

How will CQC gather evidence and assess services?



CQC has unveiled further guidance on its new single assessment framework.

It outlines what it will be changing in terms of gathering evidence and how often it will assess services.

What will be changing?

Gathering evidence:

CQC will make much more use of information, including people's experiences of care services.

It will no longer just rely on site inspections but will gather evidence to support judgements in a variety of ways and at different times. This means on-site inspections will support this activity, rather than being the primary way to collect evidence.



Frequency Assessments



It will no longer use a service's rating as the main driver when deciding when it will assess you next. Any evidence or information received at any time can trigger an assessment.

Assessing Quality

Judgements about quality will be more regular, instead of only after an inspection. It will use evidence from a variety of sources and look at any number of quality statements to do this. Assessments will be more structured and transparent, using [evidence categories](#) as part of the assessment framework and given a score based on what CQC finds.



How often will CQC assess services?

This will depend on the information received and evidence collected. So, the regulator will decide:

- Where it focuses its activity at a sector and individual provider level
- How often it will carry out assessment activity
- What type of activity it will use to gather evidence

This will allow CQC to collect evidence in a planned and responsive way.

Planned activity

Each evidence category in the assessment framework has an initial schedule for ongoing assessment. This sets out the length of time before it needs to collect evidence for that category in each service type. These are planned evidence collection activities.

This schedule is based on what CQC understands about quality in a particular type of service across the country. It may need to carry out planned evidence collection activity more frequently for a specific type of service, depending on:

- Additional national priorities
- Whether the view of risk in an individual service or area has changed

It aims to update the information it holds on a service across all required evidence categories within a 2-year period.



Responsive Activity

As well as planned evidence collection activity, it will also receive regular pieces of information.

If it receives information that indicates an immediate risk, concern or change in quality, this could trigger action to collect evidence. For example, this could include information from:

- Whistleblowing concerns
- Safeguarding reports
- Statutory notifications
- People using services, including information reported through ['give feedback on care'](#)



It will also prioritise which services to assess where it thinks there might be a significant change in quality.