

Controlled drug accountable officers

Controlled drug accountable officers (CDAOs) are responsible for managing all aspects of controlled drugs in their organisation.

The roles and responsibilities of CDAOs, and the need to appoint them, are governed by the [Controlled Drugs \(Supervision of Management and Use\) Regulations 2013](#).

Organisations that must appoint a CDAO and then register their details with us:

- NHS trusts
- Independent hospitals in England
- NHS England Local Area Teams
- Headquarters in England of the regular or reserved Armed Forces

Who can be a CDAO

A CDAO must:

- be a senior manager of their organisation
 - not routinely supply or handle controlled drugs themselves as part of their duties as an employee or officer.
-

How to [notify us when appointing or changing your accountable officer](#).

A group of designated bodies of the same type can jointly nominate and appoint a CDAO. Each designated body within the group must notify us of the CDAO.

Social enterprise organisations (SEOs) and Community Interest Companies (CICs) must appoint a CDAO for locations that the regulations defined as a 'hospital'. In other cases they could appoint a lead to ensure controlled drug governance arrangements are in place.

CDAO notification form

How to notify us

This form is protected. Contact us at enquiries@cqc.org.uk with your name, role and organisation, and we will email the authorisation code to you.

[Notify us online](#)

After you have submitted your completed form, we will email a PDF copy of the form to you containing the information you have submitted. If you do not receive this within 48 hours of submitting your form, or you have difficulty accessing or completing the form, please email enquiries@cqc.org.uk.

When you need to inform us about changes

You must use our online form to tell us if you:

- appoint a new CDAO (whether permanent or temporary)
 - re-register with us (when your organisation re-registers with us you will need to submit a new CDAO notification)
 - remove a CDAO.
-

The CDAO position must remain filled at all times.

Changes to your CDAO's contact details

Let us know changes to your CDAO's phone number or email address by emailing us at CDAOregisterdata@cqc.org.uk.

You need to provide:

- the name of the accountable officer
- the name of the organisation
- amended details.

You must do this as soon as possible. Their new information will appear in the next update of the register.

We can only accept contact detail changes through this mailbox, if you are changing your CDAO you must submit an online notification.

CDAO exemption form

Some organisations do not need to appoint a CDAO. This section explains these exemptions and how to notify us.

How to notify us

This online form is protected. Contact us at enquiries@cqc.org.uk with your name, role, and organisation, and we will email you the authorisation code.

Notify us online

After you submit your completed form, we will email you a PDF copy with the information you provided. If you do not get this within 48 hours or have trouble with the form, email enquiries@cqc.org.uk.

When you can apply for an exemption

You can apply for an exemption from appointing a CDAO if:

- fewer than 10 people work at the hospital
- appointing a CDAO would cause more problems than benefits. This looks at the number of employees, level of activities, and difficulty finding a suitable person.

If you get an exemption because of fewer than 10 staff:

- your organisation will be removed from the CDAO register
- you do not need to submit more notifications unless the situation changes.

If we grant an exemption because appointing a CDAO would be disproportionate:

- it will last up to one year, ending on 31 December each year
- you must renew the exemption within one month of its expiry.

We can cancel the exemption at any time but will give you reasonable notice.

If we decline your application or cancel an exemption, you can appeal the decision in writing within one month of the date of our letter informing you of the decision.

Find out more about the [controlled drug designated body exemption appeal process](#).

Self-assessment tools

These are Excel spreadsheets that contain macros. When you open them, select 'enable macros' to ensure the RAG (red, amber, green) ratings work.

Tool for primary care

[Controlled drugs governance self-assessment tool for primary care organisations](#)

Tool for secondary care

[Controlled drugs governance self-assessment tool for secondary care organisations](#)

Find out more

[The safer management of controlled drugs: annual reports](#)

Register of accountable officers in England

We record the details of healthcare organisations' CDAOs in a published register, which we update monthly.

View our current register:

[Register of accountable officers](#) (ods)

[The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority maintains and publishes the details of Fertility centres' CDAOs](#)

Legislation

[Controlled Drugs \(Supervision of Management and Use\) Regulations 2013](#)