



EXECUTIVE CANDIDATE PACK 2026

Deputy Director
Inspectorate Office
Mental Health Care

(Req 2972)

Letter from Christopher Dzikiti, Chief Inspector of Mental Health

Dear candidate

Thank you for your interest in the role of Deputy Director – Inspectorate Office at the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

This is a pivotal time for CQC as we continue to strengthen our regulatory frameworks and activity to meet the evolving demands of the health and social care landscape. As an organisation committed to transparency, integrity, and excellence, we are seeking a highly capable and values-driven leader to join our leadership team.

As Deputy Director for the Mental Health Inspectorate Office, you'll support the Chief Inspector of Mental Health and the two Inspectorate Directors to deliver CQC's strategy, strengthen performance, and help rebuild our organisation so it is fit for the future. You will support the Inspectorate's leadership and delivery, coordinate and connect teams across CQC and provide strategic insight and assurance to the senior leadership team.

We are looking for a candidate with skills, knowledge and experience in senior executive and strategic support, regulatory leadership and assurance, and collaborative delivery.

At CQC, we are proud of our values - **Excellence, Caring, Integrity, and Teamwork** - and we expect our senior leaders to embody these in everything they do. You will be someone who builds trust through authenticity, champions diversity and inclusion, and fosters a culture of continuous improvement.

I look forward to receiving your application and to welcoming the successful candidate to our leadership team.

With best wishes,

Chris Dzikiti
Chief Inspector of Mental Health

About CQC

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. We make sure that health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care, and encourage services to improve.

Our role

- Register care providers.
- Monitor, inspect and rate services.
- Take action to protect people who use services.
- Speak with our independent voice, publishing our views on major quality issues in health and social care.



Excellence

We pursue high standards to improve our efficiency and effectiveness.

This requires us to be:

Insight-led **Proportionate** **Innovative**



Caring

We recognise the value of every person.

This requires us to be:

Just **Compassionate** **Respectful**

We always

- Protect the rights of vulnerable people, including those restricted under the Mental Health Act.
- Listen to and act on people's experience.
- Involve the public and people who receive care.
- Work with other organisations and public groups.



Integrity

We are honest and always seek to do what is right.

This requires us to be:

Transparent **Accountable** **Impartial**



Teamwork

We work together across teams, organisations and systems.

This requires us to be:

Collaborative **Inclusive** **Fair**

Our Interim Chief Executive & Chair

OUR INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Dr Arun Chopra

Prior to joining CQC, Arun was the Medical Director of the assurance organisation for mental health services in Scotland and is passionate about joining up pathways to create an accessible service for all and joined CQC to drive forward that improvement.



Dr Arun Chopra, holds the substantive role of Chief Inspector of Mental Health and was appointed as interim Chief Executive Office in October 2025.

OUR CHAIR

Professor Sir Mike Richards

Mike was an academic cancer physician specialising largely in breast cancer before being appointed as England's first National Cancer Director in 1999.

After 13 years in that role, he was appointed as the first Chief Inspector of Hospitals at the Care Quality Commission, where he led the development and implementation of a new approach to inspecting, rating and regulating hospitals, mental health, community and ambulance services.



Current context

We are changing how we regulate to improve care for everyone

In the recent times, four important reviews were undertaken into how CQC works. These reviews were:

1. The final report of Dr Penny Dash's review
2. The first report of the review commissioned by CQC from Professor Sir Mike Richards
3. The review from the Care Provider Alliance (CPA) into [the single assessment framework](#)
4. An [independent review](#) into our systems

The outcomes of these reviews have played an important role in helping to set the future direction of CQC. They have reaffirmed the support for a robust health and care regulator, and recognised the dedication and experience of CQC staff.

How we plan to take action

Following the outcomes of our consultation, we plan to make changes to improve the following areas:

Improving our assessment framework

- Describing our expectations of quality for all our rating levels.
- Reducing duplication and making our assessment frameworks more sector-specific, simpler and clearer.
- Publishing more detailed supporting guidance that shows the key standards and sources of evidence that we will consider for the services in that sector.

How we make judgements and award ratings

- Simplifying our rating approach and strengthening the role of professional judgement.
- Supporting our inspection teams to deliver timely and expert inspections, publish impactful reports and develop strong relationships with providers.
- Improving information technology and our data and insight.

(continued on next page)

Having the right IT systems and tools to support our regulatory activity

- The findings from [the independent review of our technology](#) are helping us to identify these. We will improve how we collect, analyse and publish data to ensure we can identify regulatory risks and insights for improvement, and ensure our reporting is accurate, timely, and insightful. This includes improving the experience for providers registering with us. We will also identify the next steps for how we can improve the quality and consistency of data.

A skilled specialist inspection workforce

- Through specialist leadership around the sectors we regulate, and our commitment to our people, we aim to continue to develop the skills of our workforce, with expertise in sectors, regulatory methods and relational skills.

We aim to implement these improvements alongside direction set through the government's [10 Year Health Plan for England](#). We will continue to make ongoing improvements to our local authority assessments and strengthen our focus on nationally agreed priorities.

In this next phase of our development, we are working with providers, colleagues, people who use services, local government and wider stakeholders to develop a plan on how we implement these changes and make sure we are realistic about what can be delivered by when.

In July 2025 the Department of Health and Social Care published its review of patient safety across the health and care landscape. This focuses on the broader landscape of health and care arm's length bodies and explores how we can better work with our partners. We understand that this widely informed the government's 10 Year Health Plan, and we will take forward its recommendations to focus on streamlining the patient safety landscape and improving accountability.

Additional reading

[Our Board](#)

[Re-Building a trusted approach to our regulation](#)

[The state of health care and adult social care in England 2024/25](#)

[Evaluation findings on assessor and inspector roles](#)

[Monitoring the Mental Health Act](#)



Our teams

How we deliver our purpose through our directorates

Led by one of our 4 Chief Inspectors, our **operational teams** deliver operational policy and provide sector expertise in the following sector-specific teams: **Hospitals, Adult Social Care and Integrated Care, Mental Health and Primary and Community Care.**

They help to shape and set the direction of policy and practice across their sector and respond to emerging issues and thematic work.

They also help to develop CQC's approach to how we assess, make judgements and award ratings, and oversee how this is implemented. This applies both to health and care providers in both the NHS and the independent sector.

They build relationships with providers, as well as key national and local groups, to listen to the voices of people who use services to improve our processes for registration and assessment, and to understand risk across health and care, and they work collaboratively to develop a single shared view of quality.

Corporate Services

They ensure CQC is supported with highly effective corporate and customer services that keep our people at the centre of everything we do – while maintaining value for money from our resource. They drive continuous improvement and ensure that our purpose, values and behaviours are embedded in all aspects of service delivery.

Digital, Data and Registration

This includes our Technology, Data & Insight, and Registration functions. To deliver a modern, intelligence-led regulatory model, our IT systems need appropriate functionality to support our internal colleagues as well as providers and stakeholders. This supports our regulatory functions, including our assessment and registration process. We are also examining how the data and insights that we generate from our regulatory work can be shared in a better way to enable providers and other stakeholders to use it to support improvements in health and care.



Our teams continued

Engagement, Policy and Strategy

Our Engagement team ensures CQC communicates and engages on what matters most to our audiences. They drive our engagement nationally and regionally with the public, colleagues, providers and other stakeholders to keep people informed and improve how we regulate.

Our Policy and Strategy teams develop high-quality policies and strategies that enable CQC to regulate services effectively to encourage improvement in the quality of care, meet our equality and human rights obligations, and influence CQC's future role in the health and social care system.



Your team explained

Team information

The post holder will sit within the Chief Inspector's office, reporting to the Chief Inspector of Mental Health.

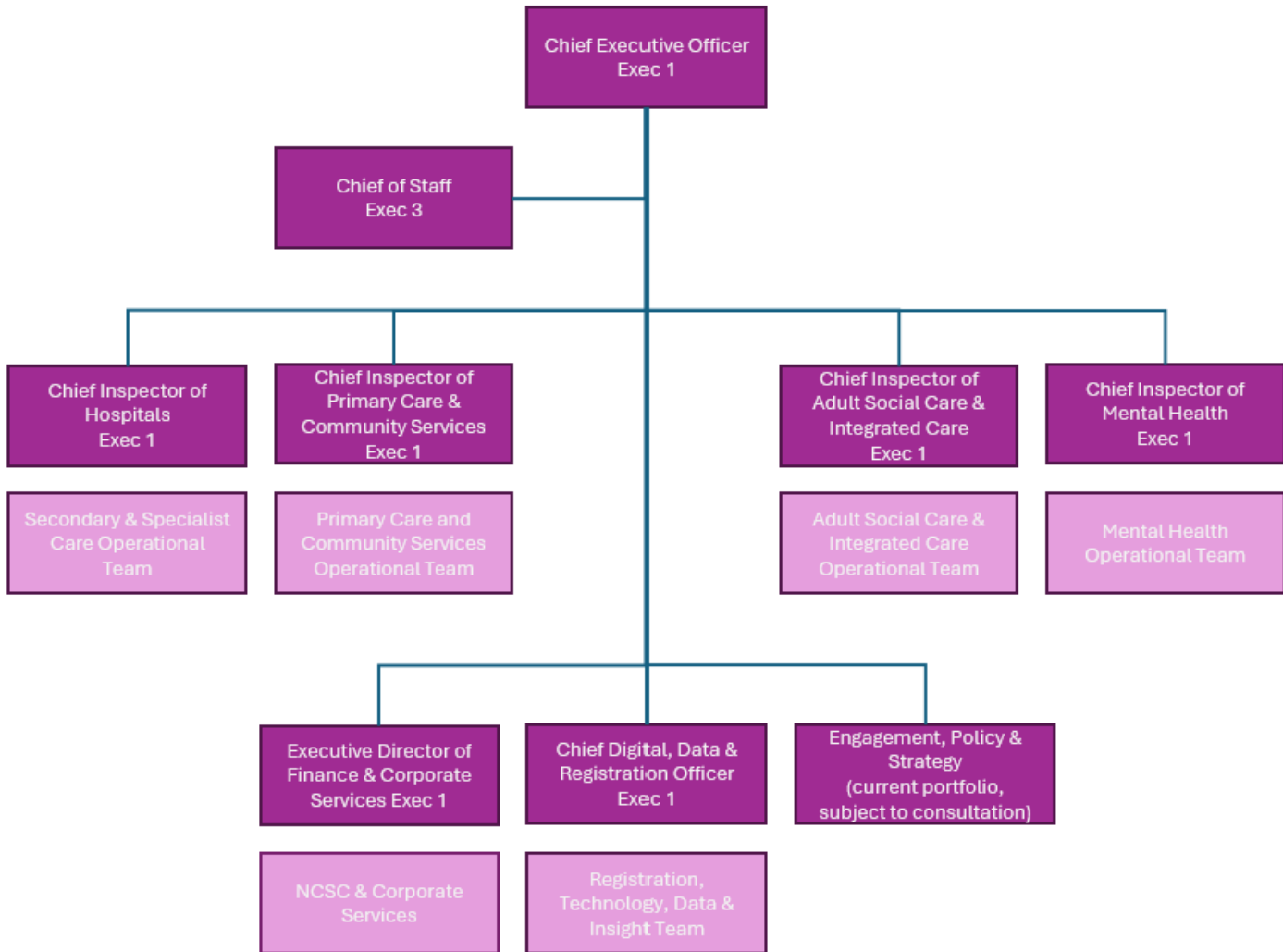
The Chief Inspector for Mental Health Care leads the regulation of Mental Health Care and Mental Health Act at CQC. The role sets priorities for performance, quality and improvement, and provides overall leadership to the inspectorate. It also involves working with senior leaders, government and partners to strengthen regulation and drive improvement across the sector.

This role will provide line manager support to the Mental Health Care Business Manager and Executive Personal Assistant.

The Business Manager for Mental Health Care supports the Chief Inspector and senior leadership team to deliver priorities and manage the effective running of the inspectorate and work within the Inspectorate Senior Leadership team, which constitutes of the Director of Mental Health who leads the Inspection workforce in their regions and the Director of Mental Health who leads the Mental Health Act functions and our regulation of Independent Sector providers and High Secure Mental Health Services, as well as CQC's National Professional Advisors who work across the Inspectorate and provides key liaison with the wider organisation. The role includes coordinating activity across teams, supporting governance processes, and ensuring key meetings, actions and communications are managed effectively. It works closely with directors and Deputy Directors to support delivery and organisational priorities.

The Executive Personal Assistant provides high-level support to the Chief Inspector, ensuring the smooth running of their day-to-day activity. The role includes managing the diary, coordinating meetings and supporting communication across the leadership team. It also plays a key role in planning, organisation and ensuring priorities are managed effectively.

Executive structure



The role

Accountabilities

- Effective running and management of the Office of the Chief Inspector.
- Coordination of enabling functions, such as Finance, Performance, People, Data & Insight/Comms & Engagement - to maximise support, efficiency and productivity.
- Overall responsibility for maintaining a high quality and proportionate governance architecture within the Inspectorate and interface with wider CQC governance infrastructure.
- Working directly to the Chief Inspector to maximise value for money, by ensuring a clear focus on priorities.
- Act as an informed strategic advisor to the Chief Inspector, providing clear and rapid analysis of key issues and strategies across the programme and wider stakeholder landscape, providing situationally aware advice and handling plans for emergent issues.
- Support the Chief Inspector in handling internal/external communications and media.
- Works as a member of the Inspectorate's senior team to further develop and refine CQC regulatory policy and approach and to trial new approaches.
- Manage and act as a point of contact for the Chief Inspector, liaising and sharing information on key priorities and ensuring connections are made as necessary with critical stakeholders.
- Translate strategy into operational plans and ensure clarity of roles.
- Provide the Chief Inspector with overarching, cross-Regional insight into management assurance and performance, with a focus on enabling quality and consistency of regulatory decisions and inspections and Inspectorate-wide learning.
- Collaborate across teams to ensure integrated regulation and assurance.
- Support cross-functional initiatives and stakeholder engagement.
- Act as CQC ambassador through external engagement where appropriate.
- Manage a large number of issues, workstreams and initiatives concurrently tracking progress, performance and completion in a timely manner, including when they are delivered through others.
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The role continued

What are we looking for?

We are looking for strong experience and demonstrable outcomes in the following areas:

- Executive support and strategic delivery: Proven experience and track record of delivery in supporting executive r leaders to deliver complex portfolios in national or complex organisations, including prioritisation, strategic planning, budget management and driving delivery against organisational priorities and objectives.
- Operational delivery and collaboration: Strong understanding of operational delivery in a fast paced, high energy environment, including monitoring and oversight of performance, productivity, quality, risk and assurance . Ability to deliver through matrix working, building trusted stakeholder relationships to achieve shared outcomes.
- Decision making, performance and change: Experience using data and insight to inform decisions, manage performance and deliver programmes. Able to communicate complex information clearly. Evidence of experience in leading and supporting complex change and demonstrating sound judgement, business acumen and political awareness.
- Sector-specific expertise: Demonstrable knowledge and experience of the Mental Health sector, including key operational pressures, regulatory requirements, and quality and safety considerations. Ability to apply this knowledge to support effective oversight, assurance or improvement activity is essential.

Terms and conditions

Contract Type: Permanent

Location: Homebased

Salary: £75,183 per annum





Recruitment timeline

The recruitment and selection process

Timetable

Advert closing date	25 th May 2026
Shortlisting	w/c 15 th June 2026
Assessment	w/c 29 th June 2026
Final Interview	7th & 8th July 2026 – face to face in either our Stratford, London Office, or Newcastle Upon Tyne Office

Application instructions

To apply for this role, please submit a copy of your CV and Supporting Statement (no more than 750-words) via the Recruitment System.

Your Supporting Statement should cover the following:

- ***How your previous experience makes you suitable for this role?***
- ***What strengths will you bring to the role?***



Panel information

Panel

- Kim Forrester, Director of Mental Health
- TBC, National Professional Advisor or Expert by Experience
- TBC, Independent Panel Member

Independent panel members

The role of an independent panel member (IPM) is crucial to supporting our Diversity and Inclusion strategy and a key part of ensuring our recruitment process is fair, open, and transparent; by working alongside hiring managers and panel members throughout our recruitment campaigns.

Independent Panel Members bring independence, objectivity, and challenge whenever they feel it necessary.

It is mandatory for all CQC Executive level recruitment campaigns to have an IPM on the interview panel.

Benefits at a glance

Pension

We want to help you plan for your future. When you start in your new role with us you will join the [NHS pension scheme](#). Or, where appropriate, [Nest](#), the government-backed workplace pension scheme.

Annual leave

We offer 27 days of leave per year for all new starters on a permanent contract. After three years this increases to 29 days. After five years you can take 32.5 days.

You get time off for bank holidays too. This is usually 8 days per year but depends on national holidays.

We know that you may need to take time off for emergencies, medical appointments or other significant life events. To support you we have a range of special leave policies.

Home, office and hybrid working

Depending on the requirements of your role, you might be able to work:

- from home
- from one of our offices (we have locations in several cities including Leeds, London and Newcastle)
- from both (hybrid working).

Most of our teams work remotely, and we are proud to support that flexibility. Office-based employees can also work from home regularly. And for those based at home, our offices are always available when needed - whether for meetings, collaboration, or a change of pace. We aim to support home working with appropriate equipment, depending on your role and circumstances.

From day one, you can request flexible working. Each application is considered carefully, based on your role and personal needs.

Fleet scheme

When you join us, you can access a salary sacrifice car leasing scheme run by NHS Fleet Solutions. You can use it to lease a car for up to three years. This benefit is only available to permanent employees.

[Find a comprehensive list of our benefits here](#)

Diversity & inclusion

Our current strategy focuses on diversity and inclusion for our colleagues and within our teams.

We've created a three-year strategy to achieve our vision of being a truly inclusive organisation where all our people are valued and make a difference.

Our commitment to equality, diversity and human rights underpins our work. We take part in these schemes:

- Business Disability Forum
- Mindful Employer
- Employers for carers
- Positive about disabled people



Our equality networks and memberships

We currently have five internal equality networks at CQC. We know that for equality networks to be successful they need to be valued and be able to contribute effectively to organisational improvement.

We have ensured that are our networks are fully supported, and they are viewed as an essential partner for the promotion of our diversity and inclusion vision of creating a fair and inclusive workplace. The equality networks at CQC are increasingly working together to develop awareness and provide support on a wide range of issues around diversity and inclusion.

Equality

Ensuring people are treated without bias, prejudice or discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 ensures equality in employment, service delivery and how we carry out our functions such as regulatory work.

Diversity

Diversity is about everyone being different and unique in their own way. A diversity led organisation values and celebrates differences and the individual talent, strength and experience it brings.

Inclusion

Inclusion gives us a sense of belonging and helps us feel respected and valued for who we are. It helps create an environment where we feel valued for our views and experiences.

Diversity continued

Equality and diversity continued

CQC is committed to promoting a fair and inclusive workplace where all our people can flourish and reach their full potential. We know diverse teams allow for a more creative and productive environment and therefore encourage applications from everyone regardless of age, gender, gender identity or expression, religion or belief, disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

For this role, we are particularly encouraging disabled people and people from an ethnic minority background to apply, as colleagues in these groups are currently under-represented at this level in the organisation.

Equal opportunities

We aim to be a modern and equitable employer. We recognise and encourage the potential of a diverse workforce, positively welcome all applications, and appoint on merit.

Disability confident scheme for disabled people

We commit to offering interviews to a fair and proportionate number of disabled candidates who meet the minimum criteria.

Nationality

All non-UK residents must be free from any restrictions to reside and take up employment in the UK.

Declaration of interests

We ask all candidates to declare any interests that could potentially raise concerns or conflicts regarding their impartiality or commitment to the work of the Care Quality Commission. Candidates are required to declare any relevant business interests, shareholdings, positions of authority, retainers, consultancy arrangements or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies, both for themselves and for their spouse/partner. The successful candidate will be required to give up any conflicting interests and other business and financial interests may be published.

