

Minimum Standards for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England

Background

In February 2011, the Government published the Command Paper *Enabling Excellence: Autonomy and Accountability for Healthcare Workers, Social Workers and Social Care Workers*. The paper sets out the Government's proposals for reforming the system for regulating healthcare workers and social care workers in England. In particular, the paper puts forward the view that rather than extending statutory regulation to all workers in the health sector and the social care sector in England, the emphasis should be on employers of unregulated workers to take responsibility for the quality of the services they provide.

There is though, a recognition in the paper that 'a more flexible system is needed to enable employers to assure themselves that prospective employees have met adequate standards of training and competence and to enable individual members of the public who seek care directly from unregulated self-employed professionals to assure themselves about their standards.'

Speaking at the NHS Employers conference on 15th November 2011, Health Secretary of State, Andrew Lansley, announced the Government's intention to commission work to develop a code of conduct and minimum training standards for healthcare support workers and adult social care workers in England.

Skills for Care and Skills for Health have been commissioned by the Department of Health to jointly convene a project to develop a code of conduct and standards which set out high-level proficiencies for the role and expectations around healthcare support workers that report to nurses and midwives and adult social care workers working in support of health and social care professionals, independently, for CQC registered residential care providers, or as domiciliary care workers in England.

The expectation is that the output from this work will be used by a body (or bodies) establishing a voluntary register(s) for healthcare support workers and adult social care workers in England as part of its standards for inclusion on a register.

Project Objectives and Deliverables

Objective	Outcome/ Deliverable
1. Define the core competences needed by individuals working as health and care support workers	Framework of core competences
2. Define the technical competences required to undertake more specialised functions required by health and care support workers which would be applicable to the context of their work setting and which would be delegated by health and	Framework of technical competences

social care professionals	
3. Develop a Code of Conduct for health and care support workers	Code of Conduct
4. Define the minimum core content for induction of health and care support workers	Definition of minimum core content for induction
5. Identify the links between the core and technical competence requirements and the competence based qualifications in the QCF	Qualifications referencing contained within competence frameworks

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