

DOMICILIARY CARE: A GUIDE TO SUCCESS



Domiciliary care has been touted as the way forward for social care. This seems to have even more impetus in these days of pandemic.

This part of the market definitely has its own set of challenges. What do you need to do to make your business a success?

THE REGISTRATION CHALLENGE

First, there is the challenge of getting your business registered. This has recently become more difficult not only for domiciliary care, but also for services supporting people with learning disabilities and autism.

CQC expect you to make a clear case explaining how your service will meet the regulations and guidance. Read the relevant guidance carefully. CQC's current emphasis is on the management of risk. Whilst providers tend to focus on being caring, CQC want to know that safety is built into your management structure.

If you already operate domiciliary care services and wish to set up new ones, look at your current inspection reports to see what sort of things inspectors are looking for when determining if you meet the regulations. Remember to provide hard evidence with your application. If you are feeling at a loss about what is required, you may find it helpful to take professional advice. It is better to get this right at the outset than to have to appeal the decision later.



CASH FLOW MANAGEMENT

Cash flow is another common problem area. Good financial hygiene is key. Contracts must be clear and consumer law compliant. Be firm with clients about your expectations in regard to payment and don't let outstanding debts drag. People's circumstances can change very rapidly and a sudden change may make paying your bill less of a priority.

In terms of local authority contracts, a good relationship with commissioners is sometimes easier said than done but it will also help you get paid on time. Your ability to negotiate with commissioners will be improved if they are in need of your services and you offer a quality provision. Keep a close eye on each month's ledgers and ask questions when the batch payments received are not clear. Get back up from lawyers if you run into difficulty and, most importantly, do not let unpaid invoices remain unchased!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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