



The **Regulation** and
Quality Improvement
Authority

**Monitoring Quality in a Domiciliary
Care Agency: Guidance for
Registered Providers**

**(Regulation 23 of the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations
(Northern Ireland) 2007)**

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Who must visit the Domiciliary Care Agency?

Main points

1. Registered providers are responsible for monitoring the quality of service provided in their agency. Please refer to Appendix 1 of this document for more detail.
2. Where the registered provider of a domiciliary care agency, the Domiciliary Care Regulations require that the registered person shall establish and maintain a system for evaluating the quality of the services which the agency arranges to be provided. The nature of the required monitoring is set out within paragraph 8.11 of the Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care Agencies (Appendix 1).

In accordance with regulation 23 (2) of the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (NI) 2007, RQIA may request submission of any monitoring report compiled. The registered provider must retain a copy of the report for examination by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA).

- 3 The registered provider must develop a system which includes a visit to the agency by or on behalf of the registered person by someone who is not the manager and who is not directly involved in the day to day running of the agency, to carry out the monthly visits and report on what they find. This individual is referred to as “the monitoring officer” in this document.

How frequently must the registered provider/monitoring officer visit the domiciliary care agency?

4. The visit by the or on behalf of the registered provider individual/monitoring officer must visit the agency at least once a month. Taking into account the nature of the service, the responsible individual should record within the report a clear rationale for whether each visit is carried out on an announced or unannounced basis. Standard 8.11

What must the registered provider/monitoring officer do at the monitoring visit?

5. The visit provides an opportunity for the registered provider/monitoring officer to monitor the quality of the service being provided in their agency. They may wish to concentrate on aspects of the service that people using it have told them they need to improve. They should include all the issues requiring action in their quality improvement plan. The registered provider/monitoring officer should look at how they are promoting equality and meeting the diverse needs of the people using the service.

6. They must interview, with consent and in private, a sample of:

Users of the domiciliary care agency*
Representatives of service users

Staff working for the domiciliary care agency

Professionals who refer people to the agency.

They should select a sample that will give a good overview of the experiences of people using and working in the agency with particular regard to their equality and diversity.

It is recognised that, in many conventional domiciliary care agencies, it is unlikely that the sample of service users/ representatives/ staff members/ referral agents will be representative owing to the size of the service. In these circumstances the monitoring officer should carry out more detailed interviews of a limited number of service users and their representatives each month, which in some circumstances may be carried out by phone.

7. They must inspect the environment of the agency, including the setting within which care is provided if the agency provides a supported living type service the monitoring should ensure they have consent to access this accommodation.
8. They must inspect the agency's record of accidents / incidents and record of any complaints.

How must the registered provider/monitoring officer record their visit?

9. The registered provider/monitoring officer must write a report about their visit. The report should reflect what they did and what they found out about the service being provided and report on what progress is being made on the agency's improvement plan. The report should include a commentary on the experiences of people using and working in the agency. Any actions incorporated into an improvement plan should be clearly set out with associated timescales and actions allocated to the relevant staff member.
10. The report is primarily a tool that the registered provider can use as part of their management of the quality of their service and will support their responsibilities to review the quality of care as detailed under regulation 23 of The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.
11. The form in Appendix 2 provides a suggested format for the report that the registered provider may wish to use. However, the registered provider may wish to develop their own format for the report that fits in with other aspects of their quality monitoring.

What must they do with the report?

12. The report helps the registered provider to monitor and improve the quality of their service in ways that matter to the people using it. Progress against any necessary actions identified in the course of one monitoring visit should be evaluated and recorded on subsequent monitoring visits.
13. They must keep the report available for inspection by RQIA on file and provide the RQIA with a copy of this if requested.
14. RQIA will use any submitted reports to monitor action against the registered provider's quality improvement plan.
15. If RQIA requires the registered provider to supply a copy of their monitoring report, RQIA will specify the form and manner of delivery. The registered provider may wish to consider sending the report by secure means if it contains any confidential, particularly private, personal information.
16. The registered provider must also make the report available to:

The service's registered manager and If the registered provider is an organisation, to each of the directors or other people responsible for the management of the organisation; or If the registered provider is a partnership, to each of the partners.

Expected outcomes

1. The registered provider can monitor the quality of the service provided in their domiciliary care agency.
2. The registered provider can track progress between monitoring visits against any improvement actions specified following a monitoring visit.
- 3 The registered provider will support the registered manager in making necessary improvements to the quality of the service.
3. The views of service users, relatives and/or their representatives, staff and other stakeholders can be taken into account.
4. Trend data on the number of incidents by type can be reviewed and any learning disseminated early to all staff.
5. The number of complaints by type and action taken to resolve these will be reviewed and recorded.
7. Any issues concerning the agency premises, and environment in which care is provided (supported living type agencies only), will be promptly addressed.
8. The agency will continuously improve the quality and standard of care provided.

Regulation 23 of The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (NI) 2007

23.—(1) The registered person shall establish and maintain a system for evaluating the quality of the services which the agency arranges to be provided.

(2) At the request of the Regulation and Improvement Authority, the registered person shall supply to it a report, based upon the system referred to in paragraph (1), which describes the extent to which, in the reasonable opinion of the registered person, the agency—

(a) arranges the provision of good quality services for service users;
(b) takes the views of service users and their representatives into account in deciding—

(i) what services to offer to them, and
(ii) the manner in which such services are to be provided; and

(c) has responded to recommendations made or requirements imposed by the Regulation and Improvement Authority in relation to the agency over the period specified in the request.

(3) The report referred to in paragraph (2) shall be supplied to the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) within one month of the receipt by the agency of the request referred to in that paragraph, and in the form and manner required by the RQIA.

(4) The report shall also contain details of the measures that the registered person considers it necessary to take in order to improve the quality and delivery of the services which the agency arranges to be provided.

(5) The system referred to in paragraph (1) shall provide for consultation with service users and their representatives.

Extract from Standard 8 of the Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care Agencies (Amended 2011)

8.11 The registered person monitors the quality of services in accordance with the agency's written procedures and completes a monitoring report on a monthly basis.

This report summarises any views of service users and/or

Their carers/representatives ascertained about the quality of the service provided, and any actions taken by the registered person or the registered manager to ensure that the organisation is being managed in accordance with minimum standards.

Report of registered provider's visit to their domiciliary care agency:

Name and address of the domiciliary care agency	
Name of the registered provider and their position in the organization	
Date and time of visit	
Name and designation of the monitoring officer	
Was this visit announced or unannounced?	
Name of person in charge of the agency during the monitoring visit.	

Actions from previous visit.	Progress

Number of service users:

1. Number of service users consulted and summary of their views on the quality of care and support provided by the agency. This section should reflect a selection of all service users each month.

2. Number of relatives/friends consulted and a summary of their views on the quality of care and support provided by the agency. This section should reflect a selection of all relatives/friends each month.

3. Number of staff on duty interviewed and summary of their comments on the standard of care provided

4. Number of referring professionals interviewed /consulted and a summary of their comments on the standard of care provided by the agency.

5. The number of accidents/incidents or other untoward events, including restrictive interventions, restraint as defined the DHSS 2005 guidance on restraint.

- 5 (a) Have all incidents been reported to the RQIA?

6. Key findings from looking at the records of complaints during this and the previous month.

7. Requirements and recommendations specified in the RQIA's quality Improvement plan.

Requirements	Completion date	Progress
Recommendations	Completion date	Progress

8. Commentary on progress made on planned improvements.

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9. The number of vulnerable adult incidents reported to the HSC Trust

10. Condition of the environment in which care is delivered and detail any action to be taken **(supported living type services only)**.

11. Other improvements planned as a result of observations during this visit.

12 Other areas for audit during this monitoring visit

Service users' finances: **(supported living type services only)**.

Finances in order as outlined within the tenants finance agreements? Record the number of tenant's files audited

Does each service user have a financial support plan which accurately reflects the way in which they are supported to manage their money?	
Have there been any recommendations within internal audit reports that remain outstanding?	
Have all relevant staff been trained in the agency's procedures on "handling service users money"?	

Medication:

Medication records are in place as required within the service users' care and support plan? Record the number of service users' files audited.

Training records:

Are all training records up to date and recorded appropriately? Record the number of training topics audited.

Supervision records:

Supervision/appraisal records are up to date and in line with agency policy? Record number of staff files.

Recruitment

Have staff from any other domiciliary care agency been used in the past month? If yes, how many and how often?

Were they recruited from a domiciliary agency registered with RQIA?

Did the responsible person ensure that all the information specified in regulation 13 Schedule 3 had been met, in particular proof of identity, two references, and an ACCESS NI check prior to the supply of the worker to work in the home of service user(s)?

Yes

No

13. Action plan agreed as a result of this visit - by whom and timescale for completion

Action	By whom	Completion date

Signed:	
Designation:	
Date completed:	
Date report forwarded/discussed with the registered manager and monitoring individual:	