

Why Branding is Important Within the Documentation You Produce for the CQC

If you are a healthcare provider, whether that be an NHS or a private provider, you will be aware that you will need to be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in order for you to continue to practice and provide your health services to patients.

Registering with the CQC is a long and painful process, in so far as the documentation you need to have in place to pass your assessment is vast. Fortunately there are companies out there who can help you in the documentation completion aspect of the Care Quality Commission assessment. But they will need guidance as to how your documentation needs to appear.

This might seem like a silly consideration. Surely the most important thing to concern yourself with when you have hundreds of documents to pull together is making sure the content is correct, not that each document is visually pleasing. This is of course true. Ensuring that the content is accurate, that it fits the criteria that the CQC will be looking for, and that it is contemporary is extremely important. If you don't get this first step correct, then the Care Quality Commission is unlikely to pass your organisation because of the quality of your documents. However, once this first step is successfully achieved, your next move is to decide how you want your documentation to look. Even internally, branding is everything.

The documentation required by the CQC to satisfy their assessment process covers internal documentation and external, patient-facing information. The patient-facing information includes patient leaflets, procedure information and advice and service signposting. The internal documentation includes process notes, policies, training manuals and presentations, action logs and procedure flow charts.

It is important that as a company or organisation you represent yourself to the public in a consistent way. This means calling your company or organisation the same thing all the time, and it also means using the same strap line on printed documents, sticking to an agreed colour scheme (both on documents and on the walls!), using a consistent logo, and retaining the same font colourings and sizes on printed documents. This consistency is very therapeutic to patients and the public, and it means that they are more likely to trust and recognise you. So you should ensure that this consistency is applied to all patient-facing CQC documentation too.

However it is also important to keep your internal documentation in line with your external branding. Not only does this provide a sense of order to the written word, it also means that staff know what they are looking for, and what it is likely to look like. This can be helpful when staff themselves are writing documents, as it sets style boundaries that they can work within. Furthermore, a consistent branding means that new staff are much more likely to

have confidence in you as an organisation. And so by default, the Care Quality Commission will too. After all a consistent branding suggests professionalism - and this isn't something that content alone can craft.

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