

When you visit a healthcare clinic, whether for general treatment or something more specialised like medical [Informative post](#) cannabis, clear communication is crucial. It's especially important that you get straightforward answers about follow-up care. Unfortunately, some clinics give vague answers or dodge your questions about aftercare and ongoing support. This can put your health at risk and leave you unsettled.

In this article, we'll discuss why follow-up matters, what regulations govern UK clinics, the risks of unlicensed medicines, and how to spot if a clinic is not being upfront — plus what to do if that happens.

Why Follow-Up and Aftercare Are Important

After your initial consultation and treatment, follow-up care ensures your health is properly monitored and managed. Good aftercare can:

- Check if the treatment is working or causing side effects
- Adjust medication or dosage safely over time
- Provide support if unexpected issues come up
- Help prevent complications or misuse of medicines

Without clear plans for follow-up, you can miss signs that something is wrong. Clinics that dodge questions about aftercare may be hiding gaps in their service or poor safety standards.

The Role of Regulation in UK Healthcare Clinics

In the UK, clinics are subject to official oversight to protect patients. Two key organisations are:

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The CQC regulates health and social care services in England. Clinics must register with them and meet essential standards of safety, quality, and patient experience. The CQC inspects clinics regularly and publishes ratings that you can review.

If a clinic avoids talking about follow-up, you can check their CQC registration status and inspection reports. Clinics not registered with the CQC or with poor findings pose greater risk.



General Medical Council (GMC) and the Specialist Register

Only certain doctors are legally allowed to prescribe medicines, especially unlicensed ones like many medical cannabis products. The GMC holds a register of all licensed doctors in the UK.

Doctors with specialist training are listed on the GMC Specialist Register. This guarantees competence in a particular field.

Ask clinics for the doctors' GMC numbers and check their specialist registration. Clinics that talk about "specialist doctors" but won't name them or provide registration details should raise red flags.

Understanding Unlicensed Medicines and Risk Disclosure

Many clinics offer treatments involving unlicensed medicines. Medical cannabis products are a prime example. Unlicensed means the medicines have not been authorised by the UK Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) for general use. This means:

- The evidence for safety or effectiveness may be limited
- There may be unknown side effects or risks
- Doctors must fully inform you of these risks before prescribing

Clear risk disclosure is a legal and ethical duty. If a clinic avoids your questions about side effects or aftercare plans for unlicensed medicines, they are failing their duty of care.

Who Is Legally Allowed to Prescribe?

Under UK law:

- Only registered medical doctors, dentists, or certain other qualified professionals may prescribe medicines.
- Prescribing unlicensed medicines requires special caution and usually specialist knowledge.
- Doctors should work within their scope of competence, backed by relevant training and experience.

If a clinic's prescribing staff are vague about their qualifications, or cannot provide GMC numbers, this is a huge warning sign.

Signs a Clinic Is Dodging Your Questions About Follow-Up

Watch out for these vague answers or behaviours:

- Not naming the doctors or health professionals involved
- Ignoring or brushing off questions about aftercare plans
- Failing to explain how side effects or problems will be monitored
- Refusing to put aftercare arrangements in writing
- Using vague language like “specialist team” without details

These vague answers often point to unreliable clinics with poor safety practices or less qualified staff.



What to Do If a Clinic Dodges Your Follow-Up Questions

1. **Ask for the registration number and doctor details.** Request the clinic’s CQC registration number and the prescribing doctor’s GMC registration number and specialist status. Use these to check official sources.
2. **Insist on clear answers about aftercare.** Ask specifically how follow-up appointments work, how side effects will be managed, and who you can contact between visits.
3. **Check external sources.** Look up the clinic’s CQC reports and any patient reviews. You can also check GMC details directly on their website.
4. **Consider your options.** If the clinic remains vague or dodges questions, your health may be at risk. It’s best to **choose another provider** who is transparent and properly regulated.
5. **Report concerns.** You can report unsafe clinics or unregistered providers to the CQC or GMC to protect others.

Summary

Clear and honest communication about follow-up care is non-negotiable for safe healthcare. In the UK, the CQC oversees clinic standards, and the GMC regulates who can prescribe. Clinics that dodge your questions about aftercare or give vague answers about staff qualifications put you at risk.

Always ask for registration numbers first. Check that staff are on the GMC Specialist Register where relevant. Ensure clinics explain the risks of unlicensed medicines and provide clear aftercare plans in writing. If you encounter dodgy answers or vague claims, **choose another provider** who takes your safety and wellbeing seriously.

Your health depends on it.