

Comfort Call Limited

Comfort Call Newcastle

Inspection report

Park View Grange
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Newcastle upon Tyne
Tyne and Wear
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18 July 2023
19 July 2023
20 July 2023
24 July 2023
25 July 2023

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Comfort Call Newcastle is a domiciliary care service that provides care and support to people living in specialist 'extra care' housing. Park View Grange provides extra care housing in purpose-built properties for people aged 55 years and over. The accommodation is bought or rented, and is the occupant's own home. People's care and housing are provided under separate contractual agreements. CQC does not regulate premises used for extra care housing; this inspection looked at people's personal care and support service. Not everyone living at Park View Grange requires support with personal care. At the time of the inspection the service was providing personal care and support to 27 people.

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

People and relatives were very happy with the service, felt it was safe and staff were caring. One person told us, "Staff are kind, caring and friendly." A relative said, "They are great. I feel listened to and have a good relationship with the carers."

Risks to people's health, safety and well-being were effectively managed. People were safeguarded from abuse. Staff were recruited safely, and the provider employed enough trained staff to meet people's needs. Effective infection prevention and control measures were in place. Medicines were managed safely.

Staff respected people's privacy and dignity and promoted their independence. People were supported to make choices about their care. Staff worked effectively with external professionals to ensure people received the support they wanted and needed.

People and their relatives felt the service was well-managed. The manager promoted an open, honest culture and was approachable. The provider promoted continuous learning and improvement. Standards at the service were effectively monitored and developed. Feedback was regularly sought and valued.

This was an 'inspection using remote technology'. This means we did not visit the office location and instead used technology such as electronic file sharing to gather information, and video and phone calls to engage with people using the service as part of this performance review and assessment.

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 23 November 2018).

Why we inspected

This inspection was prompted by a review of the information we held about this service.

We undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe, caring 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 remains good based on the findings of this inspection.

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

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?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Comfort Call Newcastle

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

We carried out this performance review and assessment under Section 46 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act). We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements of the regulations associated with the Act and looked at the quality of the service to provide a rating.

Unlike our standard approach to assessing performance, we did not physically visit the office of the location. This is a new approach we have introduced to reviewing and assessing performance of some care at home providers. Instead of visiting the office location we use technology such as electronic file sharing and video or phone calls to engage with people using the service and staff.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by one inspector and an 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

The service is a domiciliary care service. It provides personal care to people living in their own homes.

This service is required to have a registered manager. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

At the time of our inspection there was not a registered manager in post. A new manager had been in post since 26 May 2023 and had submitted an application to register. We are currently assessing this application.

Notice of inspection

We gave the service 24 hours' notice of the inspection. This was to make arrangements to carry out a virtual inspection and we needed to be sure that the provider or manager would be available to support the inspection.

Inspection activity started on 18 July 2023 and ended on 25 July 2023. We contacted people and relatives on

20 July 2023.

What we did before inspection

We reviewed information we held about the service. We sought feedback from the local authority, professionals who work with the service and Healthwatch. Healthwatch is an independent consumer champion that gathers and represents the views of the public about health and social care services in England. 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 of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 3 people who used the service and 8 relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with the manager, co-ordinator and received email feedback from 7 care staff.

We reviewed a range of records including 3 people's care and medicines records. We looked at recruitment records for 3 members of staff. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures, were also reviewed.

This performance review and assessment was carried out without a visit to the location's office. We used technology such as video/telephone calls and emails to enable us to engage with people using the service and staff, and electronic file sharing to enable us to review documentation.

Following the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found. We reviewed all evidence sent to us electronically by the provider.

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 remained good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Staffing and recruitment

- Staffing levels were effectively managed, and staff worked well to cover unexpected absences as a team. One person told us, "There are enough staff." One relative said, "There appears to be enough staff." One member of staff told us, "We work really well as a team."
- People confirmed they received care from a consistent staff team and staff were always on time. One person told us, "I know them all and its always a friendly face." One relative said, "No missed calls and [Name] gets the same carers."
- Safe recruitment procedures were in place and staff files contained appropriate pre-employment checks.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were protected from the risk of abuse and told us they felt safe in the presence of staff. One person told us, "I'm safe, they are a fantastic team." One relative said, "He is safe, he is not as isolated now and is more outgoing."
- The provider had effective safeguarding systems in place. Concerns were appropriately reported and actioned.
- Staff felt confident to report concerns and received regular safeguarding training. One member of staff told us, "I feel very comfortable going to management with any concerns. They always get addressed."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Staff effectively assessed, monitored and managed risks to people's personal safety and wellbeing.
- People's care plans contained detailed risk assessments about their individual care, support and environmental needs.

Using medicines safely

- People were happy with the support they received to take their medicines. One person told us, "They do my tablets and are always on time." One relative said, "The tablets are all in the medi-box, they are definitely 'switched on' with that!"
- Staff managed and administered medicines safely. They were trained and knowledgeable about people's medicines. One person told us, "They watch me take my tablets as I'm quite forgetful. They know my tablets and they are always on time."
- Management carried out regular staff competence checks and medicine audits.

Preventing and controlling infection

- People were protected from the risk of infection by trained and competent staff.

- Staff followed good infection control practices and used personal protective equipment when supporting people. One member of staff told us, "We have access to personal protective equipment at all times."
- Management carried out direct observations to ensure staff followed the provider's infection prevention and control policies and procedures effectively. One member of staff said, "The building is really clean and you get a warm feeling when you walk through the doors."

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Management had effective systems in place for when things went wrong at the service.
- Staff told us management shared learning with them and provided training when needed.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good. This meant people were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- Staff treated people as individuals and were aware of equality and diversity issues. One relative told us, "We couldn't pick a better place or better people to look after [Names]."
- Staff were enthusiastic about ensuring people received good care. One staff member told us, "I let people know of any day centres they may be interested in attending and inform them when we have bingo, clothes shows and coffee mornings, on."
- People felt supported and treated well. One person told us, "Everyone in here has a smile on their face, nothing is a problem for them."

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- People were empowered to make choices about their care and their care plans were person centred. One person told us, "They take me into the garden as I like to look at the fish in the pond." One relative told us, "They know them well and give them choices."
- People felt involved in their care. Relatives were involved when needed. One person told us, "We have a little chat and I don't think they could do more for me." One relative said, "They chat with [Name] and take them to coffee mornings."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People's right to privacy was respected. One relative told us, "They always close the door, especially when [Name] is getting a shower." Another relative said, "They close the blinds when they put on [Name]'s clothes."
- Staff treated people with dignity and provided compassionate, individualised support. One person told us, "They treat me with dignity. They know my likes and dislikes, and they always listen."
- Staff promoted people's independence, without compromising safety. One person said, "They work along with me for my independence." A member of staff said, "I support the service users to explore their interests by encouraging them to do what they enjoy."

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. The rating for this key question has remained good. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

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

- People were central to the culture of the service. One staff member told us, "People always seem happy and content with the care they receive. It's like my home from home. Always plenty of smiles and laughing is heard in the building."
- Staff supported people to achieve good outcomes and maintain their well-being. One relative told us, "Mam's quality of life is great now. You can see how happy she is." Another relative said, "[Name] has come on leaps and bounds."
- People and their relatives spoke highly about the staff. One person told us, "The staff are great doing their job. They took me to the bingo. We all get on great." One relative said, "The carers are like friends."

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

- The manager and staff understood their roles and the importance of complying with regulatory requirements.
- Staff performance was routinely monitored, and regular audits were conducted to improve service delivery and mitigate risks.
- Staff told us they felt supported and had confidence in the management. One member of staff said, "We are a good team with fantastic management."

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

- The provider understood their responsibility under the duty of candour. They were open and honest with people and their relatives. They knew when to apologise, investigate and respond when something went wrong.

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

- The provider and manager encouraged feedback about the service through regular meetings, surveys and one to one discussions. One staff member said, "We have regular supervisions, staff meetings, spot checks, and appraisals."
- People and their relatives were given regular opportunities to share their views. One relative told us, "We completed a survey and we got feedback on how the residents felt."

- Staff spoke positively about the management and their roles. One staff member told us, "The care co-ordinator and manager are really lovely and approachable." Another member of staff said, "I absolutely love my job. Morale is very good and I always feel valued as an employee."

Continuous learning and improving care

- The management was committed to continuous learning and the provider had effective systems in place to identify areas for improving care.
- Staff told us management shared areas for improving the delivery of care with them. One member of staff told us, "If there are areas for improvement this will be discussed with colleagues, seniors and management."

Working in partnership with others

- The service had close links and good working relationships with a range of professionals to enable effective, coordinated care and support for people. One professional told us, "They are a good provider who engage very well." Another professional said, "Everyone works extremely hard to ensure the needs of the customers are met."