

What is a commissioned service?

Basic info

A commissioned service means care, support or supervision that has been arranged and paid for on a client's behalf by a public authority such as:

- In the case of personal care, a local authority adult social care department
- In the case of housing-related support, a local authority housing department
- In the case of nursing care, the NHS

The client might have to make a means-tested contribution to the cost of the service, but the commissioning body makes the arrangements and the contract is between the commissioning body and the care/support provider.

More info

Commissioned care services are regulated:

- In England care is registered by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- In Wales the regulator is the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).
- In Scotland the regulatory body is Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS), usually referred to as the "Care Inspectorate" in relation to its registration and inspection functions.

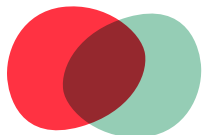
The care regulators do not only regulate care homes where the care and accommodation are provided together by the same person or company: they also regulate care services where care is provided separately from accommodation.

In addition, in Scotland only, housing related support is also regulated by SCSWIS. Local authorities receive grants from the Scottish government to fund commissioned housing support services under section 91 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The services qualifying for this funding are listed in the Schedule to the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Housing Support Services) Regulations 2002.

When is a care or support service not commissioned?

This simply means that the service has not been arranged and paid for by a commissioning authority. Examples of non-commissioned services include the following:

- People who have too much income or capital to qualify for help with care charges might choose to approach care or support providers directly and purchase services commercially.
- Others might be given control of the budget that the authority would have used to commission services, in which case the client purchases services directly from the provider using the authority's money. This arrangement is variously known as "personal budget", "direct payments" and "self-directed" care or support.
- Particularly in England and Wales, housing related support might be provided by a landlord without any commissioning by the authority: the landlord is able to resource the service independently. For example:



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- The Abbeyfield Society relies on volunteers to befriend and entertain its frail and elderly tenants
 - Many organisations are able to raise funds from donations, selling donated goods in a shop, etc.