



CQC PROVIDER UPDATE

CQC'S NEW REGULATORY APPROACH

6 ACTIONS FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE PROVIDERS

Practical steps for stronger evidence, staff competence and everyday inspection readiness.

xcentriksolutions.com

28 AUGUST 2026

CQC READINESS CHECKLIST 2026

A practical self-audit for adult social care providers

Use this checklist with your registered manager, nominated individual or quality lead. Mark Ready only where you can produce current evidence and explain how it improves care. Mark Action where evidence is missing, outdated, inconsistent or difficult to retrieve.

USE IT WELL

A management self-audit, team discussion tool and action-planning prompt.

DO NOT USE IT AS

A guarantee of a CQC rating, a substitute for current CQC guidance or legal advice.

Provider/service: _____ Review date: _____

Review lead: _____ Next review: _____

Independent practical resource by Xcentrik Solutions Ltd. Not affiliated with or endorsed by CQC.

1. Governance and leadership

1. Governance and leadership		READY	ACTION
1	The Statement of Purpose, registration details, regulated activities, conditions and service model are accurate and current.	☐	☐
2	A named person monitors current legislation, CQC guidance and official provider updates.	☐	☐
3	Policies have owners, version control, review dates and evidence that staff can access current copies.	☐	☐
4	The audit programme covers key risks and records findings, owners, deadlines and re-audit outcomes.	☐	☐
5	Incidents, complaints, safeguarding concerns and near misses are reviewed for themes and learning.	☐	☐
6	Management and governance meetings show decisions, challenge, accountability and completed actions.	☐	☐
7	Business continuity, data security and cyber-response arrangements are tested and understood.	☐	☐

Evidence checked / immediate notes

2. Workforce, training and competence

2. Workforce, training and competence		READY	ACTION
8	The training matrix is complete, accurate and shows mandatory, role-specific and refresher requirements.	☐	☐
9	Induction and learning are tailored to the service, each worker's role and the needs of people supported.	☐	☐
10	Practical workplace competence is assessed for higher-risk tasks, not assumed from course attendance.	☐	☐
11	Supervision and appraisal records show reflection, performance discussion, wellbeing support and actions.	☐	☐
12	Specialist learning reflects the service user group, including relevant health conditions and communication needs.	☐	☐
13	People assessing competence have suitable knowledge, skill and authority, with clear assessment records.	☐	☐
14	Recruitment files contain required identity, right-to-work, DBS, reference, history and suitability checks.	☐	☐
15	Agency and temporary staff have verified competence, induction and access to essential service information.	☐	☐

Evidence checked / immediate notes

3. Safe care, safeguarding and risk

3. Safe care, safeguarding and risk		READY	ACTION
16	Person-centred risk assessments are current, proportionate and linked to care plans and staff guidance.	☐	☐
17	Medication records, audits, stock checks, competency records and error-management processes are reliable.	☐	☐
18	Staff can recognise, record, report and escalate safeguarding concerns without delay.	☐	☐
19	Infection prevention arrangements are monitored and adapted to current risks and guidance.	☐	☐
20	Moving and handling plans, equipment checks and staff competence match individual needs.	☐	☐
21	Emergency procedures, drills, escalation contacts and out-of-hours arrangements are tested.	☐	☐
22	Staffing levels and deployment are based on people's needs, risks, continuity and required skills.	☐	☐
23	Learning from errors and near misses is shared, acted on and checked for sustained improvement.	☐	☐

Evidence checked / immediate notes

4. Person-centred care and outcomes

4. Person-centred care and outcomes		READY	ACTION
24	Care plans reflect current needs, strengths, preferences, routines, goals and agreed outcomes.	☐	☐
25	Consent, mental capacity and best-interest decisions are recorded and reviewed appropriately.	☐	☐
26	Communication needs and reasonable adjustments are clear, accessible and followed in practice.	☐	☐
27	People and representatives are involved in reviews and can influence how support is delivered.	☐	☐
28	Complaints are accessible, investigated fairly, answered on time and used to improve the service.	☐	☐
29	Equality, dignity, privacy, culture and protected characteristics are respected in everyday care.	☐	☐
30	Outcome evidence shows whether support is improving independence, safety, wellbeing and quality of life.	☐	☐

Evidence checked / immediate notes

5. Records, notifications and inspection readiness

5. Records, notifications and inspection readiness		READY	ACTION
31	CQC notifications are identified, submitted promptly and retained with evidence of submission.	☐	☐
32	Provider-portal contacts, registered locations, managers and authorised users are correct.	☐	☐
33	Records are accurate, contemporaneous, secure, accessible and consistent across systems.	☐	☐
34	Staff understand CQC's role and can discuss person-centred care, safeguarding and speaking up honestly.	☐	☐
35	Core evidence can be retrieved promptly without a last-minute search or reconstruction exercise.	☐	☐
36	Information from audits, incidents, complaints, rotas and care records reconciles and does not conflict.	☐	☐
37	Portfolio-holder or other significant CQC communication is recorded, owned and followed through.	☐	☐
38	A named leader tracks official CQC changes and completes a gap analysis before systems are amended.	☐	☐

Priority action plan

Choose the actions that carry the greatest risk or have the weakest evidence. Give each action an owner, deadline and completion test.

PRIORITY / GAP	ACTION	OWNER	DUE	EVIDENCE / COMPLETE

Management sign-off

Reviewed by: _____ Role: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Need tailored support?

Xcentrik Solutions Ltd supports care providers with training-needs analysis, mandatory and specialist learning, competency-assessment resources, supervision tools, training-matrix reviews and CQC-readiness audits.

Visit xcentriksolutions.com

Disclaimer: This checklist is a general management resource. It does not replace current CQC guidance, legal advice or service-specific professional advice, and completion does not guarantee any CQC judgement or rating.