

What to expect on a GP inspection

Essential reading!

Find our handbook and key lines of enquiry for GP providers online at www.cqc.org.uk/gpproviders

Before the inspection

You will receive a letter confirming your inspection two weeks in advance. The inspector will also call you to explain more about what will happen on the day, and answer any questions you have.

You will need to complete a Provider Information Return (PIR) before the inspection, including information such as your statement of purpose, information on complaints or serious incidents.

We will send you comment cards for you to promote in your practice, so your patients can share their views.

On the day

General advice

Inspectors will always be accompanied by a GP specialist advisor, and sometimes a practice nurse or practice management specialist advisor, or expert by experience.

How inspectors spend their time at your practice will often vary. It will depend on the size of your practice and any areas they are particularly interested in looking at.

Our inspectors will always need a private space to work in, so it will be appreciated if you can offer the inspection team a separate room to use during the day.

Start of the day

When they arrive, the inspection team will introduce themselves, and they may ask for a quick tour of the practice. They will then ask to have an introductory meeting, where they will ask you to give a brief presentation about your practice. You can find tips on how to make your presentation at www.cqc.org.uk/guidetogpinspection.

The inspection team will then go off to focus on their relevant areas of expertise. During this time they will ask you for evidence, and make notes by following the key lines of enquiry (found in the appendices of the handbook).

Who will we need to speak to and for how long?

The practice manager will need to be available all day, as they will be needed to provide information and answer questions as they go along

The clinical practice staff, such as GPs or Practice Nurses, should be available for an in-depth interview of up to an hour at some point during the day, with our GP or practice nurse specialist advisor.

We may ask to speak to non-clinical staff (such as receptionists and administrative staff) for a shorter period of time.

The inspector or expert-by-experience will ask to speak to some of your patients who are in the practice at the time, as long as they are happy to talk to us.

We will ask to meet a representative from your patient participation group, who will be interviewed by the expert-by-experience or inspector.

We will always work around your practice so that receptions are not left unattended. Therefore it is helpful if you can ensure you have enough staff at the practice on the day.

At the end of the inspection

The inspection team will meet again in the afternoon to conclude their findings and ask for any additional information.

Once they have concluded the inspection, the inspector will offer you some informal feedback on what they have found. Please remember that this is not representative of the final judgment, as findings will need to be considered further.

After the inspection

The inspector will draft their report and rating for your practice. The report will then go through a quality assurance panel, to ensure the judgment is fair and consistent.

We will send you the draft report so you can complete a factual accuracy check.

Once finalised, we will publish the report on our website and inform your clinical commissioning group and NHS area team.

Once the report has been published, you must display your rating in your practice. You can find help to do this at: www.cqc.org.uk/ratingsdisplaytoolkit.