Adult Social Care Trade Associations meeting
Query responses –

Query:

What is CQC's approach to electronic records? Is it satisfactory to keep all records electronically?

Response:

CQC recognises and supports the growth in use of digital care records by health and social care providers. Digital systems have the potential to achieve good outcomes for people who use services, as well as providers and inspectors have found when digital information is done well, it can make inspection quicker. We are working to ensure that providers who use digital systems are registered, inspected and rated comparably and consistently with providers who use paper based systems. As part of this we are drafting an externally published briefing for providers and inspectors to clarify CQC's position on digital record systems and provide guidance on what acceptable formats of digital records look like. We would be pleased to share this with the Trade Association for comment.

A key part of this briefing explains:

There are no regulatory requirements for providers to specifically use paper based or digital records in relation to the people they provide a service to or their staff. Where digital systems are planned or in use, there is no prescribed definition of what good looks like. Making the decision to have a paperless records system can demonstrate an innovative approach and a provider should be able to evidence the benefits of this, such as improvements to their quality assurance system, accuracy of information or efficiency of staff. This should be of benefit to both the people who use services and staff. Providers should also be able to demonstrate how digital systems can (at the point of registration) and do (once registered) contribute towards good outcomes for people using the service.

Digital records systems are assessed against the relevant Key Lines of Enquiry and the Characteristics of Ratings. Digital records systems must comply with Regulation 17 Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and relevant data protection requirements. People using a service must also be able to access and contribute to their own records in their preferred format, in line with the Accessible Information Standard.