

1**Background**

This briefing raises awareness of why quality and safety is important across all care settings. Patient safety is the avoidance of unintended or unexpected harm to individuals during health care. It is about duty of care, quality of care, good practice and working together to prevent errors in healthcare. Individuals should be cared for in a safe environment and protected from harm and abuse. Healthwatch have put together some useful guidance [here](#)

2**Why it matters**

The Care Act (2014) places a legal duty on organisations that care for individuals. A duty of care is a legal responsibility, it means promoting wellbeing, making sure people are kept safe from harm, abuse and injury. The duty includes sharing your concerns. The basic principles of care include compassion, dignity and respect. Person centred care means putting the needs and values of the patient first and working with professionals to get best outcome.

3**Information**

Use your senses, judgement and intuition.

What do you hear? Are call bells answered? Are individuals and carers listened to? Are individuals content or distressed?

What do you feel? Is the environment comfortable, is it too hot or too cold?

What do you smell? Is it clean/offensive?

4**What do you see?**

Is the environment free from clutter, well maintained and person friendly? Is there a visible, responsible person? Is there a high turnover of staff? Are staff visible? Do staff or carers appear knowledgeable and familiar with the individual?

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Do the individuals being cared for know the staff's names?

Are individuals well supported?

Is there access to appropriate activities and stimulation?

Are care plans accurate and reviewed? Are they tailored to individual needs?

Are decisions lawful?

7**Questions to consider**

Is the care good enough for you or your loved ones?

Do you know where to take your concerns, and do you need any support?

Is the complaints process visible to visitors, service users or their carers?

Are MCA and DoLS used appropriately?

Remember your duty of care

6**What to do**

Use your professional curiosity, follow your gut feeling. Alert professionals to concerns promptly and raise with someone with responsibility

Seek advice from your Safeguarding lead and/ or consider raising a safeguarding alert on 0300 123 6720 or 0300 123 6722

