



What was health care and adult social care like in England in 2024 and 2025?

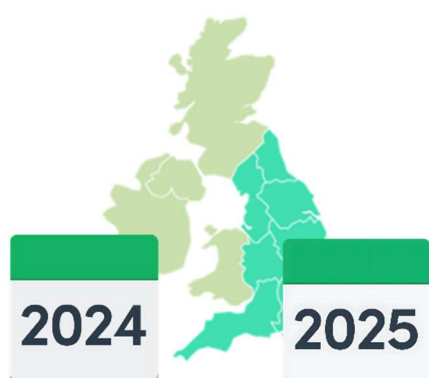
October 2025



Easy read version of 'The state of health care and adult social care in England 2024/25'



We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC). We check how good health and social care services are in places like hospitals, GP surgeries, care homes and homecare services.



This booklet tells you what we found out about these services in England over the last year.

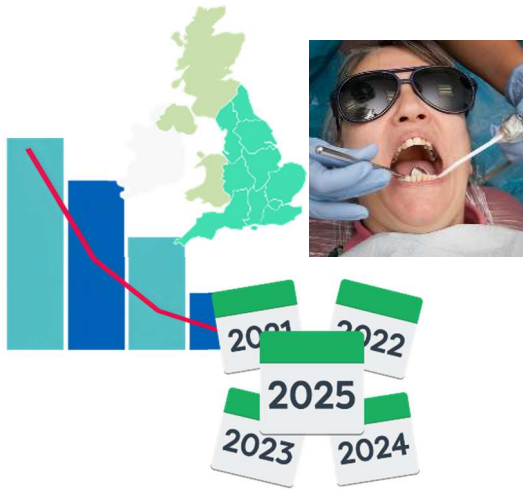
Getting the care people need



People cannot always get the care and treatment they need when they need it. For example:



- only half of the people answering a survey who had tried to contact their GP by phone said that it was easy



- the amount of dental work done across all of England is lower than it was 5 years ago



- the number of children and young people waiting for over a year for community health services, like autism checks, is 3 times higher than it was at the start of 2023



- fewer older people can get social care support from their council – 20 years ago, around 1 in 12 older people got support from their council – now it is around 1 in 27



- 1 in 3 people answering a survey said they waited 3 months or more for community mental health care



- the number of people going to urgent and emergency care services has gone up and nearly 2 million people waited more than 12 hours in A&E to be given a bed or sent home.

Health and social care staff



People's care in some areas is affected by problems with staffing, which can also make it harder for family and other carers. For example:



- there are 3 times more jobs that need filling in adult social care than there are in other types of job



- there are half the number of district nurses per person aged 65 and over than there were 14 years ago



- we hear that there are not enough hospital staff with the right skills – this makes their work harder and can affect people using services

People's experiences



Difficulties in health and care services has had an effect on people's experiences of care. For example:



- we have seen that often people's care needs to be more person-centred, which can happen better when services work together well



- more than 2 out of 5 people answering a survey said their health had got worse while waiting to be given treatment in hospital



- working out how to use health and care services, like making an appointment, can be difficult for some groups of people, including people living with dementia, autistic people and people with a learning disability.

Worries about health and care for groups of people

Some groups of people generally get worse experiences of health and care than others. For example:



- older people and people who live in the poorest areas are more likely than others to have to go back to hospital within 30 days of leaving it
- even though people aged over 65 mainly told us they had a good experience of care after leaving hospital, some said they didn't feel ready to leave, or that their care did not meet all their needs





- even though more people in England are being diagnosed with dementia, health and social care staff in do not always fully understand their needs



- too many women are still not getting good care when they have a baby



- staff in mental health need to get the right training to make sure everyone gets the same care – this should help make sure Black men get the same level of care as everyone else



- children with special educational needs or disabilities are waiting too long to have their health and care needs checked, which can make them feel much less safe where they live.



Our report also talks about some of the ways autistic people and people with a learning disability have poorer experiences of health and care. For example:



- they can find it difficult to see their GP, because the ways that appointments are booked may not offer the choices that they need



- GP surgeries do not always adapt their services (like making easy reads easy to find) to help people using them



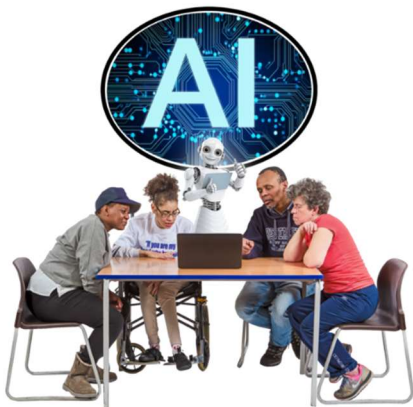
- we found that some autistic people and people with a learning disability who are kept on their own in hospital did not have plans on how to leave.

Improvement in health and care services



Even though there have been difficulties, we have seen some areas of improvement in health and care services. For example:

- the government has a plan that aims to help people get health and care services more easily where they live – where this is being tested, people think it is working well



- some services are starting to use new technologies like artificial intelligence (or AI) to help organise themselves, which can make care better for people.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards



Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards are rules that services must follow to protect people who cannot make choices for themselves.



These Safeguards are used when people need to have their freedom taken away to keep them safe.



These rules are being used more, and we are worried that some people are affected more than others – like older people with dementia.



Some councils are finding it harder than others to respond quickly when services ask them to agree the Safeguards.

How health and social care services work together



It is very important that health and adult social care services work together well and look at the problems we have talked about.



This can be difficult when hospitals have to make sure they hit targets, like how long people have to wait in A&E, instead of working on how to keep people healthy.



However, we have seen some areas doing well at supporting older and ill people in their own homes – but problems with not being able to get enough staff can make this difficult.



We have also seen services working well together to make sure people are safely sent home from hospital and then supported to get better – but again there are problems with getting enough staff or the right care – especially homecare services.

Find out more



Look at our website here:

www.cqc.org.uk/stateofcare



If you want to give feedback on your care – it can be good or bad, fill out our form here: www.cqc.org.uk/give-feedback-on-care



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