

Resident Experience Review

**An Independent Resident Evidence service from
Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire**



Why Now?

The regulatory landscape for care homes has fundamentally changed – and the gap between inspection and reality is growing.

CQC's inspection capacity has fallen sharply. From 2023 to 2024, around 7,000 inspections took place across all care settings – fewer than half the 16,000 conducted in 2019 to 2020.

The government-commissioned Dash Review identified this as a structural crisis: ratings in many homes still reflect inspections carried out years ago, with providers left unable to demonstrate the improvements they have actually made.

At the same time, CQC's new Single Assessment Framework has changed the rules. Rather than relying on periodic inspections, CQC now gathers and reviews evidence continuously, updating assessments as new information emerges.

A home delivering excellent care today may remain invisible to the regulator, to commissioners, and to families unless it can produce current, documented evidence to support that claim. Central to the framework is one evidence category that most homes find the hardest to evidence well: People's Experience. CQC defines this as "a person's needs, expectations, lived experiences and satisfaction with their care, support and treatment."

Critically, it can be evidenced through interviews with residents and the organisations that represent them, survey results, and feedback from community and voluntary groups.

The framework uses 'I statements' from Think Local Act Personal (TLAP)'s Making It Real framework to structure this evidence, keeping people's own voices at the centre.

People's Experience carries equal weight with every other evidence category. CQC will treat any negative feedback as a concern and investigate further, even where other sources show no cause for alarm.³ The challenge is real. Most care homes rely on internal resident surveys that rarely reach the most vulnerable residents, and self-reported experience data – gathered by the organisation delivering the care – carries limited evidential weight with a regulator. What's missing is an independent voice.

Why Us?



Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire has spent 12 years as the statutory independent champion for people who use health and care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Listening and making what we hear count is our entire purpose.

Our Enter and View programme has taken trained, authorised representatives into regulated care settings across the county. We speak directly with residents and families, observe the care environment, and produce structured, evidence-based reports. We are experienced at reaching seldom-heard voices, including people living with dementia, communication difficulties, and complex needs. These are the residents whose voices are almost entirely absent from standard feedback mechanisms – and whose experiences carry the most weight with CQC under the People's Experience evidence category.

This is not inspection. We hold no regulatory powers and issue no ratings. What we offer is something different – and, in the current regulatory environment, something increasingly valuable:

Independent, structured, narrative evidence of what it is like to live in your home, gathered by people with no stake in the outcome.

Our Resident Experience Review has been built directly from this methodology and aligned in full to the CQC Single Assessment Framework. Our analysis maps to CQC's quality themes and is structured specifically to support the People's Experience evidence category. The report we produce can be used directly as evidence in your CQC assessment portfolio.

What the Resident Experience Review Involves

Bronze Tier – Free During Our Pilot Phase

Our Bronze tier is deliberately simple and low-impact – designed to give you a clear, honest picture of resident experience with minimal disruption to your home.

- A structured visit by trained, independent Healthwatch reviewers
- Direct conversations with residents using accessible and inclusive methods
- A written report structured around CQC’s quality statements and People’s Experience evidence themes
- Findings mapped to CQC Quality Statements and four Key Question areas: Safe, Effective, Caring and Responsive
- An actionable summary of the key messages residents want you – and CQC – to hear

Silver is particularly suited to homes preparing for a CQC assessment, responding to a previous inspection outcome, or wanting to give commissioners and families concrete evidence that quality assurance goes beyond internal audit.

Silver Tier – Triangulated Resident, Family and Staff Insight

Silver is for homes who want a richer, three-way view across residents, families and staff, with practical recommendations and the opportunity to respond. It includes everything in Bronze, plus:

- A short pre-review site visit to finalise practical arrangements and distribute family survey materials
- A staff online survey capturing up to 15 staff perspectives on what helps and hinders good care
- A family survey reaching up to 15 family members via online link or paper copies
- Structured environmental observations during the review: mealtimes, communal spaces, atmosphere and staff interactions
- An enhanced report that triangulates residents’, families’ and staff views, highlights strengths and risks, and includes clear, prioritised recommendations
- Space for you to respond to findings – demonstrating to commissioners and CQC that you actively invite and act on external challenge

Who Is This For?



- Group owners and operators who want independent, consistent evidence across their portfolio - and a credible answer when commissioners or families ask how they know what's really happening in their homes.
- Care home managers who want to understand resident experience between CQC assessments and demonstrate proactive quality governance
- Homes rated 'Requires Improvement' that need documented evidence of genuine change in resident experience
- Homes not recently inspected that want to build a credible evidence base ahead of assessment

Pilot Availability

We are currently offering our Bronze tier Resident Experience Review at no cost to a limited number of care homes in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire as part of our formal pilot programme. Participating homes will receive a full written report and will be invited to provide feedback that shapes the development of the service.

We'd welcome a conversation about whether our Resident Experience Review is right for your home - with no obligation and no pressure. Places are limited. If you would like to be considered for the pilot, or to find out more about our full tier offering, please contact:

info@hwnn.co.uk
www.hwnn.co.uk

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is the independent champion for health and social care in Nottinghamshire. We are a registered charity (Charity number 1159968). The Resident Experience Review is an independent quality assurance service and does not constitute CQC inspection or regulatory assessment.

Footnotes / Sources

¹ CQC inspection volumes 2019–2024: Penny Dash Review interim report, July 2024:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-into-the-operational-effectiveness-of-the-care-quality-commission-full-report/review-into-the-operational-effectiveness-of-the-care-quality-commission-full-report>

² Provider experience of ratings and delays: Community Care reporting of the Dash Review findings:

<https://www.communitycare.co.uk/content/news/70-of-community-social-care-services-have-no-or-outdated-cqc-rating-analysis-finds>

³ CQC Single Assessment Framework – evidence categories and continuous review: Brabners legal briefing:

<https://www.brabners.com/insights/health/cqcs-single-assessment-framework>

⁴ Definition of People's Experience and legitimate evidence sources:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance/regulation/providers/assessment/evidence-categories/peoples-experience>

⁵ 'I statements' and Making It Real framework:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-regulation/providers/assessment/single-assessment-framework/i-statements>