

Executive 2000 Recruitment Ltd

E2K Care

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service well-led?

Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

E2K Care is a home care agency providing personal care to people in their own homes. The service provides support to people with sensory impairments, physical disabilities, and those living with dementia. At the time of our inspection there were 29 people using the service.

Not everyone who used the service received personal care. CQC only inspects where people receive personal care. This is help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do, we also consider any wider social care provided. There were 27 people who received support with personal care.

People's experience of using this service and what we found

Recruitment files did not always contain all the information required. The provider acted straight away during the inspection and introduced a new oversight system. We have made a recommendation on recruitment practice. People told us they felt safe with kind and compassionate staff, and their needs were consistently met. Incidents, accidents, and safeguarding matters were recorded and acted upon. Risk assessments were in place to guide staff on how to support people safely and minimise risks. Staff employed good infection prevention and control practice. People received their medicines as prescribed, to support their health and wellbeing.

Whilst the provider had referred safeguarding concerns to the local authority for investigation, they had not also notified the CQC. Systems and processes were in place to ensure quality assurance across the service. However, gaps in recruitment files had not been identified. There was a positive and open learning culture. The management team were responsive to feedback, working well with other professionals to drive continuous improvement. People and staff were able to provide their views, and confident they would be acted upon.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was good (published 18 June 2019).

At our last inspection we recommended the provider consult best practice guidance on the use of surveillance in people's homes. At this inspection we found the provider had acted on this recommendation and made improvements.

Why we inspected

We received information of concern suggesting the provider had not always made statutory notifications relating to potential safeguarding matters. These are notifications required to be sent to the CQC by law. As a result, we undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only.

For those key questions not inspected, we used the ratings awarded at the last inspection to calculate the overall rating. The overall rating for the service has changed to requires improvement based on the findings of this inspection. You can see what action we have asked the provider to take at the end of this full report.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for E2K Care on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Enforcement and recommendations.

We have identified breaches in relation to failure to notify the CQC of safeguarding matters at this inspection. Please see the action we have told the provider to take at the end of this report. We have also made a recommendation on best practice relating to recruitment.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was not always safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service well-led?

The service was not always well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Requires Improvement ●

E2K Care

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act) as part of our regulatory functions. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

Inspection team

The inspection was completed by 1 inspector and 1 Expert by Experience. An Expert by Experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Service and service type

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats and specialist housing.

Registered Manager

This provider is required to have a registered manager to oversee the delivery of regulated activities at this location. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Registered managers and providers are legally responsible for how the service is run, for the quality and safety of the care provided and compliance with regulations.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in post. The registered manager was also the nominated individual and company director for the service. The nominated individual is responsible for supervising the management of the service on behalf of the provider.

Notice of inspection

We gave a short period notice of the inspection. This was because it is a small service and we needed to be sure that the provider or registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

Inspection activity started on 23 June 2023 and ended on 11 July 2023. We visited the location's office on 29 June 2023.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We sought feedback from the local authority and professionals who work with the service. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR). This is information providers are required to send us annually with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 6 people and 5 people's relatives to gain their feedback on the service. We spoke with 6 members of staff including the registered manager, the joint company director, the assistant manager and 3 care workers. We sent out surveys to staff and received and reviewed 2 responses. We reviewed 4 people's care plans and risk assessments, and multiple medication records. We looked at 4 staff recruitment files, as well as a range of documents used for oversight and governance, including audits, policies and procedures. We received written feedback from 3 professionals who work with the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has changed to requires improvement. This meant some aspects of the service were not always safe and there was limited assurance about safety. There was an increased risk that people could be harmed.

Staffing and recruitment

- Recruitment checks took place, including on employment history, references and with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). DBS checks provide information including details about convictions and cautions held on the Police National Computer. The information helps employers make safer recruitment decisions.
- However, not all information was consistently filed in one place, which meant there were some missing employment checks which had not been identified.

We recommend the provider consults national best practice guidance on safe recruitment.

- The assistant manager acted straight away during the inspection, providing recruitment documents remotely for review and putting a new system in place to ensure better consistency.
- There were sufficient staff deployed to meet people's assessed care needs, and to provide unhurried and person-centred care. One person said, "The care workers listen to me and give me time. They are lovely." Another person said, "[Care workers] always ensure that I am warm enough and nothing is too much trouble for them."
- Visits were planned and delivered in a way to ensure a consistent and reliable service. One person told us, "The times suit us, and they are the times stated in the care plan. If [the care workers] do happen to get stuck on a previous call, they ring and tell me they will be a little late. I have no problems whatsoever with them." Another person said, "[Care workers] do anything I ask them to, and they stay the time required. I have no complaints."

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse; Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The management team understood their responsibility to keep people safe from the risk of harm or abuse, reporting concerns to the local authority for investigation. However, these safeguarding notifications had not also been submitted to the CQC as required. The provider acted straight away during the inspection in response to our feedback.
- The provider kept a log of safeguarding matters to ensure good oversight. Staff told us they were confident in reporting concerns, and confirmed any outcomes or lessons learned were shared openly with the whole staff team to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.
- One staff member said, "Initially I would report [any concerns] to a senior, they normally act on it straight away." Another staff member said, "We are all kept up to date if any of the other care workers have raised concerns."
- People told us they felt safe. One person said, "I get good quality care and I feel safe with all the [care workers]. In several years they have never let me down." Another person said, "[The care workers] are really

good to me. I have never met such nice people."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risk assessments were in place to guide staff on how to support people safely, including in areas such as mobility, skin integrity and continence care. Fire safety measures such as personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) were also in place.
- Staff received specialist training to monitor and reduce potential risks to people's health. One staff member said, "Before coming to E2K Care I had never supported someone with a catheter but after a few shadowing shifts, online training and in-house training I have been trained well to be able to provide support."
- The service worked well with relevant external professionals to manage safety. One professional told us, "I have found care workers to be competent, efficient, and caring. My experience with them has been that they often do above and beyond what they are being asked of to ensure clients well-being and safety."

Using medicines safely

- People received their medicines safely and as prescribed, and this was recorded on an electronic system which could be checked in 'real time'. One person's relative said, "[Care workers] give [my person] their medicines at the correct times and it's all recorded on the app on their phones."
- Staff confirmed they received training, competency assessments and support in relation to medicines. One staff member told us, "I administer medication as per the service user's care plan and log everything on an app. I double check everything I do. Any medication that is missing or that is refused I log and then inform the on-call manager."

Preventing and controlling infection

- Safe infection prevention and control measures were employed by staff, including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). One care worker said, "We always have plenty of PPE."
- Records showed staff received training on how to reduce the risk of infection.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Well-led – this means we looked for evidence that service leadership, management and governance assured high-quality, person-centred care; supported learning and innovation; and promoted an open, fair culture.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. At this inspection the rating has changed to requires improvement. This meant the service management and leadership was inconsistent. Leaders and the culture they created did not always support the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The service proactively identified and raised any safeguarding matters for investigation by the local authority. However, these incidents were not always notified to the CQC as required by law. Although these notifications were made retrospectively, this is a ratings limiter, which means we cannot rate the well-led key question any better than 'requires improvement'.

Statutory notifications were not submitted to the CQC without delay. This was a breach of Regulation 18 Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009.

- Due to circumstances outside of their control, the registered manager had been less involved in the day-to-day running of the service but had now returned more fully to the role.
- The assistant manager had worked hard during this time to ensure the continued running of E2K Care, including studying for a management qualification. People did not describe any impact on the safety and quality of the care as a result.
- Effective audits and checks were completed in a wide range of areas to ensure good quality assurance and oversight across the service. However, gaps in recruitment files had been overlooked. The assistant manager told us a new system had been developed and introduced following our feedback to provide better oversight in this area.

Continuous learning and improving care; How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

At our last inspection we recommended the provider seek advice and guidance on the use of technology in relation to protocols and legislation. The provider had made improvements.

- The registered manager confirmed people's consent was recorded for any surveillance use in their homes, for example where family members wanted to check on their safety.
- The management team were open and responsive to feedback during the inspection and took action straight away to make improvements.

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- Management led the staff team by example to embed a caring and compassionate approach within the service, including when completing care visits to people in their own homes.
- One person's relative told us, "Management are all easy to talk with and approachable. They are fantastic." Another person said, "I could not ask for a better care company. Even the managing director comes out and gives the care as well. They are wonderful to me."

- This created an open, positive, and person-centred culture which promoted good outcomes for people. One professional said, "We find that the care workers treat [people] with respect and are caring towards them and treat them with dignity. E2K where possible send the same care workers so [people] know who is coming in to do their care. We find the care workers to be reliable and honest."

- One staff member told us, "I have encouraged a service user into having showers again instead of a bed wash. I've given them the confidence to do this as well as joining a gym to give them the social interaction they need and also to build up the strength to be able to transfer from bed to chair without assistance."

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- People gave feedback about the service in a variety of ways, including satisfaction surveys which were reviewed and analysed by the management team.
- Staff considered and adapted to people's individual communication needs to ensure their involvement. One person's relative said, "[Care workers] all have a laugh and a joke with [my person] and [my person] doesn't hear well so they always ensure they talk clearly so [my person] understands them."
- Staff told us they felt valued in their roles and able to make suggestions. One staff member said, "I really enjoy working for [registered manager]. The whole team are really good, and our clients are too. I walk in, and they say, 'Oh, it's so nice to see you'." Another staff member said, "I am 100% supported, [management] are on call 24/7 and I feel an important part of the team."

Working in partnership with others

- The provider worked well with other stakeholders. One professional told us, "We have very good communication with the office and the manager and feel the office staff are approachable and helpful."
- Staff worked in partnership with people and those important to them. One person's relative told us, "I was involved in [my person's] care plan and it is all followed how it should be. [E2K Care] are just brilliant."

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Personal care	Regulation 18 Registration Regulations 2009 Notifications of other incidents Statutory notifications were not submitted to the CQC without delay.