

Because we all care

Campaign Q&A

CQC and Healthwatch have come together to launch a joint campaign to encourage users of health and social care to provide feedback on their experiences.

In the short term, the aim of the campaign is to help services find and address safety and quality issues, in response to COVID-19, as well as opportunities to improve care.

In the long-term, the aim is to increase public feedback to health and care services by normalising the act of giving feedback after experiencing health or social care.

To support the campaign, CQC and Healthwatch have commissioned research surrounding the impact of COVID-19 on our attitudes towards health and social care services, with a focus on the process of giving feedback. We've also made the campaign available for any health or care service to use to get feedback from the people they serve.

Campaign Q&As

Why have you launched this campaign?

We've launched this campaign to help bring together organisations across the health and social care sector to encourage more people to share their experiences to improve care for all. Feedback on services is an essential asset to help services improve the quality of care. By encouraging people to feedback on their own experiences of health and social care services, or those of a loved one, we aim to help services in England find and address quality issues and find ways to improve in response to COVID-19.

Over time, the campaign aims to normalise the act of giving feedback on care to increase the rate of feedback provided by service users. This will provide a better picture of what's working and what isn't, so we can work with services to help improve care for everyone.

What will the campaign activity involve?

"Because We All Care" is largely a digital-led campaign. We will be using a range of social media approaches, including an animation, case studies, and social media support, to raise awareness of how people can feedback on their care, and why this is important. We are also making the campaign available to other partners and providers in the health and social care sector and will be supplying a range of communications resources which they can use to collect feedback directly for their own service.

How does feedback lead to improvements in health and social care?

Whether good or bad, feedback helps services understand what's working and what isn't when it comes to health and social care. This vital insight enables services to either learn directly from those they support, or for Healthwatch and CQC to support care providers in making necessary changes to ensure the delivery of good care. We also want to hear about positive experiences and examples of best practice that can then be replicated across other services where needed.

Feedback works. For example, feedback helped CQC to support 71% of health and social care providers to improve services in 2018/19. In the same year, feedback also enabled local Healthwatch to make over 7,200 recommendations to services about the improvements people want to see.

How can people give feedback?

There are lots of ways that people can share feedback on their health and social care services. Here are just three:

- You can tell the service that supports you
- You can tell Healthwatch so they can make sure services hear what's working and what can be done to improve support. They can also help you with advice and information, accessible via this link: <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/because-we-all-care>
- You can tell CQC to support their ongoing monitoring of services and know when, where and what to inspect, accessible via this link: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/give-feedback-on-care>

You can share feedback quickly with CQC or Healthwatch online or by phone.

How has COVID-19 impacted the capabilities of acting on feedback?

It's now more vital than ever that we understand people's experiences of care. CQC routine inspections are currently paused but we are continuing targeted inspections based on intelligence.

Healthwatch has also paused visits to services and events to find out people's views, this means we are more reliant on people contacting us, on-line and by phone, to provide feedback to provide the crucial insight we need into the standard of care across the country.

Throughout the response to COVID-19, CQC and Healthwatch have used people's feedback extensively to help services adapt during this difficult time.

What is CQC's role in the feedback process?

CQC is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. CQC inspects health (NHS and independent) and social care services across the country and produces free, independent inspection reports to help individuals make an informed decision their or a loved one's care. Throughout this process, CQC gathers and listens to individuals' experiences of care to inform improvements to services. We work with national charities, our 'Tell Us About Your Care' partners and Experts by Experience to gather feedback.

What is Healthwatch's role in the feedback process?

There is a local Healthwatch service in every area of England, which are supported by Healthwatch England. On a national and local scale, Healthwatch seeks out the views of individuals and communities on their experiences of care. Healthwatch has the power to ensure that decision makers are aware of this information and make the changes necessary to raise the standard of care. Local Healthwatch also play a key role in helping service users to raise concerns about care and access advice and information.

What happens when you receive reports of bad care?

Everybody has the right to receive safe, high-quality care. If we find that care has fallen short of this, we use our powers to take action against those responsible. CQC has powers to investigate claims and work with the service to help them to take steps to improve the quality of the care they provide. We use this information to inform our ongoing monitoring and depending on the severity, would inspect the service in question. If required, we might take further action including:

- Issuing requirement or warning notices to set out what improvements the provider must make and by when

- Making changes to a provider's registration to limit what they may do
- Placing a provider in special measures where we closely supervise the quality of care while working with other organisations to help them improve within set timescales

In the worst-case scenario, if severe issues persist and the standard of care does not improve, CQC can close the service in question.

Local Healthwatch share the views and experiences of people using health and social care with those involved in the commissioning, provision, management and scrutiny of services. As part of their work they also produce reports and recommendations about how a service could be improved. If local Healthwatch are concerned about a service or area of care they can make a recommendation to Healthwatch England to advise CQC to carry out a special review or investigation into the service.

Healthwatch England can also provide advice to the Secretary of State, NHS England and NHS Improvement and local authorities, all of whom are required to respond.

Why are you encouraging people to criticise health and social care services who have been working hard throughout COVID-19?

It's important to highlight that we value every piece of feedback that we receive, whether it's good or bad. Both sides of the coin are equally important for the improvement of health and social care services. Good feedback gives insight into what's working, so that we can share good practice across other services. Constructive feedback tells us about patients' needs and what services could be doing to improve care for them, as well as highlighting more serious situations that require immediate action. We know that providers appreciate this feedback, and understand that trust, openness and transparency lead to a culture of improvement and learning.

COVID-19 has placed an immeasurable strain on the NHS and social care providers, and feedback will be crucial to supporting these services to recover and improve care for the future.

When will NHS and social care services return to normal?

COVID-19 is one of the greatest health challenges our nation has faced in modern times. During lockdown a lot of routine treatment and care had to be either delayed or delivered in a different way so services could respond to the pandemic.

NHS and social care services are trying to get back on track but with restrictions in place it is difficult to predict when services will overcome all the challenges they face.

What we can say is that feedback from the public can help - supporting services to address issues and understand if any of the new ways of working (such as providing more digital healthcare) are better than the old.

Research Specific Q&As

Why have you released this data?

We've released this data to support our new campaign "Because We All Care", which aims to help services identify and address quality issues, as well as support patients in response to COVID-19, by encouraging people to share feedback about their experiences of health and social care services in England.

How has the research been analysed?

The research has been analysed from a national survey conducted by Opinium looking at people's experiences and attitudes of health and care services in the context of COVID-19. It is a representative national sample of 2,000 adults aged 18+ in England, with 50 respondents with long term health conditions and carers in each region. The research was implemented between 11th - 16th June 2020.

Why is the focus only on England - what about the rest of the UK?

CQC is the health and social care services regulator for England and Healthwatch England is the independent national champion for people who use health and social care services. It is therefore of most value to these organisations to gain greater insight into the public perception of the communities that they serve.

Why do you think COVID-19 has increased people's willingness to improve health and social care?

COVID-19 has highlighted just how essential health and social care services are to this country and that they shouldn't be taken for granted. Prior to the pandemic, our health and care workers were always working behind the scenes, however they have now been brought centre-stage for their incredible work. Our research suggests this heightened awareness and the increasing need for health and social care has generated greater feelings of gratitude and a willingness to help support these services and those who need them.

Why has the sentiment to support NHS and social care services been strongest among young people?

Young people are often the group most eager for change, which has been confirmed by this research, but why this might be is a harder question to answer. It may be that they are more open to the idea that change is possible, or they may have more time to dedicate to these causes. The important thing, however, is that we harness this desire to help create the future health and care system that works for everyone, supporting people to stay well and manage any health issues they face.

Is feedback more effective than donating?

We see giving feedback on your care as a form of donating to NHS and social care services. You can donate in several ways, including:

- Donating your time to share your experiences of care
- Donating your time to volunteering for your local Healthwatch or other health organisations
- Donating money to a health-related cause.

Campaign partner Q&As

Can any health or care organisation adopt this campaign?

Yes, we have produced a campaign toolkit you can use to run your own campaign to get feedback for your service. To access this visit: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/rx3i61mxD9KEx/>

Or you can talk to your local Healthwatch if you are interested in supporting their locally run campaigns. To find your local Healthwatch visit: www.healthwatch.co.uk