

CQC regulated activities: who should register?

People planning or reviewing a health or adult social care service in England.

A starting map of the 14 regulated activities, common care-service examples and questions to resolve before operating. Names such as agency, supported living or community service do not decide registration on their own.



Why this matters to me

From my care-work perspective, getting the service model clear at the start saves confusion later. I want people to be able to explain exactly what they will provide, who directs it and which organisation is accountable.

How to use this guide

Read the five short lessons, work through the checklist and use the record sheet to choose your next action. Allow around 25-35 minutes plus time for your own review. Keep personal records securely; use anonymised notes for team learning.

This is general educational information for England, checked against the sources listed at the end. It is not an accredited qualification, clinical assessment or individual legal advice.

Learn and apply

1. Identify the accountable legal entity

CQC registers the legal entity carrying on a regulated activity: an individual, partnership or organisation as applicable. A brand name, job title or professional registration is not a substitute for this analysis. Map who contracts with the person, arranges and directs the service, employs or supplies staff and takes responsibility for delivery. Check locations, registered-manager requirements and any applicable registration conditions. Some services need more than one regulated activity.

2. Use the current list of activities

The legislation sets out 14 regulated activities. Use the activity map in this guide as an index, then read the current CQC scope guidance and relevant statutory definition. A broad label such as healthcare does not tell you which category applies. CQC updated its scope guidance in August 2026, including treatment of disease, disorder or injury and related exceptions. Do not rely on an older online summary when deciding a current business model.

Learn and apply

3. Compare three common care models

Example A: a provider directs staff delivering personal care in people's homes. Personal care registration may be required. Example B: a provider supplies residential accommodation together with nursing or personal care. The accommodation activity is relevant, with further activities considered where applicable. Example C: a supported living service separates housing from care but delivers personal care. The name supported living does not remove the potential registration requirement. These are simplified illustrations, not decisions about a particular organisation.

4. Examine agency and introduction models carefully

A business that only supplies staff to another registered provider may fall within an exception, but ongoing direction, control and responsibility matter. An introduction-only arrangement is different from managing a person's ongoing care. Do not assume every recruitment agency, self-employed carer or care platform is automatically exempt. Write down the real contracts, supervision, rota control and escalation arrangements, then check the precise statutory exception and current CQC guidance. Seek confirmation where the model is unclear.

Learn and apply

5. Resolve uncertainty before providing regulated care

Prepare a short service description with the legal entity, proposed activities, people served, settings, professional roles and responsibilities. Compare this with CQC's guidance and use the registration enquiry route for unresolved questions. Children's services can involve Ofsted and CQC boundaries, so seek the appropriate specialist guidance. Do not operate a regulated activity without required registration. This educational guide is not a CQC registration decision or a substitute for legal advice about your specific model.

Check your understanding

A company calls itself a care agency. Does that name alone show whether it needs CQC registration?

Suggested answer: No. Examine the legal entity, activities and who directs and controls the care. Staff-supply and introduction exceptions have conditions; the label agency does not settle the question.

The 14 regulated activities

An index for further checking. The statutory definitions and exceptions determine the actual scope.

Personal care

Personal care supplied to people who need it because of age, illness or disability, subject to the statutory scope and exceptions.

Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care

Residential accommodation supplied together with nursing or personal care.

Accommodation for persons who require treatment for substance misuse

Accommodation together with relevant substance-misuse treatment.

Treatment of disease, disorder or injury

Treatment within the current statutory definition; recent changes mean old summaries of exceptions may be unreliable.

Assessment or medical treatment for persons detained under the 1983 Act

Relevant assessment or treatment of people detained under the Mental Health Act.

Surgical procedures

Procedures falling within the statutory surgical category.

Diagnostic and screening procedures

Specified diagnostic or screening procedures.

The 14 regulated activities

An index for further checking. The statutory definitions and exceptions determine the actual scope.

Management of supply of blood and blood derived products etc

Management of the relevant supply of blood, tissues or associated products.

Transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely

Specified patient transport and remote triage or medical advice.

Maternity and midwifery services

Maternity or midwifery services within the regulated scope.

Termination of pregnancies

Services carrying out termination of pregnancy.

Services in slimming clinics

Relevant slimming-clinic services within the statutory definition.

Nursing care

Nursing care within the regulated scope, subject to applicable exceptions.

Family planning services

Specified family-planning services, including relevant procedures.

Practical review checklist

Mark each item: checked / action needed / not applicable. Note the evidence and reason, rather than treating a tick as proof.

- ☐ The accountable legal entity is identified.
- ☐ Actual care tasks are described in plain language.
- ☐ Direction, control and responsibility are mapped.
- ☐ Each potentially relevant activity is checked.
- ☐ Exceptions are checked against the real model.
- ☐ Locations, managers and conditions are considered.
- ☐ Children's-service boundaries are checked where relevant.
- ☐ Unresolved questions are answered before regulated work begins.

My next three actions

1. Action: _____

Owner / help needed: _____ Review date: _____

2. Action: _____

Owner / help needed: _____ Review date: _____

3. Action: _____

Owner / help needed: _____ Review date: _____

Your working record

Use a copy for each review, support plan or referral. Keep identifying and sensitive information in your own secure system.

Legal entity and service name

Who contracts, directs and supervises

Tasks, setting and people supported

Potential regulated activities

Exception relied on and source

Question for CQC or specialist adviser

Sources and next steps

Information checked on 18 September 2026. Guidance and local pathways can change; use these primary sources for current detail.

[Care Quality Commission \(2026\). Scope of registration, updated 26 August 2026](#)

[Care Quality Commission \(2025\). Who has to register?](#)

[UK Parliament, Health and Social Care Act 2008 \(Regulated Activities\) Regulations 2014, Schedule 1, as amended](#)

Choose what helps you next

Explore the matching free mini-course, browse related resources or ask Looking Glass Care about practical support. The guide and mini-course do not include an individual assessment or a regulated qualification.

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