

Dementia care homes in England: how CQC registration works

Care homes in England must be registered with the Care Quality Commission. This guide explains what a CQC registration and a Dementia specialism mean, and how to check a home.

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England's regulator for care homes is the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Every care home in England must be registered with it, so the CQC provider directory is the public record of every home that legally operates. This directory lists care homes from that directory that carry a Dementia specialism.

What the CQC does

The CQC is the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England. It registers services, monitors them, inspects them and can take action against providers that fail to meet the regulations. A care home cannot lawfully operate in England without CQC registration. The CQC publishes its directory of registered locations as open data under the Open Government Licence v3.0, which is the source of every England listing on this directory.

Care homes and care homes with nursing

The CQC directory distinguishes two kinds of care home:

- **Care homes** provide accommodation and personal care, such as help with washing, dressing and meals.
- **Care homes with nursing** provide the same care plus nursing care from registered nurses on site.

Both are regulated by the CQC. People with dementia can live in either kind, depending on their needs. This directory marks which kind a home is by the service type on its CQC record.

What a Dementia specialism means

The CQC directory records the specialisms each service declares. A home whose record includes the Dementia specialism has told the CQC that it provides care for people with dementia. Every listing on this directory comes from a care home whose CQC record includes Dementia, so the homes here are exactly the homes you are looking for when a relative has a memory condition.

How to check a home

Each listing links to the home's page on the CQC website (the "CQC Location URL"). There you will find the latest inspection rating, the full inspection reports and whether the CQC has taken

any action. The CQC provider search also lets you compare homes in a local authority area. CQC ratings are not a licence check only: registration shows a home may operate, and the rating and reports show how it was last judged.

Choosing a home with dementia care

The NHS dementia guide and the Alzheimer's Society provide practical guidance for choosing care, including questions to ask about staff training, activities and how the home manages changing needs. Use this directory to see every registered home in a town, then check each one's CQC page before you visit.

This is general information, not legal or medical advice; confirm the current position with the CQC before you rely on it.

Frequently asked questions

Do care homes in England need to be registered?

Yes. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England, and a care home must be registered with it before it can operate.

What does a Dementia specialism mean on the CQC record?

The CQC provider directory records the specialisms a service declares, and Dementia is one of them. This directory lists only care homes whose CQC record carries a Dementia specialism.

What is the difference between a care home and a care home with nursing?

A care home provides personal care only; a care home with nursing also employs registered nurses and provides nursing care. Both are regulated by the CQC, and both are listed here.

Does CQC registration mean a home is good?

Registration means the home is legally allowed to operate. It is not a quality rating. Check the home's latest CQC rating and inspection report on the CQC website before you choose.

Sources

[CQC, using CQC data \(licensing note, OGL v3\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/about-us/transparency/using-cqc-data) — <https://www.cqc.org.uk/about-us/transparency/using-cqc-data>

[CQC provider search](https://www.cqc.org.uk/search/all) — <https://www.cqc.org.uk/search/all>

[CQC, what we do \(regulation of health and adult social care\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do) — <https://www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do>

[NHS, dementia guide](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/) — <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/>

[Alzheimer's Society, care homes and care services](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/dementia-care-care-homes) — <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-support/dementia-care-care-homes>

This guide is about United Kingdom.