PROCEDURE AND AUDIT CHECKLIST

Business continuity and emergency preparedness procedure checklist

Source anchors

- CQC Regulation 12, safe care and treatment
- CQC Regulation 15, premises and equipment
- CQC Regulation 17, good governance
- CQC notifications
- NHS England emergency preparedness, resilience and response
- NHS core standards for emergency preparedness, resilience and response guidance
- NCSC small business cyber security guidance

How to use this checklist

Use this checklist to audit whether the service can keep people safe during disruption. It can be used annually, after a test, after a live incident, after premises or IT change, or before an inspection-readiness review.

Continuity arrangements vary by service model. Check current CQC, commissioner, local authority, public health, cyber, fire safety and sector-specific requirements before relying on local defaults.

For each row, record:

- **Met:** evidence is current and complete.
- **Part met:** evidence exists but has a gap or needs follow-up.
- **Not met:** evidence is absent or the control is not working.
- **Not applicable:** the service does not carry out this activity.

Every `Part met` or `Not met` item should create an action with an owner and due date.

The PDF is designed for printing, or for completing on screen with a PDF viewer's Fill & Sign, Markup or comment tools. Use those tools to tick boxes and type into the lines.

Service details

SERVICE NAME	LOCATION
DATE COMPLETED	COMPLETED BY

REGISTERED MANAGER	INCIDENT LEAD

DEPUTY INCIDENT LEAD	PERIOD REVIEWED

1. Plan ownership and essential functions

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS	OWNER	DUE
1 **Business continuity plan is current and owned by a named lead.** **Evidence:** Plan, review record.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
2 **Essential functions are identified and prioritised.** **Evidence:** Essential-function map.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
3 **Deputies and out-of-hours leadership arrangements are clear.** **Evidence:** On-call rota, escalation chart.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
4 **Contact lists are current and accessible if IT is unavailable.** **Evidence:** Contact list, paper fallback.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
5 **Continuity risks are linked to the risk register.** **Evidence:** Risk register, governance minutes.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
6 **Plan is accessible to senior staff during disruption.** **Evidence:** Staff interview, plan location check.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		

2. Incident activation and escalation

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS	OWNER	DUE
1 **Activation triggers are defined for staffing, premises, IT, medicines, infection and other disruption.** **Evidence:** Procedure, plan.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
2 **Incident lead knows how to open an action log.** **Evidence:** Action log template, staff interview.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
3 **Emergency services and provider escalation routes are clear.** **Evidence:** Escalation chart, contact list.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
4 **Commissioner, local authority or public health routes are listed where relevant.** **Evidence:** Contact list, contract requirement.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS	OWNER	DUE
5 **CQC notification decision is considered for significant service disruption.** **Evidence:** Notification decision record.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
6 **Staff know how to escalate immediate continuity risks.** **Evidence:** Induction record, staff interview.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		

3. Staffing and communication continuity

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS	OWNER	DUE
1 **Minimum safe staffing and cover options are defined.** **Evidence:** Staffing plan, on-call route.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
2 **Bank, agency, locum or redeployment arrangements are current where used.** **Evidence:** Supplier record, agency assurance.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
3 **Non-urgent activity can be postponed or reduced safely where needed.** **Evidence:** Prioritisation plan, risk assessment.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
4 **People using the service and representatives can be contacted during disruption.** **Evidence:** Contact list, communication plan.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
5 **Communication templates are factual and proportionate.** **Evidence:** Template, incident sample.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
6 **Communication decisions are recorded.** **Evidence:** Action log, call log.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		

4. Records, IT and cyber fallback

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS	OWNER	DUE
1 **Essential records can be accessed if normal IT is unavailable.** **Evidence:** Records fallback test.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
2 **Paper fallback forms and secure storage are available where relevant.** **Evidence:** Forms, storage check.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
3 **Temporary records can be reconciled after systems return.** **Evidence:** Reconciliation procedure.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		
4 **Backup and recovery contacts are current.** **Evidence:** Supplier contact, backup record.	☐ Met ☐ Part met ☐ Not met ☐ N/A		

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS		OWNER	DUE
5 **Cyber incident escalation route is clear.** **Evidence:** Cyber procedure, contact route.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
6 **Data protection reporting decisions are recorded where personal data may be affected.** **Evidence:** Incident record, ICO decision note.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		

5. Premises, utilities, equipment and medicines

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS		OWNER	DUE
1 **Fire, flood, heating, water, power and building-failure responses are documented.** **Evidence:** Premises plan, maintenance contacts.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
2 **Evacuation, relocation or service suspension decision route is clear.** **Evidence:** Evacuation plan, relocation record.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
3 **Essential equipment and medical-device failure route is documented.** **Evidence:** Equipment log, supplier contact.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
4 **Medicines, controlled drugs, vaccines or cold-chain fallback is covered where relevant.** **Evidence:** Medicines plan, cold-chain procedure.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
5 **Vehicle or transport continuity is covered where relevant.** **Evidence:** Vehicle plan, supplier record.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
6 **Cleaning, infection control and waste arrangements are included where disruption affects premises.** **Evidence:** IPC plan, contractor contact.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		

6. Testing, recovery and governance

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS		OWNER	DUE
1 **Continuity plan is tested at a stated cadence.** **Evidence:** Test schedule, drill record.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
2 **Tests include realistic scenarios for the service model.** **Evidence:** Tabletop exercise, scenario log.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
3 **Recovery steps confirm records, medicines, premises, staffing and delayed tasks are safe.** **Evidence:** Recovery checklist, stand-down note.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
4 **Debriefs happen after tests and live incidents.** **Evidence:** Debrief record.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		

CHECK AND EVIDENCE	STATUS		OWNER	DUE
5 **Actions from tests and incidents have owners, due dates and evidence.** **Evidence:** Improvement actions.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		
6 **Registered Manager reviews overdue continuity actions.** **Evidence:** Governance minutes, dashboard.	☐ Met ☐ Not met	☐ Part met ☐ N/A		

7. Summary judgement

Which disruption would most quickly affect safe care or treatment?

Which essential function has the weakest fallback?

Which contact list, supplier route or escalation route is most likely to fail?

Which continuity action or test is overdue?

What would a CQC inspector see if they asked for continuity evidence today?

8. Action log

Action	Source check	Owner	Due date	Completion evidence

9. Completion

Sign-off	Name	Date
Completed by		
Reviewed by Registered Manager		

This checklist is a working tool. It does not replace emergency services advice, live regulator guidance, public health advice, cyber advice, fire safety advice, legal advice, commissioner requirements or local emergency plans.

Related reading

- Sample policy: Business continuity and emergency preparedness policy
- Related procedure checklist: Staffing and safer recruitment checklist
- Related procedure checklist: Incident reporting and learning checklist
- Related procedure checklist: Risk management and risk register checklist

An example for guidance, not a ready-to-use checklist. Adapt it to your own service, procedures, roles and local arrangements. It is guidance, not legal advice, and you are responsible for checking that any document you use is current.