make sure that care homes meet government standards of quality and safety and the action we can take if we find care homes are not meeting standards.

## Registering and inspecting care homes

By law all care homes in England are responsible for making sure that the care they provide meets government standards of quality and safety.

[There is a separate booklet like this one for people who receive care in their own home provided by an agency].

We register care homes provided they can show us that they are meeting the government standards.

If care homes are not registered with us, they will not be able to carry out services.

We inspect care home services to check that they continue to meet government standards and we take action if they don't.

On the following pages we summarise what standards you have a right to expect from your care home.

# The essential standards of quality and safety you can expect

1

## To be involved and told what's happening at every stage of your treatment

- You will be involved in discussions about your care, treatment and support. You will get support if you need it to help you make decisions and staff will respect your privacy and dignity.
- You will be given opportunities, encouragement and support to help you live as independently as possible.
- Before you receive any examination, care, treatment or support, you will be asked whether or not you agree to it.

Harpal has autism. This affects his communication and social skills. He recently took part in a pilot of a scheme for young people preparing to move to adult residential care. A personal care plan was designed. Harpal was fully involved in contributing to it, as was Harpal's mother, at his request. Harpal's communication skills were helped by having a 'buddy' of a similar age to take him out for leisure activities, including a local youth club so Harpal could form friendships with other young people from the Sikh community. He was also assigned a keyworker – a member of staff from the care home to help him become more independent.

## 2

### Care, treatment and support that meets your needs

- Your personal needs will be assessed to make sure you get safe and appropriate care that supports your rights.
- You will get the care that you and your social care professional agree will make a difference to your health and wellbeing.
- You will get the food and drink you need to meet your dietary needs.
- Your care needs are coordinated if you move from one care provider to another.
- Staff respect your cultural background, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief and your disability if you have one.

Alice was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease four years ago. After a long spell in hospital, she and her husband George were given the choice of Alice staying in hospital or moving to a residential care home. They both chose to have Alice move to a care home. The residential care home Alice and George chose was fully briefed by the hospital about her medical and personal needs – her room was adapted to keep her safe, and her GP was consulted and involved throughout. As Alice is a vegetarian, this fact was included in her care plan. A vegetarian option was added to the daily menu. Her husband told us how satisfied he was with the support Alice received during the move from hospital to the care home.

# 3

## To be safe

- You will be protected from abuse or the risk of abuse, and staff will respect your human rights.
- You will be cared for in a clean environment where you are protected from infection.
- You will get the medicines you need, when you need them, and in a safe way.
- You will be cared for in a safe and accessible place that will help you as you recover.
- You will not be harmed by unsafe or unsuitable equipment.

Olive had been partially sighted all her life, and now she was losing more of her sight. Residential care was recommended but Olive was anxious about moving to a new environment and not being able to properly see the people who were caring for her. She decided to move in for a trial period.

Olive's care home was well adapted to meet the needs of residents with poor sight. She found she had all the equipment she needed, such as task lighting and magnifiers, and there were trained staff to help her feel secure in the home and to trust the people around her. She decided to move into the home.

## 4

### To be cared for by staff with the right skills to do their jobs properly

- You will be cared for by staff who have the knowledge, skills and experience needed to meet your health and welfare needs.
- There will always be enough members of staff available to keep you safe and meet your needs.
- You will be looked after by staff who are well managed and have the chance to develop and improve their skills.

An individual occupational therapy service is provided to people with complex needs who live in a residential care home. Therapists are always available to support residents to be as independent as possible. Managers work in partnership with both the local authority and the local university to make sure their therapists develop their skills to the highest level.

At the same time, occupational therapy graduates from the university are given training placements within the care home and have a chance to network and share best practice. Their placements include training on how to promote equality and the rights of people living in the care home.

# 5

## Your care home to routinely check the quality of its services

- The managers of your care home continuously monitor the quality of their services to make sure you are safe.
- Your personal records, including medical records, will be accurate and kept safe and confidential.
- You, or someone acting on your behalf, can complain and will be listened to. Your complaint will be dealt with properly.

We inspected a care home after several people living there, and their families, had contacted us to express their concerns. We asked the managers of the care home to take steps to improve their service, and we published this information on our website. When we inspected the home again we found that managers now hold a monthly meeting with residents and their families to get feedback on the quality of care. If a complaint is made the managers take it seriously and settle it quickly.

People who live in the care home, their families and friends, now tell us they find their concerns are acted on quickly. They find the meeting with the care home very useful and they are satisfied with the high standard of care they continue to receive. We have now updated our website to state that the care home is meeting the essential standards of quality and safety.

# What to do if you find your care home is not meeting government standards

## **Tell us about your experience**

Our role as regulator means that we do not settle individual complaints ourselves. But we still need you to tell us about your experience of care. People and the families of people who receive care, and the staff who deliver the care, are very important to our work. If you tell us your experience, you can help us to improve local care. Your feedback helps our inspectors understand how well care homes are meeting standards.

You can tell us about your experience either directly or through a local support group such as your LINK (Local Involvement Network) (from October 2012 local HealthWatch).

You can get in touch with us through our website at **[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)** or by telephoning our national help line on **03000 616161** or by writing to us at the address at the back of this guide.

## **Complain to the care home**

If you have a complaint about a care home, the first thing you should do is to tell the management of the home. By law, every care home must have an efficient procedure for dealing with complaints. You can also contact your local council if your council pays for your care. If you pay for your own care you can contact your Local Government Ombudsman.

## How we take action

Our inspectors visit care homes on a regular basis and at any time in response to concerns. We look at the experience of care people get rather than checking systems and processes.

We take action, including enforcement, when we find services aren't meeting the standards, requiring care homes to improve. If services do not improve, we can:

- Issue fines or formal warnings
- Stop people being admitted into a care service
- Suspend or cancel a care home's registration.

We publish any formal actions we have asked a care home to undertake on our website at **[www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)**.

We update our website when the care home has made the required improvements to meet essential standards.

# How we keep you informed

On our website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk) we publish details of how the care home services we regulate meet government standards of quality and safety. You can search for your own care home to check for yourself how your care home is performing against the standards you have a right to expect.

The screenshot shows the Care Quality Commission website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the CQC logo and links for 'Information: For the public' and 'For organisations we regulate'. Below this is a search bar with the text 'See our latest checks (or tell us your experience)'. The main content area is titled 'Your care home' and includes a search bar, a 'Print' button, and social media icons. The page displays the care home's name, type of service, and a table of inspection results. A callout box points to the 'standards you have the right to expect' section, which is highlighted in purple. The table shows five standards, with the first three marked as 'Overall' and the fourth as 'Improvements required'.

Standard	Overall	Notes
1 Standards of treating people with respect and involving them in their care	Overall	✓
2 Standards of providing care, treatment and support that meets people's needs	Overall	✓
3 Standards of caring for people safely and protecting them from harm	Overall	✗ Improvements required
4 Standards of staffing	Overall	✓
5 Standards of management	Overall	✓

Search by name for your care home or service

Click here to share with us your experience at this care home

Summary of how the care home is meeting the standards according to our most recent check

## About us

We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England.

Our job is to make sure that care provided by care homes, care services in people's own homes, hospitals, dentists, ambulances, and elsewhere meets government standards of quality and safety.

We also protect the interests of vulnerable people, including those whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

We put the views, experiences, health and wellbeing of people who use services at the centre of our work and we have a range of powers we can use to take action if people are getting poor care.

### **Other publications in this series:**

- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of agencies that provide care in your own home
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your hospital

## How to contact us

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