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FREE LIVE WEBINAR

Is Your Care Service Really Well-Led?

5 Leadership Checks Every Registered Manager Should Make

Thursday 19 November 2026 · 11:00 am – 12:00 pm GMT
Speaker: Mark Thomson, Head of Learning and Development at CareTutor



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ABOUT CARETUTOR

Who are we?

CareTutor supports social care learning and leadership.

Pathway
Video-based eLearning with engaging, scenario-led content.

120+ courses
CPD-accredited training across the care sector.

Leadership
Skills for Care quality-assured leadership development.

Webinars
Free educational webinars for care professionals.

TeamTalk
Bite-sized microlearning for busy frontline teams.

Bespoke
Custom eLearning built around your service.

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WEBINAR OUTCOMES

What will you take away?

- ✅ A clearer picture of what CQC means by Well-led today
- ✅ Five practical leadership checks you can apply this week
- ✅ Tools to spot gaps between paperwork and practice
- ✅ A private self-assessment to focus your next steps

Today's focus: not more paperwork — better leadership decisions.

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STATE OF CARE 2025/26

What CQC's latest findings tell us

31%

Requires Improvement for Well-led

3%

Inadequate for Well-led

Evidence

gaps between what records show and what people experience.

Could these weaknesses exist in your service without you realising?

Oversight failures rarely announce themselves. They hide inside completed audits, closed complaints and quiet shifts.

Source: CQC State of Care 2025/26, published 23 October 2026. Well-led ratings relate to assessed care homes under the current framework, not every registered care service.

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CURRENT EXPECTATIONS

What does CQC currently expect?

Well-led goes beyond policies and procedures.

✅ Vision & values
A clear vision lived out in day-to-day practice, not just written on walls.

✅ Governance
Systems that give leaders a true picture of risk, quality and experience.

✅ Culture
An open, learning culture where staff feel safe to speak up.

✅ Improvement
Evidence of sustained change, not one-off fixes.

Source: CQC Well-led assessment framework and 2026 regulatory improvement updates. CQC is developing sector-specific assessment methods; proposed changes are not requirements already in force.

THE LEADERSHIP TEST

Compliance or effective leadership?

What paperwork says

Policies up to date.
Training 98% complete.
Audits signed off.
Complaints closed.
Supervisions recorded.

What practice says

Do staff feel confident raising issues?
Does feedback change the service?
Are risks spotted early?
Do people describe genuine improvement?
Is there evidence of good practice — not just completed processes?

Leadership test: do you have evidence of good practice, not just completed processes?

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CLOSER TO THE TRUTH

When records look good

What records show

Care plan updated and signed.
Medication charts complete.
Incidents logged and closed.
Training matrix green across the board.
Monthly audit shows full compliance.

What the manager needs to know

Is the plan actually being followed?
Do staff agree on the approach?
Are families raising quiet concerns?
Are small risks turning into patterns?
Is anyone seeing the whole picture?

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CARETUTOR'S PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK

The Five Leadership Checks

01

Effective Oversight

02

Learning & improvement

03

Staff & Culture

04

Clear accountability

05

People's outcomes

CareTutor's practical checks, informed by CQC Well-led expectations — not an official CQC checklist.

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01

CHECK 01

Effective oversight

Do I really know what's happening?

Are you getting an accurate picture across shifts, visits and locations?

Compare audit results with staff feedback and people's experiences.

Can you identify emerging risks before they become incidents?

PRACTICAL CHECK

Choose one concern and compare records, what staff tell you, and what is actually happening. Would all three give the same answer?

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CHECK 02

Learning and improvement

02

Are problems actually staying fixed?

Look for repeat incidents, complaints or concerns.

Do investigations find causes, not just individual mistakes?

Can you show improvements have worked over time?

Example: a complaint closed after a reminder — then raised again two weeks later.

PRACTICAL CHECK

Review three recent actions. Test whether the change actually lasted — or whether the same issue has quietly returned.

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CHECK 03

Staff and workplace culture

03

Would staff tell me the truth?

Do staff feel safe raising concerns, challenging decisions and admitting mistakes?

Are people treated fairly and supported to develop?

Do supervision and training lead to confident, capable practice?

PRACTICAL CHECK

Ask a staff member privately: "If you were worried about poor practice, would you feel confident raising it — and what would you expect to happen?"

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04

CHECK 04

Clear accountability

Would the service run safely without me?

Do colleagues understand their responsibilities and authority?

Are concerns escalated when managers are unavailable?

Can you demonstrate oversight at every level?

PRACTICAL CHECK

Trace a recent concern from identification through decisions to checking the action worked. Would it still hold up if you were on leave?

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05

CHECK 05

People's experience and outcomes

Can people feel the difference?

Are people involved in decisions and improvements?

Does feedback from families and partners influence your service?

Can you show improvements in safety, independence, choice or quality of life?

Evidence should include processes and people's lived experiences.

PRACTICAL CHECK

Identify one improvement from the last three months. What is genuinely better for the people you support?

APPLY YOUR THINKING

A realistic management scenario

The situation

A person returns from hospital with increased mobility support needs.

Their care plan has not been updated.

Two staff describe different approaches.

A relative raises a safety concern.

What the records show

Latest records audit: full compliance.

Training completion: 98%.

Ask yourself

What does this tell you about leadership and oversight in this service?

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ZOOM POLL

What would you investigate first?

Assume immediate safety concerns are already being addressed. Which factor would best help you decide what is actually going wrong?

A The gap between the care plan and current practice

B Why two staff describe different approaches

C What the audit checked and when it took place.

D How the relative's concern was heard and acted on

Single-choice poll followed by discussion. More than one factor may be involved — there is no simplistic correct answer.

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STRONG LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

What a Well-led response looks like

Strong leadership addresses immediate risks — and the systems that allowed them to develop.

Protect	Address immediate risks and ensure appropriate support.
Understand	Find out why changes were missed and checks failed.
Lead	Clarify responsibilities, update guidance and support staff.
Verify & listen	Check improvements work across the service and confirm the person feels safe and their needs are met.

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PRIVATE REFLECTION

Your leadership self-assessment

For each area, jot down on a piece of paper honestly: Yes · Partly · Not yet. No public scores - Keep your answer private

1	I know what is really happening across every shift, visit and location.	Yes	Partly	Not yet
2	I learn from concerns and prevent them recurring.	Yes	Partly	Not yet
3	I support staff and enable them to speak up.	Yes	Partly	Not yet
4	Responsibilities and accountability are clear at every level.	Yes	Partly	Not yet
5	I can demonstrate better outcomes for the people we support.	Yes	Partly	Not yet

Which answer is hardest to support with evidence? Start there.

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TWO-MINUTE REFLECTION

Your next seven days

What is one thing you'll do differently after today's webinar?

Choose your weakest check. Identify one evidence gap. Agree an action, an owner and how you'll check its impact.

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CONTINUE YOUR DEVELOPMENT

Strengthening your leadership with CareTutor

CareTutor supports managers through Skills for Care licensed leadership programmes.

Lead to Succeed — developing aspiring managers and deputies.

Well-Led — strengthening leadership for experienced managers.

Leading Change, Improving Care — developing service improvement skills.

Funding may be available to eligible employers through the Learning and Development Support Scheme*

* Subject to current rules and availability.

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QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

What leadership challenges are you facing?

- Quality & risks
- Staff & culture
- Governance
- Improvement