

# Mastering the new CQC inspection | practical steps to protect your rating and reputation

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Your webinar will start in

**60**  
seconds

While you're waiting ...

Scan the QR code to learn more about the ways we can support your business.



# Housekeeping

- 1 Please mute your microphone when not speaking to reduce background noise.
- 2 We will be answering questions at the end of this webinar.
- 3 If you require further advice and support following this session, please email [c4enquiries@care4quality.co.uk](mailto:c4enquiries@care4quality.co.uk)

Care 4  
Quality

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# Agenda

1. The CQC's **single assessment framework**
2. What **good** looks like
3. **5 common pitfalls** that trip providers up
4. **Quick wins** to boost inspection outcomes tomorrow
5. How **Care 4 Quality** can help



# Who are Care 4 Quality by WorkNest?

Supporting health and social care providers to stay compliant, confident, and inspection-ready.

## Our core services:

- **Mock inspections:** CQC-style audits tailored to your service, giving a clear, actionable picture of where you stand.
- **Policies and procedures:** Bespoke policies written and maintained by sector specialists, ensuring full alignment with current legislation and best practice.
- **Ongoing compliance support:** Practical guidance to strengthen governance, quality assurance, and inspection outcomes.



 *Trusted nationwide for expert, hands-on compliance support.*

# CQC assessment framework

**Assessment framework:** The original five **key questions** remain unchanged and continue as before. Instead of **key lines of enquiry** (KLOEs), we now have **quality statements** (Qs).



## Quick poll

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What level of change have you made in the last 12 months in how you gather data for CQC SAF assessments and evidence?

- We have made all the changes we think necessary
- We have made substantial changes
- We have made minor changes but still have a way to go
- We haven't made changes yet
- Don't know

# How assessment has changed

## Gathering evidence

- Make much more use of information, including people's experience of services
- Prioritise gathering feedback from the people you serve and their families
- The CQC will gather evidence in a variety of ways – inspection is only one process to support judgments

## Frequency

- A service rating is no longer the driver for deciding when the next assessment will be
- Evidence collected or information received at any time can trigger an assessment

## Judgements

- Judgements on quality will be made more regularly, not just following an inspection
- The CQC will use a variety of evidence sources and look at between one and several statements

Gather evidence



Use between one or several quality statements

Draft report produced, for factual accuracy check



Report produced with ratings

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# CQC: 6 categories of evidence gathering

The CQC has introduced six categories to support the evidence that will be collected:

People's experiences

Feedback from partners

Feedback from staff and leaders

Processes

Observations of care

Outcomes of care

# Gathering evidence

## User feedback

- Prioritise gathering feedback from the people you serve and their families
- **Methods include:** Surveys, focus groups, suggestion boxes, complaints process

## Staff input

- Staff are an invaluable source of information about service user experience
- **Use:** Staff meetings, questionnaires, incident reporting and analysis, observations

## Documentation

- Your existing documents can offer valuable evidence
- **Analyse:** Policies and procedures, care plans, risk assessments, audit reports, meeting minutes

Direct observation



Care environment



Staff and service user  
interaction



Service user choices

Care 4  
Quality

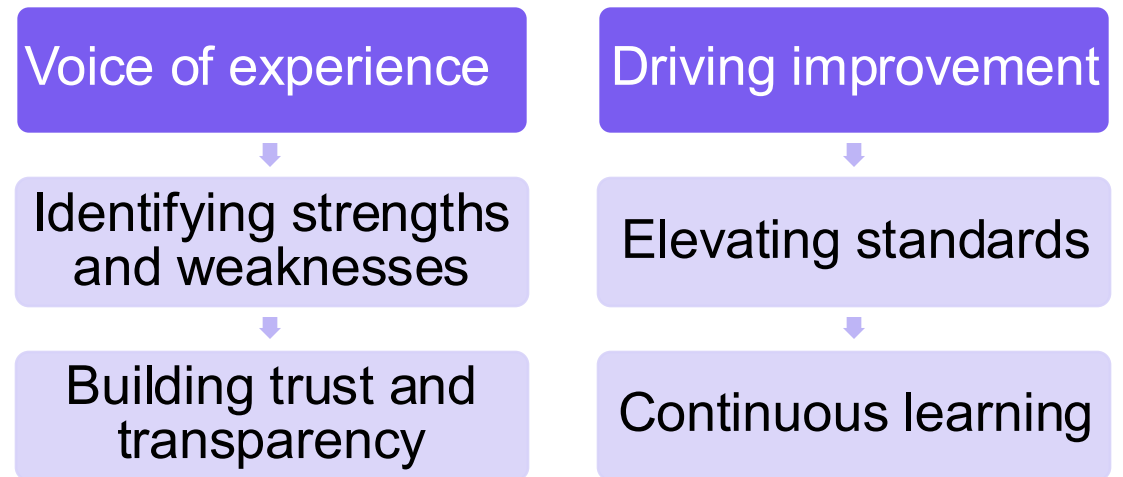
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# Feedback gathering

Under the assessment framework, feedback isn't just another piece of evidence; **it's a core component.**

The CQC gathers feedback through various channels (including surveys, interviews, focus groups, and stakeholder engagement) to assess the quality-of-care services and inform their inspections.

- Feedback is invaluable for understanding the **lived experience of care**
- **Every voice matters**, especially those facing barriers to communication
- Feedback must be a two-way street; gather it, **act on it**, and communicate your actions back



**Feedback gives an opportunity to create person-centered and responsive services**

# The importance of surveys

Direct evidence  
of people's  
experiences

Alignment with  
the CQC's focus

Identifying areas  
for improvement

Demonstrating  
continuous  
improvement

Empowering  
service users

Enhancing  
transparency and  
accountability

Supporting staff  
engagement

Strengthening  
partnerships

Building trust and  
reputation

It is vital to act on your findings and evidence how the feedback has helped to improve the service

## Quick poll

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What is your biggest challenge to complying with CQC guidance and the new CQC Single Assessment Framework?

- Lack of resource/staff
- Lack of time
- Cost implications
- Not enough clarity from the regulator on what's needed
- Technology/digital platform challenges
- Other

## Leadership:

- Competent, skilled, experienced, compassionate and inclusive
- Sets an example and supports an open, safe, values-based organisation
- Promotes a learning environment and supports innovation

## Listening

- People's voices are heard
- Consultation is a key element for service improvement
- Staff are engaged with development and innovation

## Equality and inclusivity:

- Systems ensure people are protected from abuse and discrimination
- There is equity of access and experience
- Recruitment demonstrates equal opportunity

## Systems and process:

- Systems allow leaders to make informed decisions
- Governance processes ensure the service is monitored
- Audits highlight what is and is not going well; actions use SMART objectives
- Risk is managed and escalated in a timely manner
- Policies are up-to-date and easily accessible to staff

## Person-centred:

- Person is central to all decisions and care planning
- Needs and risks are assessed, recorded and reviewed
- Services work with other teams and external bodies to ensure continuity of care

# What could good look like?



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# Real examples of good practice

## **Safe** (learning culture)

**Staff gave examples of how accidents and incidents were used as opportunities for learning and discussed at team meetings**

**Resident-related events were communicated at handover**

**This meant risks were identified and managed to reduce risk to people**

# Real examples of good practice

**Effective** (supporting people to live healthier lives)

People were actively encouraged to make healthy choices around food and drink

Menus were diverse, nutritionally balanced, and reflective of people's individual preferences, cultural backgrounds, and dietary requirements

# Real examples of good practice

## **Caring** (kindness, compassion and dignity)

Cooks had implemented new techniques for presenting puréed meals in a way that resembled the original food, moulding puréed vegetables, meats, and desserts to look like their solid counterparts

This not only supported dignity in dining but also encouraged greater appetite and enjoyment for people with swallowing difficulties

# Real examples of good practice

## **Responsive** (listening to and involving people)

People were regularly asked for feedback about the service

Questionnaires were sent out to people and relatives, and reviews of people's care took place every six months

Telephone surveys were also carried out every two to three months

# Real examples of good practice

## **Well-led** (partnerships and community)

**Extended partnerships  
beyond clinical care**

**Engaged with specialist  
and community  
organisations to enhance  
people's wellbeing**

## Quick poll

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Which area causes you most concern with regards to complying with the CQC framework?

- Risk Management
- Care Planning
- Safe Staffing
- Medicines Management
- Learning Culture

# 5 common provider pitfalls

We reviewed 20 recent reports for Care Home and Domiciliary services where they were rated 'Requires Improvement'. The most frequent themes were:

Risk management

Medicines management

Care planning

Learning culture

Safe staffing

# Risk management



## Preventative steps:

If you haven't already, consider:

- Implementing a risk management policy
- Introducing an audit process to check service user risks have been identified
- Regularly sharing areas for improvement in risk management (including actions) with staff
- Providing staff training and support with risk assessing
- Following up checks to ensure change has been sustained
- Maintaining a central record of risk review dates

# Care planning



## Preventative steps:

Make sure the service user is at the heart of all you do:

- Have a clear, person-centred Care Planning Policy
- Review processes, including staff training and support
- Observe and audit assessment and care planning interactions
- Routinely audit care plans to check documentation reflects good practice
- Discuss audit findings and actions at staff meetings
- Re-audit following any change to check for improvement

# Safe staffing



## Preventative steps:

Staffing is key to a safe service. Do you:

- Have clear recruitment, training and supervision policies?
- Have an adaptable dependency tool?
- Review staffing levels, skills mix, deployment, and training records?
- Observe staff interactions, workload, and availability to meet individual needs?
- Have audit processes for checking staff records?

# Medicines management



## Preventative steps:

Don't breach Regulation 12! Make sure:

- You have a clear and up-to-date Medicines Management Policy
- Regular and effective audit systems are in place
- Staff have received recent training on medicines administration
- Lessons are learnt from medication-related incidents
- Staff are made aware of issues and actions to improve practice
- To include audit findings in staff meetings

# Learning culture



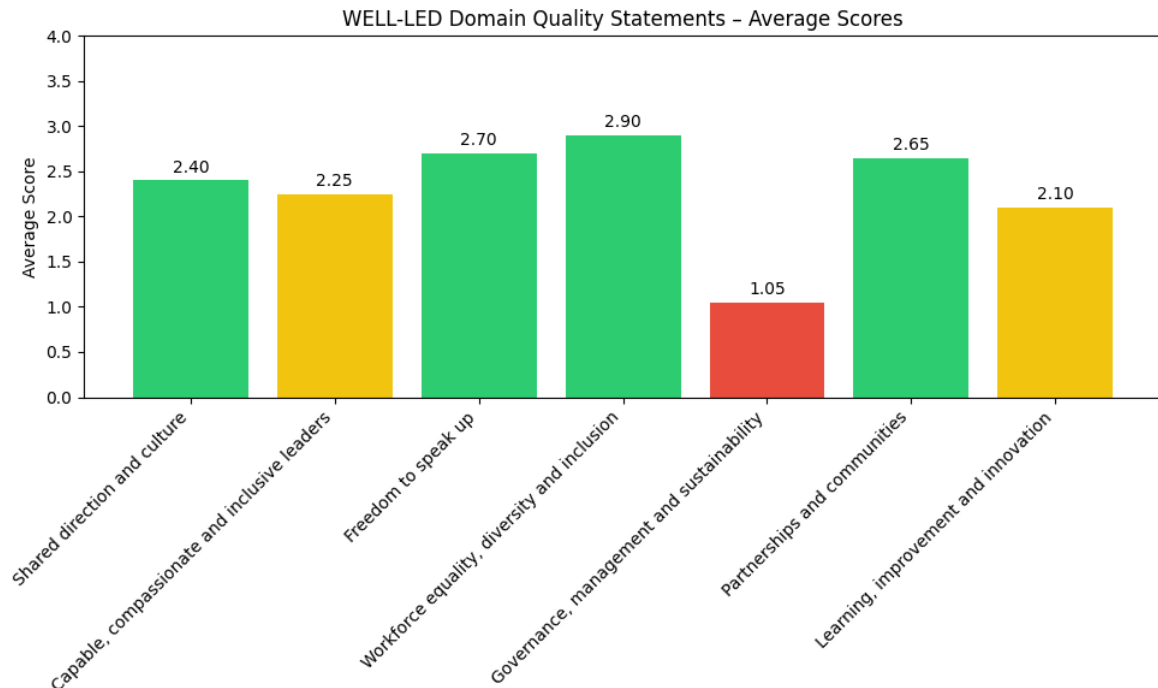
## Preventative steps:

Learning lessons makes us better! Do you:

- Have a clear record of lessons learned and any actions of these?
- Consult with staff on how you can improve and have an open, honest and learning culture?
- Review policies, report processes and training to ensure staff understand their role in reporting?
- Routinely communicate the outcomes of investigations with staff, including improvement actions?
- Have improvement plans in place that are monitored to ensure any change in process or practice has been sustained?

# Governance, management and sustainability

Had the lowest score by far out of the 20 services with  
19 out of 20 scoring a 1!



## WHY?

Delayed  
statutory  
notifications

Inaccurate,  
fragmented  
documentation

Poor risk  
management

Training  
issues

Outdated,  
non-bespoke  
policies

Unsupported,  
undertrained  
managers

Superficial,  
ineffective  
audits

Overreliance  
on a single  
manager

Insufficient  
provider  
oversight

So, what can managers  
and providers do?

**GET A MOCK INSPECTION**

**CHECK YOUR EVIDENCE**

**PREPARE STAFF**

**INVOLVE SERVICE USERS**

**AUDIT THE ENVIRONMENT**

# How Care 4 Quality can support



## Mock inspections / CQC-style audits

- ✓ **Tailored** to suit **your specific requirements**
- ✓ Backed by a **comprehensive report** focused on addressing the five key questions, ensuring all aspects of your services are operating compliantly
- ✓ Conducted by **highly-experienced consultants** based nationwide



## CQC policy creation

- ✓ **Bespoke policies** for a wide range of sectors
- ✓ **Continuously updated** in line with the latest legislative, regulatory, and best practice guidance
- ✓ Written and maintained by **sector specialists** – taking the pressure off



## CQC compliance support

- ✓ **Crucial support** through enforcement action
- ✓ **Due diligence visits** before acquisitions, often resembling mock inspections
- ✓ **Bespoke support packages** tailored to your requirements

# Q&A

You may also be interested in our upcoming training course:

## Well-Led in Practice | CQC Compliance Training for Registered Managers

### Upcoming dates:

- Tuesday 11 November 2025
- Tuesday 25 November 2025
- Wednesday 21 January 2026

Scan the QR Code to book onto the course





# Existing client?

Contact the Care 4 Quality Office:

08083 037629 | [c4qenquiries@care4quality.co.uk](mailto:c4qenquiries@care4quality.co.uk)

# Interested in C4Q's services?

Contact our New Business Team quoting 'Care  
England' for preferential rates:

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Or scan the QR code to  
request a callback.

