

Service User Guide (template)

Sample policy template. This is a Verivius-authored template anchored to the statutory regulation and current CQC/professional guidance. Tenants must adapt the operational sections to their own organisation, service type, workforce, premises and professional requirements. Where this template and live law or regulator guidance diverge, the live source wins.

This is a Verivius-authored template for the Service User Guide that CQC asks care homes, domiciliary care agencies and supported living services to provide. Unlike a staff policy, this guide is written for the people who use the service and their families. The provider completes it with its own details. It must mirror the Statement of Purpose, in particular the service-user bands.

Statutory anchor: Regulation 9 (person-centred care), Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 (SI 2014/2936). This guide also engages Regulation 10 (dignity and respect) and Regulation 16 (receiving and acting on complaints), and must mirror the provider's CQC Statement of Purpose. **Primary source:** <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2936/regulation/9> **Last reviewed:** 2026-06-10
Verivius pack version: v1, 2026-06-10

Policy owner: Registered Manager. **Applies to:** all people who use the service and their families, and all staff who provide or describe the service.

1. What the regulation says

The care and treatment of service users must be appropriate, meet their needs, and reflect their preferences. (Reg 9(1): the headline duty)

carrying out, collaboratively with the relevant person, an assessment of the needs and preferences for care and treatment of the service user (Reg 9(3)(a): collaborative assessment)

Regulation 10 adds the dignity duties that this guide reflects:

Service users must be treated with dignity and respect. (Reg 10(1): the headline duty) having due regard to any relevant protected characteristics (as defined in section 149(7) of the Equality Act 2010) of the service user. (Reg 10(2)(c): protected characteristics)

Regulation 16 adds the complaints duties that this guide summarises:

Any complaint received must be investigated and necessary and proportionate action must be taken in response to any failure identified by the complaint or investigation. (Reg 16(1): the headline duty)

The registered person must establish and operate effectively an accessible system for identifying, receiving, recording, handling and responding to complaints by service users and other persons in relation to the carrying on of the regulated activity. (Reg 16(2): the system requirement)

The full text is at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2936/regulation/9>, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2936/regulation/10> and <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/2936/regulation/16>. Where this guide and the regulation diverge, the regulation wins.

2. Plain-English summary

Care and treatment must be appropriate, meet the service user's needs, and reflect their preferences. The regulation lists nine specific things you have to do to deliver person-centred care, including: assessment with the service user, designing care to meet their preferences, involving them and the people supporting them in decisions, providing information, making reasonable adjustments, and considering well-being when meeting nutritional and hydration needs. Service users must also be treated with dignity and respect, and there must be an accessible system for receiving and acting on complaints. The Service User Guide is one of the main ways a service gives people the clear information they need about how it works.

3. Purpose and scope

This guide gives people, families and representatives clear information about what the Service does, what it does not do, how care is arranged, how safety is monitored, how to raise concerns, and how to contact the right person.

It applies to every person who receives the Service, every family member or representative who is given service information, and every staff member who explains the Service before or during care. The guide must stay consistent with the Statement of Purpose, the contract or service agreement, the complaints policy, the safeguarding policy, the privacy notice and any accessible-information arrangements.

4. Roles and responsibilities

- **Registered Manager:** owns this guide, approves each version, checks it matches the Statement of Purpose and ensures people receive an up-to-date copy.
- **Nominated Individual or provider representative:** checks that the guide reflects the provider's legal entity, registered locations, regulated activities and service-user bands.

- **Care coordinator or office lead:** keeps contact details, fees, referral routes, opening hours, on-call routes and complaint contacts current.
- **Complaints Lead:** checks that the complaints summary matches the live complaints policy and escalation route.
- **Safeguarding Lead:** checks that safety, safeguarding and local-authority contact information is accurate.
- **All staff:** use the current guide when describing the Service and report anything that is out of date or unclear.

5. Operating procedure for keeping the guide accurate

The Service follows this procedure:

1. **Check source documents.** Compare the guide with the current Statement of Purpose, service agreement, privacy notice, complaints policy, safeguarding policy and service-delivery arrangements.
2. **Confirm the service-user bands.** Check that the people the guide says the Service supports match the bands declared to CQC.
3. **Check operational details.** Confirm contact details, office hours, on-call arrangements, fees, visit-monitoring arrangements, complaints contacts and safeguarding routes.
4. **Check accessibility.** Confirm whether the person needs large print, easy-read, audio, translated information, an interpreter, an advocate or another communication support.
5. **Issue the guide.** Give the guide before the service starts where possible, and again when a material change affects the person.
6. **Record issue.** Record the version issued, the date, the format, who received it and any support used to explain it.
7. **Review feedback.** Record concerns, complaints or questions that show the guide is unclear, and update the guide where needed.
8. **Approve the new version.** The Registered Manager signs off each version before it is issued.

6. How to use this template

This is a guide for the people who use the service. Write it in plain language, and provide it in accessible formats (for example easy-read, large print, or another language) where people need them, particularly for a service supporting people with a learning disability or autism. Everything in it must match the Statement of Purpose; in particular, the people you say you support here must be the same service-user bands you declared to CQC. A guide that does not match the Statement of Purpose is a common reason for rejection.

(Throughout, replace the angle-bracket placeholders with your own details.)

7. About our service

- Who we are: <provider name, and a short description of the service>.
- Our aims: <the aims and objectives of the service, matching the Statement of Purpose>.
- The people we support: <the service-user bands you support, matching the Statement of Purpose>.

8. What we offer, and what we do not offer

- The care and support we provide: <list the services offered>.
- What we do not, or cannot, offer: <state clearly the services that are not offered, so people know the limits of the service>.

9. How we decide whether we can meet your needs

- How we assess your needs before we start: <the assessment process>.
- The criteria we use to decide whether we can meet your needs safely: <criteria>.
- What happens if your needs change so that we can no longer meet them safely: <process>.

10. Our fees and charges

- What we charge and how: <transparent fee structure and charging method>.
- What is and is not included, and any extra charges: <detail>.
- How and when you pay, and what happens if circumstances change: <detail>.

11. How we deliver and check our service

- How we deliver care (for example visit times for home care): <detail>.
- How we monitor that care is delivered and on time, including how visits or calls are monitored and how we keep to time: <detail>.
- What to expect from our staff, and how we make sure they are suitable and trained: <detail>.

12. Your rights and how we treat you

- We treat you with dignity and respect, and we provide care that is centred on you and your wishes.
- We make reasonable adjustments and provide information in a format you can understand.
- We respect your privacy and keep your information safe under data protection law.

13. How to raise a concern or make a complaint

- You can raise a concern or complaint, and it will never affect the care you receive.
- How to complain, and who to contact: <name and contact details of the person complaints go to>.
- What we will do and how long it will take: <a short summary of the complaints policy>.
- Where you can go if you are not happy with our response: <the independent route, for example the relevant ombudsman>.

14. Keeping you safe

- How we keep you safe from abuse and neglect, in summary: <a short summary of the safeguarding policy>.
- How to tell us, or someone independent, if you do not feel safe: <contact routes, including the local authority safeguarding team>.

15. Our contact details and the terms of our service

- How to contact us: <address, telephone, email, hours>.
- The terms of the care we provide: <a summary of the contractual terms, or where to find the full agreement>.

16. Accessible formats

This guide is available in other formats on request, for example easy-read, large print, audio, or another language. Ask us and we will provide one that works for you.

17. Records and evidence

The Service keeps a guide-control record. The record should include:

- current guide version and approval date
- Statement of Purpose version checked against the guide
- service-user bands and regulated activities covered
- date issued to each person, family member or representative
- format issued, for example standard, large print, easy-read, audio or translated version
- any communication support used to explain the guide
- staff member who issued or explained it
- questions, complaints or feedback showing that the guide needs clarification
- actions opened to update the guide

Guide issues, feedback and updates should link to the complaints register, safeguarding record, risk register, audit register or improvement-actions register where they reveal a concern, risk or action.

18. Training and audit

Staff who explain the Service must know where the current guide is held, how to check whether a person needs an accessible format, and how to record that the guide has been issued. New staff should see the guide during induction so they do not describe services the provider is not registered or equipped to deliver.

The Registered Manager audits the guide at least annually and whenever the Statement of Purpose, fees, contact details, complaints route, safeguarding route or service model changes. The audit checks that the guide is current, issued, understood and available in accessible formats. Findings are recorded in the audit register and actions are tracked to completion.

19. Sources and further reading

This template is based on CQC's guidance for providers and managers, the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, and other topic-specific legislation and guidance listed below. It is a starting point for adaptation, not a substitute for legal, clinical, HR, safeguarding or specialist professional advice.

- CQC Regulation 9: Person-centred care
- CQC Regulation 10: Dignity and respect
- CQC Regulation 16: Receiving and acting on complaints
- CQC Statement of Purpose guidance
- CQC service user guide guidance
- CQC Fundamental Standards
- Accessible Information Standard
- CQC complaints guidance
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2014/2936/regulation/9>)

20. Related reading

- Related policy: [Person-centred care policy](#)
- Related policy: [Accessible information and communication policy](#)
- Related policy: [Complaints policy](#)
- Related policy: [Safeguarding adults policy](#)

21. Document control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
v1.1	2026-07-12	Verivius (sample)	Added operational ownership, guide-maintenance procedure, issue record, training and audit controls so the template can be run as a live service-user information document.
v1.0	2026-06-05	Verivius (sample)	New template authored to CQC's "what to include" for a service user guide: declared service and limitations (what is and is not offered), the needs-assessment criteria, transparent fees and charging, how the service is delivered and monitored (including call monitoring and punctuality), embedded summaries of the complaints and safeguarding procedures, contact and contractual details, and accessible formats, with a clear instruction that the guide must mirror the Statement of Purpose service-user bands (the CQC red flag is banding misalignment).
v1	2026-06-10	Verivius (sample)	Conformed to the Verivius policy standard: added the statutory-anchor header block, the verbatim "What the regulation says" quotes (Reg 9, 10, 16), the plain-English summary, the standard Sources and further reading section, and the closing disclaimer. All original guide sections preserved and renumbered.

This sample policy template was issued by Verivius. It is a template, not a substitute for legal advice or the tenant's own policy-development process. Where this template and live law or regulator guidance diverge, the live source wins.

An example for guidance, not a ready-to-use policy. This sample is deliberately generic and is not a finished policy. Before any service uses it, rewrite it around your own service, procedures, roles and local arrangements, and remove or replace anything you cannot actually provide (for example a reference to specific training you cannot access). It is guidance, not legal advice, and you are responsible for ensuring any policy you adopt is current.