

Acting Together – Information Sheet for families Getting involved in checking services

‘Acting Together’ is the name the Care Quality Commission has given to involving people who use services in everything it does.

This includes for example taking part in

- consultations,
- CQC staff training,
- events
- developing CQC’s ways of working.

Acting Together also includes **‘Experts by Experience’**.

Experts are people who have personal experience of using or caring for someone who use health, mental health and/or social care services. Experts by Experience can take part in inspections of services with an inspector, either on a visit to a service, on the telephone or at a group meeting. Experts are paid for the visits, or other work they do.

Experts by Experience receive training to help them carry out their paid role on reviews of services, and must all have a valid CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check & ID Badge. We will organise a CRB check & ID badge with you.

For all of the other activities it is not necessary to be trained or have a CRB check, but it is helpful if people know what CQC do.

About us

Choice Support led a consortium of smaller organisations in a successful bid for the Acting Together contract and continues to be the lead partner in its delivery.

Our partners are

- John Hersov,
- Voiceability,
- Living Options Devon,
- Advocacy Alliance,
- Skills for People,
- Advocacy Experience,
- Inclusion North
- Eve Hersov.

The consortium provide experts for the following groups;-

- People with Learning Disabilities/autism
- People with Physical and Sensory Impairments
- People with experience of Detention under the Mental Health Act
- People with Mental ill Health.

We work across all 9 geographical areas of England.

About the Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of healthcare and adult social care services in England. They check whether care services meet essential standards of quality and safety, and also protect the interests of vulnerable people, including those whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

Which services do they check?

CQC check on these types of services:

- Providers of medical treatment to people of all ages, including treatment provided in hospitals, by ambulance services and by mental health services.
- Providers of care homes for people over 18 who need help to maintain their independence and wellbeing. This includes nursing homes. Care homes can provide residential care for the following:
 - People with long- or short-term health conditions
 - Disabled people and people with learning disabilities
 - Older people
 - People with drug or alcohol problems
- Agencies that provide care, treatment and support to people over 18 living in their own homes to help them maintain their independence and wellbeing.
- Providers of services for people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.
- CQC started to register and check on dental services (in the community) and independent ambulance services from April 2011. They will register and then check on GPs and other primary medical services in the community from April 2012. (Note: They have proposed a later

start date for registration of GP services, which must be consulted on by the Department of Health and debated in Parliament).

People with Learning Disabilities Review of Services.

As part of the review of all learning disability services CQC is to undertake a programme of unannounced inspections of services for people with learning disabilities. They will inspect 150 services for people with learning disabilities which are similar to Winterbourne View.

In addition a sample of other registered services covering alternative models of provision for people with learning disabilities will be inspected too.

The Inspections will focus on:

- Care and welfare of service users
- Safeguarding service users from abuse

These Inspections will be carried out by inspector/s supported by Experts by Experience and also a family/carer expert (of someone who has a learning disability and has or uses services).

There are people with learning disabilities already recruited as experts in all the nine geographical regions.

We have been asked to recruit family/carer experts specifically for these inspections.

To take part in these inspections all experts will need to have taken part in a training workshop & sorted an ID badge & CRB check with us.

CQC would like to start the first phase of this process as early as August 2011 and continuing over the next few months into December 2011.

If you are interested or want to know more in the role of Family/Carer Expert please contact Scott Cunningham at Inclusion North on

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