## **Safe environments**

### The environment which people live in should be both appropriate to their needs and protect them from harm. In order to meet this area of CQC inspection, your service will need to be effective in how you detect and control risks.

### The inspection focus applies to both residential care environments, as well as protecting people as much as possible in their own homes. It also extends to the safety of equipment, technology, and other aids too.

### Recommendations checklist

These recommendations act as a checklist to help you consider what you could potentially evidence, but it’s not intended as a definitive list. We hope they help you reflect on what evidence you might wish to share with the CQC.

|  | Yes | No | N/A | How we evidence | Action |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| We make it everyone's business to ensure a safe environment but encourage ‘live’ reporting of issues including team members, the people we support, family friends, other professionals etc. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We can evidence that people live in safe environments and are protected from harm (e.g., maintenance plan etc.). |  |  |  |  |  |
| We conduct regular fire safety practices by trained and competent staff at all residential and/or office environments. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We check the safety of all fire equipment and effectively train staff to identify and respond to associated risks. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We ensure our emergency plans provide sufficient information to protect people (e.g., fire safety, gas leaks, or equipment breaking down). |  |  |  |  |  |
| We act swiftly to repair any equipment that requires maintenance or has broken down with temporary measures in place. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We use an effective safety management system for risks and hazards, as well as quality assurance processes to identify and improve safety. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Where relevant to our service, we conduct regular checks of kitchen equipment and utensils to ensure they’re safe to use (e.g., taking fridge temperature checks). |  |  |  |  |  |
| Where relevant to our service, we undertake environmental risk assessments of people’s own homes and advise about safety considerations, referrals to the fire service, pest control etc. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Our facilities, equipment and technology are well-maintained, including regular cleaning, safety checks and replacements. We ensure maintenance certificates are effectively filed for future reference. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wherever and whenever needed, we will use external specialists to check the safely of our environment and equipment. We obtain contractors' credentials ahead of work taking place. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Where we have reviewed and actioned any issues related to our environment and/or equipment, these are documented in our improvement plan. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We feedback environmental incidents to team members, people we support and families. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We discuss planned work for our own care setting with everyone concerned to ensure safe planning and implementation of any work. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Our contingency plans include focus and mitigations related to environmental issues including flooding, bad weather, heatwave, and impact of loss of premises. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We are proactive in signing up for heatwave and cold weather planning alerts. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Our contingency plans align closely with wider infection prevention and control measures and wider outbreak management. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Where environment or equipment risks are outside of our direct control, we ensure that these are escalated to those responsible. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We ensure our environment and premises are designed in a way that minimises risks to people, visitors, and staff (e.g., safe storage of wheelchairs, handrails, bed rails, etc.). |  |  |  |  |  |
| We have safety systems in place which protect but doe not restrict people. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We’re proactive in sourcing and promoting assistive living technologies and/or adaptive equipment to help people maintain or develop their independence. Safety is a key part of our procurement process. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We risk assess and ensure that our staff are fully supported to be as safe as possible when working alone (e.g., in parts of the residential home, whilst working in the community, or home working). |  |  |  |  |  |
| Where any serious issues occur, we will report as appropriate to RIDDOR, CQC and commissioners as relevant. Investigations and follow-up actions will be responded to promptly and transparently. |  |  |  |  |  |
| We discuss any incidents / near misses at regular meetings across the service. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Where relevant to our service, we ensure our environment protects people from psychological harm, responding to sensory needs and other issues that might impact a person’s ability to feel safe. |  |  |  |  |  |
| All equipment is stored securely. |  |  |  |  |  |

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| Resources to help **GO Online: Inspection toolkit**  Learn more about how this is inspected via a short film, practical examples and resources [here](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Support-for-leaders-and-managers/Good-and-outstanding-care/inspection-toolkit/Topic-focus.aspx?services=&kloe=safe-3&topic=safe-environments).  **Recommendations checklists** Access the full range of all Recommendations Checklists, exclusively available to Skills for Care Registered Manager Members [here](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Support-for-leaders-and-managers/Support-for-registered-managers/GO-guide-SAF.aspx).  **Good and Outstanding care support** Skills for Care’s Good and Outstanding care resources include practical e-learning modules, guidance and seminars to support you to meet CQC expectations. Learn more about what is available [here](https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/go). |