

CQC Fit Person Interview Guide

As part of your application to become a registered manager you will be expected to participate in a Care Quality Commission (CQC) Fit person interview lasting several hours (usually 2 to 4 hours).

What is the purpose of the Interview?

This is an interview to check if you are a suitable person who is fit, of good character who is able to manage your service safely. The fit and proper person check does not apply to providers that are individuals or partnerships. Where it applies, the CQC will be interested in knowing about the policies, procedures in place and their effectiveness when it comes to assessing the suitability of everyone involved in the care and management of your service. You should carry out due diligence by carrying out DBS checks and checking references. There might be a need to check social media profiles and credit checks in particular when it comes to senior members of staff. It is your responsibility to ensure no directors are barred from holding the position. All staff should be able to legally work.

If you are the interviewee your experience, qualifications, employment history, knowledge and an understanding of the service you will be managing will be assessed. The CQC will also want to know about any criminal records or any other character and behavioural issues such as disciplinary procedures. Under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014: Regulation 19 you are required to be of good character. Where there are issues such as fraud, theft and robbery there should be clear risk assessments and assurances given to CQC to protect the people who will be using your service.

The interview will also be used by the CQC to risk assess and determine if you are going to be compliant with all the regulations. It will also be used as an opportunity to seek clarification about the information provided as part of your registration application.

Preparing for the CQC Fit Person Interview

This interview needs to be taken seriously as you will not be registered if you do not successfully demonstrate you are a fit and proper (suitable) person who can run the care business safely and meet all regulatory requirements. Remember, the role of a registered manager is enshrined in law. You and your organisation (registered provider) have a joint responsibility under the regulations.

As part of your preparation, you have to try your best to be calm and reflect about the purpose of the interview. You do not need to be afraid. The fit and proper person interview is not there to trap you or make your life difficult. It is an opportunity for you to demonstrate to the CQC inspector that you are ready to provide a safe service and meet all regulations. You will be ready to face the interview if you take your time to truly understand about your services, plans, policies, procedures and CQC Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE).

During the Interview

The CQC inspector might be with a colleague who will assist mainly with administrative tasks during the interview. You need to have a good insight about your own organisation and what it intends to do. You might be asked about the service user bands, clients you will be targeting, recruitment and basic business information. You will be expected to have a good idea and understanding of all the policies and procedures in place.

Your role and responsibility during the interview is to demonstrate how all the essential standards have actually been embedded and implemented by your service. You will need to demonstrate how you are going to run the service by carrying out effective recruitment which includes ensuring references and DBS checks have been made for all staff.

There should be policies and procedures regarding how you seek consent and promote involvement of people using your service. You need to be articulate regarding how you carry out assessment of needs and risks. There should be care plans for each of the people who will use your service. You should fully embrace the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, and have systems in place to check for quality. There should also be systems to address when things go wrong such as complaints and safeguarding. Your knowledge and practice should embrace GDPR 2018 regulations, safe handling of medication, the Care Act 2014 and Health and Social Care Act 2008 among many other legislation and regulations associated with your practice.

Before responding to any questions please pause to think how this relates to any of the fundamental standards. Do not get carried away and lose your composure which might result in you not fully reflecting your ability, professionalism, policies and procedures. The CQC inspector will quote and record your response which they will refer to when making a decision about your application.

Analogy of how you should approach the interview?

The CQC registered managers interview is going to be focused on what you should know already. The interview questions and answers should be approached like someone wanting to know about your home. If you are asked why you choose this particular home you could discuss about how it is near schools, shops and good area (meeting needs, aims and objectives). When asked where the kitchen is located, it should be easy for you to point to it and highlight key features (what is good about it and unique?).

If you are asked how and when you operate your washing machine (policies and procedures) you should be able to explain. Being articulate and explaining how you match detergents, separate different colours (risk assessments) and follow instructions (regulations) this will demonstrate your knowledge and understanding. The inspector is likely to trust you and have the confidence you are a fit and proper person as you know about your house and have the confidence to know and justify what you should know already. If you are oblivious to basic things regarding your own house then you will most likely fail and risk your application to be registered being refused.

Sample Interview Questions and Answers

We have chosen 11 random questions that could be asked at the interview.

1] Which service user bands have you applied for? Refer to your application where you could have stated areas such as “Caring for people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act, Dementia, Eating disorders, Learning disabilities, Mental health conditions, Personal care, Physical disabilities, Sensory impairments, Substance misuse problems, Caring for children (0 - 18yrs), Caring for adults under 65 yrs, Caring for adults over 65 yrs.”

2] Who is your designated safeguarding lead and what qualifications do they have? (Identify the person and their role. They are expected to be the main source of support regarding safeguarding, responding to concerns and making referrals to statutory services (local safeguarding authority). They are usually expected to have a level 3 in safeguarding as a minimum.

3] How do you make sure your clients consent to your service? Clients should be given the opportunity to be informed about your service and agree to it. Consent forms should be completed and signed by clients or their representatives. Care workers also need to ask and seek consent when working with clients. For example, when giving personal care.

4] How does your service comply with the Mental Capacity Act? Clients should always be presumed to have capacity unless proved otherwise. Support should be provided and any restrictions limiting liberty will need to go through best interest procedures and approval from the court of Protection.

5] How do you ensure medication support is safe? Staff should be trained and have a minimum level 2 in safe handling of medication. Medication sheets should be used and accurately record information from prescriptions including dosage and frequency. Applying creams should also be recorded including having protocols for when as required medication such as pain-killers.

6] How has the organisation satisfied themselves the directors where fit and proper persons? This can involve carrying out DBS, Credit, professional registration checks. There can also be checks to see if any directors are not barred, right to work and their social media profile. At least a minimum two references should always be collected as well. When it comes to staff, reference to safe recruitment which includes DBS checks, references. Rational and risk assessments should be

in place where there are concerns.

7] How do you ensure people are supported to express their views and involved in decision making? This can be addressed during assessments and recorded on care plans. Times when carrying out assessments could also be during when the clients are at their best, not affected by medication and more alert. They could also have support if they choose and consent during assessments. Staff should follow the wishes and preferences of clients including in relation to end of life. For example, how they want certain care to be provided such as bathing and dressing. Clients should always have a copy of their care plans and all agreements in place. Reviews should be regular to ensure an accurate record and understanding of views and wishes remains in place.

8] How are people supported, respected and treated with dignity and promote independence? Care plans are always personalised. The views and wishes of the clients should be recorded and acted upon whenever possible. Clients will need to be respected and addressed how they like. Privacy should be maintained by not going through personal information without consent. When providing care, this should be private and handled with care and dignity. For example, covering clients with towels during personal care and not rushing. Support can be provided without overstepping as part of promoting independence.

9] How are communication needs met including the accessible information standard? This involves assessing communication needs and addressing them. For example, when a client uses Makaton, procedures are put in place to do so. There might be a need to work with other professionals to address needs. Information should always be given to clients in a way they understand.

10] How do you address any concerns? There are complaints procedures which clients are aware of, access and can use. You should be in a position to explain the steps involved in the procedures. Make reference to being transparent, promoting the right to complain, committed to resolving issues, responding effectively and learning from this. You could also consider preventative initiatives such as having a family liaison individual who can help with being preventive by addressing any issues before they become a problem.

11] How do you support your staff? Regular supervision is carried out with staff. You should be approachable and ensure all staff are aware of the chain of command, roles and responsibilities. There should be investment in continuous professional opportunities for staff such as training and shadowing more experienced practitioners.

Help with preparing for your CQC

Care Tips is available to prepare you for the interview through coaching, mentoring, mocks, going through some basic questions. We will support you to make links between the questions, regulations and the assessment framework. This service is from £35 per hour. £60 for 2 hours. £130 for five hours. You can also elect to purchase additional questions and answers from our portal if you want to prepare independently.

CQC Preparation and Readiness Course

We offer a CQC preparation course run on a one-to-one basis by one of our consultants. For this course to be effective, you are recommended to share with us the evidence you plan to submit for your application so that we can identify strengths and developmental areas.

The course will be based on the learning outcomes of three units that make up the level 5 diploma in leadership and management for adult care (governance, managing a domiciliary service, and quality assurance). Your mentor will draw from their experience as they explore with you both the business and care side of your organisation. We will examine person-centred care, your recruitment, assessments, care planning, reviews and other regulatory requirements such as information management, food safety, health and safety.

The course will outline key areas for your CQC interview and handy tips regarding managing your service effectively. It will highlight your role and responsibilities, the relationship between your policies, regulations, legislation, standards, choices, privacy, partnership working, meeting needs, and the assessment criteria used by the CQC.

The focus of the course is not to just prepare for the interview but to also give you the confidence to be able to implement some of the strategies provided in order to run your service safely and effectively. For example, how to develop your business, network with others, risk manage, recruit safely, build a culture influenced by human rights and person-centred values which are all areas that lead to being rated as a well-led organisation.

We estimate six to ten hours for the course, depending on your progress. The course is suitable for nominated individuals, registered managers, and directors. The cost of the course is £230.

How we work?

Care tips does not employ a one size fits all approach. Our work normally involves the following four steps.

- 1] Your initial enquiry informs us of your circumstances and the support you require.
- 2] We carry out an initial assessment based on the information provided and make recommendations. If you are happy with our recommendations, we formalise the arrangement and draw up an action plan. It is possible at this stage for you to just book the initial two hours for general support or just an hour if you feel this fits better with your needs.
- 3] We arrange a follow-up video conference meeting for clarity (if required).
- 4] If this is not required, we go straight to step 4, where a video conference meeting is booked to start your general support session or our formal CQC fit person preparation and Readiness course.