

CQC framework crosswalk

Hospitals (secondary & specialist) · draft · 34 quality statements → 26 topics

These are drafts. Built from CQC's DRAFT sector frameworks published 24 March 2026. CQC is piloting these over summer 2026, with implementation expected at the end of the year. CQC has published no official mapping — this crosswalk is Safe Workplace's interpretation of topic scope, not CQC's. We will send you the final version free when CQC publishes.

Start here: most of this is unchanged. Two quality statements change key question — they are flagged in red below. Rows marked Absorbed or Redistributed have no direct successor, so that evidence needs re-homing. Everything else is a label change.

Safe

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Learning culture	Safety culture	Renamed	Broadened from learning to safety culture overall.
Safe systems, pathways and transitions	Safe systems, pathways and transitions	Unchanged	
Safeguarding	Safeguarding	Unchanged	
Involving people to manage risks	Managing risks during care and treatment	Reframed	Emphasis shifts from involving people to managing the risk.
Safe environments	Safe environments and infection, prevention and control	Merged	Merged with infection prevention and control.
Infection prevention and control	Safe environments and infection, prevention and control	Merged	Merged with safe environments.
Safe and effective staffing	Safe staffing	Renamed	'Effective' drops from the title.
Medicines optimisation	Safe delivery of medicines and treatments	Renamed	Broadened to cover treatments as well as medicines.

Effective

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Assessing needs	Assessing needs	Unchanged	
Delivering evidence-based care and treatment	Delivering evidence-based care and treatment	Merged	In adult social care this merges with outcomes; elsewhere it stays separate.

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Monitoring and improving outcomes	Outcomes	Merged	Adult social care folds outcomes into evidence-based care; the other three keep a distinct Outcomes topic.
Supporting people to live healthier lives	Supporting people to live healthier lives	Unchanged	
Consent to care and treatment	Consent to care and treatment	Unchanged	
How staff, teams and services work together	Partnerships and communities + Care provision, integration, and continuity	Redistributed	No direct successor. Scope now sits across partnerships and care provision/integration.

Caring

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Kindness, compassion and dignity	Kindness, compassion and dignity	Unchanged	
Treating people as individuals	Person-centred care	Renamed	Becomes Person-centred care — which moves INTO Caring from Responsive.
Independence, choice and control	Independence, choice, and control	Unchanged	
Responding to people's immediate needs	Person-centred care	Absorbed	Folded into Person-centred care.
Workforce wellbeing and enablement	Workforce equity and culture	MOVES KEY QUESTION	MOVES KEY QUESTION — Caring → Well-led (Workforce equity and culture).

Responsive

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Person-centred care	Person-centred care	MOVES KEY QUESTION	MOVES KEY QUESTION — Responsive → Caring.
Care provision, integration, and continuity	Care provision, integration, and continuity	Unchanged	
Listening to and involving people	Listening and responding to feedback	Reframed	'Responding' replaces 'involving'.
Providing information	Listening and responding to feedback	Absorbed	No direct successor; scope spreads across listening/responding and person-centred care.

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Equity in access	Timely and equitable access	Merged	Timeliness now explicit in the title.
Equity in experiences and outcomes	Equity in experience	Narrowed	'Outcomes' moves to the Effective key question.
Planning for the future	Person-centred care + Assessing needs	Absorbed	No direct successor; scope spreads across person-centred care and assessing needs.

Well-led

Quality statement today	Becomes	Change	Note
Shared direction and culture	Strategic direction	Renamed	Narrowed to strategic direction.
Capable, compassionate and inclusive leaders	Capable and compassionate leaders	Renamed	'Inclusive' drops from the title.
Freedom to speak up	Workforce equity and culture + Safety culture	Absorbed	Loses its standalone topic; scope sits in workforce culture and safety culture.
Workforce equality, diversity and inclusion	Workforce equity and culture	Reframed	Absorbs workforce wellbeing from the Caring key question.
Governance, management and sustainability	Governance + Management of risk, performance and issues	Split in two	Adult social care keeps one combined topic; the other three split governance from management of risk, performance and issues.
Partnerships and communities	Partnerships and communities	Unchanged	
Learning, improvement and innovation	Improvement, innovation and learning	Reordered	Same scope, words reordered.
Environmental sustainability – sustainable development	Strategic direction	Absorbed	REMOVED from adult social care — CQC: "We have not included environmental sustainability in the draft adult social care assessment framework." In the other three it survives inside Strategic direction, alongside strategy, values, organisational sustainability and social impact.

What this means in practice

It is consolidation, not expansion. 34 quality statements become 26 topics. Fewer things to evidence, not more.

The five key questions have not moved. Safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led have been constant since 2014, through every framework generation. Evidence organised around them carries across.

Scoring is being removed. CQC will judge each key question directly against published rating characteristics rather than aggregating scores. That means ambiguity in your evidence becomes ambiguity in the judgement — and a provider with complete, dated, owned evidence is in a stronger position than before, not a weaker one.

Source: CQC draft sector assessment frameworks published 24 March 2026 (consultation closed 12 June 2026), and CQC's currently published quality statements. Prepared by Safe Workplace · safework.place/tools/cqc-framework-crosswalk · 29 July 2026