



Rules we want to make about visiting in care homes, hospitals and hospices



Easy read booklet

Who we are and what this booklet is about



Department
of Health &
Social Care

We are the **Department of Health and Social Care**. We help run **health and social care services** in England.



Health and social care services are places that give you care like care homes, hospitals and hospices.

**care
services**

In this booklet we call health and social care services, **care services**.



We want to make sure everyone who lives in care services can have people visit them.



We want to make some new rules for care services to follow about people visiting their friends and family.



This booklet tells you about the rules care homes and hospitals already have about visiting.



These rules are about things like how many visitors someone can have and what times they can visit.



We want you to answer some questions about visiting and the new rules we want to make.



Our questions are in our survey. Make sure you read this booklet before you answer the questions in the survey.

Why visiting is important



Visiting is good for the health and **wellbeing** of people who live in care homes or are in hospital, and the people who visit them.



Wellbeing means how you think and feel about yourself and your life.



Care homes, hospitals and hospices should help people spend time with their family and friends and make sure it is easy for them to visit.



People with learning disabilities who find it hard to talk to people, need the help of their friends and family.

Visiting during COVID-19



The COVID-19 pandemic made it hard for people to visit friends and family in care homes and hospitals.



Many people were not allowed to have anyone visit, even if they were very unwell.



We do not think anyone should have to go to hospital by themselves. This includes going to hospital for an **appointment** or an emergency.



An **appointment** is the time and date you agree to talk to someone like a doctor or nurse.

Current rules for visiting in care homes and hospitals

Current rules for visiting in care homes



Care homes in England should help people have visits from their friends and family.



Care homes should use **risk assessments** to make sure all visits are safe.



Risk assessments explain how anything in your care home could possibly be unsafe and what you will do to keep everyone safe.



Care homes should ask health experts to help them make decisions about how to keep everyone safe.



Care homes might make changes to how people can have visits to keep everyone safe.



Care homes might change how many people are allowed to visit at a certain time.



Care homes should always let people who are very unwell have visits.

Current rules for visiting in hospitals



Hospitals should follow rules made by the NHS about how to let people have visits from their friends and family.



Hospitals also means hospitals that help look after people who have mental health problems.



Hospitals should make sure the safety and wellbeing of everyone are put first.



Hospitals should let everyone have 1 visit every day for at least 1 hour.



2 people should be able to visit someone at the same time.



Some people need help to say what they need or to make decisions about their care.



Hospitals should let friends or family come to their appointments with them.



If it is not possible for someone to have visits they should be able to talk on the phone or by video call.

Rules made by the Care Quality Commission



The **Care Quality Commission** are an organisation that makes sure care services follow rules about how to give good care.



The Care Quality Commission is called **CQC** for short.



The CQC have rules about giving care with **dignity** and **respect**.



Dignity is when you treat someone like they matter and are important.

Respect is when you think about how someone feels, and you treat them in a kind way.



The CQC have rules about giving people care that is best for them and their needs.



The CQC have rules to make sure people can take part in their **community** and do things by themselves.



Community means where you live and the people you know.



CQC can give **warnings** to care services who do not follow their rules.



Warnings are when you tell someone they have done something wrong so they have a chance to do better.



They can make care services change how they give care or stop them from giving care.

What to do if rules are not followed



If you think a care home or hospital does not follow rules about visiting, you can make a **complaint**.



A **complaint** is when you tell someone why you are unhappy with how you have been treated.



We know that some people need help from others to make a complaint.



All services that follow the CQC's rules must have an easy way for people to make a complaint.

Changes we want to make



We know how important it is for care homes, hospitals and hospices to let people visit their friends and family.



We want to change the CQC's rules to include more rules about visiting.

We could

- change rules the CQC already has about how to give care with dignity and respect.

or

- change rules the CQC already has about about giving people care that is best for them and their needs.

or

- write new rules for the CQC about how care services should let people have visits.





We want as many care services as possible to follow our **proposed** new rules about visiting.



Proposed means our rules have not been made yet and are only ideas.



Lots of care services already follow the CQC's rules about how to give good care.



Our proposed rules about visiting will help the CQC know when services do not give care that is good enough.

Our proposed new rules about visiting



We think care services should only be able to say someone cannot visit if they have a good reason.



We think care services should

- have a list of all the reasons why someone cannot visit

or



- have to explain why someone cannot visit every time they say no.



The next page tells you some examples of good reasons why a care service might say no to visiting.



A care service might say no if

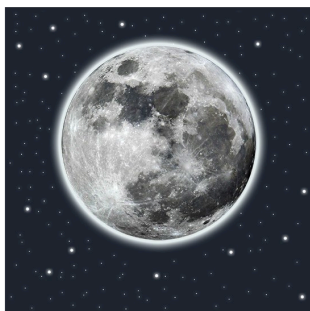
- someone does not want to have a visit.



- someone is unwell and will make other people unwell.



- the person visiting might hurt someone.



- someone wants to visit at an unusual time, like late at night.



If a care service says no to visiting they might need to explain their decision to the CQC.

Our proposed new rules about visiting in care homes



We think care homes should let everyone have at least 1 person visit them at all times.



We think people should be able to go out and leave the care home to do things like walk, go to work, or do something they enjoy.



People should be able to go out and visit other people.



People might meet someone to do something together, or go to the house of a friend or family member.



Care homes need have a good reason not to let someone go out.

How our proposed new rules will affect people



We want to make sure our proposed new rules do not affect people who visit, live or work in a care service, in a bad way.



We do not want our rules to hurt people with **protected characteristics**.

Protected characteristics are things about you that someone should not treat you badly for.



Protected characteristics are things like your age, disability, **race** and **gender**.

Race means your background or skin colour.



Gender means if you describe yourself as male, female, or something else.

Thank you for reading this booklet.



We now want to ask you some questions about the information in this booklet.



Please read our survey that comes with this booklet.

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The full version of this document is called

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