

Planning assessments

Making sure we have the right information before we carry out an inspection helps us to focus on the right things. It influences what we look at, who we talk to and how the team is put together.

Gathering information before the inspection

The ways we collect information about services depend on the type of service we are inspecting. The information we collect includes:

- comments we have received through phone calls, letters and emails or through our [form to give feedback on care](#)
- information from [local Healthwatch and other organisations](#)
- feedback from activities we've planned to encourage you to give feedback on care
- information from staff who raise concerns
- information from the care provider.

The inspection team

Many of our inspection teams include specialists such as clinicians or pharmacists. They may also include Experts by Experience. These are people who have personal experience of care, either because they have used care services or because they have cared for someone who has.

The size of the inspection team and how it's made up depends on the type of service we are inspecting.

For example, when we inspect an NHS trust, the inspection team can have up to 50 members, including clinical and other experts. When we inspect a care home, a single inspector and an Expert by Experience is often enough.

Where do we get our evidence?

To answer the key lines of enquiry, our inspection teams use evidence from four main sources:

- Local information that we collect continuously. This includes complaints and the things we're told by staff, carers and people who use services.
- Information that we collect just before the inspection, such as information from the service provider or from our own records.
- Local and national data.
- Our inspection, which includes observing care and looking at records and documents.

For adult social care services – such as care homes and home care companies – our four sources are slightly different. This is because less data is available for adult social care than for other services.

For adult social care services, we use:

- a [range of data](#), including local information
- information that we collect just before the inspection
- information from [speaking with people](#) who use services, their families, carers, staff and other professionals
- our inspection.

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