

Cott's Care Limited

Cott's Care Solutions

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service effective?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

This inspection was completed on 25 October 2018 and was announced. The provider was given 48 hours' notice of the inspection because the service provided was domiciliary care in people's own homes and we wanted to make arrangements to contact people.

Cott's Care Solutions is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats. It provides a service to older adults and younger disabled adults. Not everyone using Cott's Care Solutions receives a regulated activity; CQC only inspects the service being received by people provided with 'personal care'; help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do we also take into account any wider social care provided. There were 16 people receiving the regulated activity of 'personal care' from Cott's Care Solutions at the time of the inspection.

There was a registered manager in post at the service. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run

This was the first inspection of the service and it has been rated 'Good' overall.

People received safe care and treatment. Staff had been trained in safeguarding and had a good understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. The administration and management of medicines was safe. There were sufficient numbers of staff working at the service. There was a robust recruitment process to ensure suitable staff were recruited.

Risk assessments were updated to ensure people were supported in a safe manner and risks were minimised. Where people had suffered an accident, themes and trends had been analysed, and action had been taken to ensure people were safe and plans put in place to minimise the risk of re-occurrence.

Staff had received training appropriate to their role. People were supported to access health professionals when required. They could choose what they liked to eat and drink and were supported on a regular basis to participate in meaningful activities.

People were supported in an individualised way that encouraged them to be as independent as possible. People were given information about the service in ways they wanted to and could understand.

People and their relatives were positive about the care and support they received. They told us staff were caring and kind and they felt safe living in the home. We observed staff supporting people in a caring and patient way. Staff knew people they supported well and could describe what they liked to do and how they liked to be supported.

The service was responsive to people's needs. Care plans were person centred to guide staff to provide consistent, high quality care and support. Daily records were detailed and provided evidence of person centred care. Where required, people were supported to make decisions about end of life care which met their individual needs and preferences.

The service was well led. People, staff and relatives spoke positively about the registered manager. Quality assurance checks were in place and identified actions to improve the service. The registered manager sought feedback from people and their relatives to continually improve the service.

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.

There were sufficient staff to keep people safe.

Medicines were managed safely with people receiving their medicines as prescribed.

Staff reported any concerns and were aware of their responsibilities to keep people safe from harm.

People were kept safe through risks being identified and well managed.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Staff received adequate training to be able to do their job effectively.

Staff received regular supervisions and appraisals.

The registered manager and staff had a good understanding of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA).

People and relevant professionals were involved in planning their nutritional needs. People's health was monitored and healthcare professionals visited when required to provide an effective service.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

People could express their views about the service and staff acted on these views.

Care plans clearly described how people should be supported. People and their relatives were supported to make choices about their care and support.

There was a robust system in place to manage complaints. All people and staff were confident any complaints would be listened to and taken seriously.

People were supported to make decision about end of life care which met their individual needs and preferences.□

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

People could express their views about the service and staff acted on these views.

Care plans clearly described how people should be supported. People and their relatives were supported to make choices about their care and support.

There was a robust system in place to manage complaints. All people and staff were confident any complaints would be listened to and taken seriously.

Care plans recorded people's likes, dislikes and preferences. Staff had information that enabled them to provide support in line with people's wishes.

People were supported to make decision about end of life care which met their individual needs and preferences.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well led.

Staff felt supported and were clear on the visions and values of the service.

Quality monitoring systems were used to further improve the service.

There were positive comments from people, relatives and staff regarding the management team.

Cott's Care Solutions

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Prior to the inspection we looked at information about the service including notifications and any other information received from other agencies. Notifications are information about specific important events the service is legally required to report to us. We reviewed the Provider Information Record (PIR). The PIR was information given to us by the provider. This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, tells us what the service does well and the improvements they plan to make.

This inspection took place on 25 October 2018 and was announced. The provider was given 48 hours' notice of the inspection because the service provided was domiciliary care in people's own homes and we wanted to make arrangements to contact people.

The inspection included looking at records, speaking to people who use the service, talking with staff and phone calls and emails to relatives and health professionals. The inspection was completed by two adult social care inspectors and an Expert by Experience (ExE). A ExE is a person who has personal experience of using services.

We spoke with the owner of the service, the registered manager of the service and five members of care staff. We spoke with 11 people who used the service. We also spoke with five relatives of people using the service and one health and social care professional who has regular contact with the provider.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People and their relatives told us they felt safe. One person said, "The carers are first class never do I get frightened or feel unsafe around them I've had them since May and they are always on time." Another person said, "I feel really safe." One relative said, "The carers are fantastic. I feel very safe about my mum."

People were protected from the risk of abuse and harm. Staff had been provided with safeguarding training and understood how to recognise abuse and report allegations and incidents of abuse. Agencies staff notified when they suspected an incident or event that may constitute abuse; included the local authority, CQC and the police. One staff member said, "We are encouraged to be open and honest and raise any concerns we have. All concerns are taken very seriously."

Risks to people were identified and managed. People had risk assessments in place which gave staff information on managing any identified risks such as falls and risks from people's home environment. A record was kept of when safety checks had been carried out on equipment such as hoists and wheelchairs. Where applicable, plans were in place in the event of staff being unable to gain entry to people's homes to ensure people were safe.

Plans were in place to deal with any emergency that may affect the delivery of the service. This included arrangements for prioritising the delivery of care to people during an episode of severe weather. The planning ensured people with the highest needs would be prioritised for visits whereas those with the lowest level of need and with appropriate support available would be able to rely on temporary support from relatives or neighbours.

Suitable staffing levels were in place to meet the needs of people using the service. Staff were organised to provide visits to people in one geographical area to minimise any delays with visit times. People told us they felt assured that they would receive their care. The registered manager told us telephone calls would be made to warn people of any late visits and this practice was confirmed by people using the service and their relatives. One person told us, "If the carers are going to be late, I will normally get a call to tell me about it". A relative told us "Generally the carers are on time. However, if they are delayed for any reason, we are notified of this." The registered manager told us they used a call monitoring system to ensure people were receiving their care calls at the times that they required and for the full duration of the time they had requested.

The service had implemented safe recruitment practices. We looked at the recruitment records of five staff employed at the service. Recruitment records showed that relevant checks had been completed including a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. A DBS check allowed employers to check whether the applicant had any past convictions that may prevent them from working with vulnerable people. References were obtained from previous employers as part of the process to help ensure staff were suitable and of good character. Where staff had gaps in employment, these were investigated and a full account of each applicant's employment history was available to ensure suitable staff were employed.

The provider had a disciplinary procedure and other policies relating to staff employment to ensure people

who used the service were kept safe. We saw from the staff records that where required, appropriate disciplinary action had been taken.

The service had effective arrangements to respond to incidents, accidents, concerns and safeguarding events. Staff told us they had confidence in the registered manager's ability to investigate and respond appropriately to safety concerns. The service had a folder which was a central log for detailing any concerns and there was a system to deal with each one as appropriate. The service could identify areas for improvement and lessons were learnt from each investigation.

There were clear policies and procedures for the safe handling and administration of medicines. Staff administering medicines had been trained to do so. Some people required assistance to take prescribed medicines. Where this was the case, the support the person required was clearly documented in their care plan, with medication administration records maintained and completed. Where people were prescribed medicines 'as required' to help with certain health conditions, clear guidance was in place for staff to follow.

Medication administration records demonstrated people's medicines were being managed safely. Where staff administered medicines to people, they had signed to record the medicines had been given. Staff had their competence reviewed annually to check they were still managing medicines safely.

People were protected by the prevention and control of infection. Staff had received training in food hygiene and infection control. Spot checks on staff included checking personal protective equipment such as disposable gloves were being used where appropriate.

A system was in place to investigate and learn from accidents, incidents and 'near misses'. A record of the actions taken to respond to an accident had been made and the attempts to resolve the issue. Where required, other health professionals had been involved in care reviews following incidents to ensure the care package was still meeting the needs of the person.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People said their needs were met. One person said, "The staff are very good at what they do". Relatives also said the service met people's needs. One relative commented, "The staff are well trained and know what they are doing."

Staff had been trained to meet people's care and support needs. Staff received a mixture of face to face training and online e-learning. Training records showed staff had received training in core areas such as safeguarding adults, health and safety, manual handling, first aid, food hygiene and fire safety. We saw evidence that where there were staff training was due, they had been booked to attend the next available course. Staff new to care were supported to complete the Care Certificate. The Care Certificate is a set of nationally recognised standards to ensure staff new to care develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours to provide compassionate, safe and high-quality care.

All the staff we spoke with told us they had received good levels of training to enable them to do their job effectively. One person said, "The training being provided is very good and prepares us well for the role."

The provider told us staff received an induction when they first started working for the service. The registered manager told us staff would be required to read the relevant policies and procedures before they worked any shifts. The registered manager told us new staff were required to complete shadow shifts. These shifts allowed a new member of staff to work alongside an experienced member of staff whilst they were new to their role. The registered manager told us staff competence would be assessed before they could work alone. The staff we spoke with all confirmed that they had received a good induction.

Staff had received regular supervision. Supervisions are one to one meetings a staff member has with their supervisor. These were recorded and kept in staff files. The staff we spoke with told us they were well supported and they could discuss any issues with the management who were always available.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that as far as possible people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible. People can only be deprived of their liberty to receive care and treatment when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA. For people living in their own home or in shared domestic settings, this would be authorised via an application to the Court of Protection (COP). We checked whether the service was working within these principles.

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA. We saw from the training records that staff had received training on the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). Staff we spoke with demonstrated a good understanding of the principles of the MCA and were confident to carry out assessments of people's capacity. Where required, people had assessments regarding their capacity to make decisions and these were clearly recorded in their care files. For example,

where people lacked capacity, there was evidence meetings had taken place with their representatives to determine a care plan that was in the person's best interests. Care records clearly detailed consent had been sought from people when developing their care plan. Relatives we spoke with informed us that they were consulted in relation to the care planning of people using the service.

People's care plans described their support needs in relation to their diet including likes, dislikes, allergies, intolerances and any nutritional needs. For example, people's care plans recorded what their preferences were for their breakfast. People and their relatives had no concerns around the standard of meals prepared by staff.

People were supported to maintain their health through liaison with health care professionals such as GPs and district nurses and occasional support to attend health care appointments. When staff noticed changes to their physical or mental health they contacted their family or in some cases health care professionals with the person's permission. Consent had been sought to contact relevant professionals where required. If emergency services were needed they were alerted and staff would remain with people until they had arrived.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

It was evident that people were cared for with compassion and kindness. All the people we spoke with provided positive feedback about the caring nature of the staff. One person said "My carers are very kind and caring. They are very respectful towards me." Another person said "They (carers) really look after me." Relatives we spoke with also provided positive feedback about the staff. One relative said "The carers are good. They really care."

Reviews of people's care were carried out through consultation with them and their relatives. Review forms recorded people's comments and responses. The service had access to information about advocacy services and would sign post people to this if required. Advocates help people to express their views, so they can be heard. They can be lay advocates or statutory advocates such as Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCA's).

People's privacy and dignity was respected. Staff gave us examples and demonstrated an awareness of the importance of respecting privacy and dignity when providing personal care. For example, they would close curtains and doors when providing care. This approach was reflected in people's care plans which also included actions to provide emotional support.

The service promoted people's independence. Care plans stressed the importance of encouraging people to do as much for themselves as possible. Staff said they felt this was important as they did not want to de-skill people and wanted to support people to remain living at home for as long as possible. Care files identified any areas of independence and encouraged staff to promote this. All the staff we spoke with could tell us how they would support people but support them to maintain their independence as much as possible.

Staff treated people with understanding, kindness, respect and dignity. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of dignity and respect. Staff told us how they would seek consent from people before they commenced any care tasks and demonstrated how they would ensure people's privacy was always maintained when supporting them with personal care. Staff told us it was very important to listen to people and respect their choices. This was also evident in care files. For example, there was an emphasis throughout people's care files for staff to give choice to people during each care call.

Care records contained the information staff needed about people's significant relationships including maintaining contact with family. Relatives told us there was good communication from care staff and management who would provide regular updates regarding their loved one's care.

Staff knew, understood and responded to each person's cultural, gender and spiritual needs in a caring and compassionate way. We saw several examples where people's individual needs and requirements had been identified and addressed. There was an up to date equality and diversity policy in place which clearly detailed how the service would treat people and staff equally regardless of personal beliefs or backgrounds.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Each person had a care plan and a structure to record and review information. Care records were held at the agency office with a copy available in people's homes. These care plans contained good levels of detail and were person centred. Each care plan detailed individual likes, dislikes and preferences in relation to their care. We found the care plans contained clear guidelines for staff to follow. For example, where people were supported with hoisting, their care plan included clear guidelines around the individual needs of people. Staff confirmed they had enough time allocated during visits to adequately support people. People and their relatives had no concerns about the length of visit times.

People's communication needs were identified and recorded in their care plans. Spot checks included how staff communicated with people using the service. Consideration had been given to complying with the Accessible Information Standard. The Accessible Information Standard (AIS) was introduced by the government in 2016 to make sure that people with a disability or sensory loss are given information in a way they can understand.

Reports and guidance had been produced to ensure unforeseen incidents affecting people would be well responded to. For example, if a person required an emergency admission to hospital, people's care files contained a list of emergency contacts for staff to notify. Care staff also told us they would be supported by office staff to remain longer with people to ensure they were not left alone in the case of an emergency.

The people we spoke with indicated that they were happy with the staff that supported them and felt they could raise any concerns they had. One person said, "I can talk to the carers if I have any concerns or I can call the office". Another person said, "I don't have any complaints but I know if I made a complaint, it would be taken seriously."

The service was providing end of life care. Training records showed that all the staff working at Cott's Care Solutions had received training around end of life care. Where required, the service had worked closely with people and their relatives to develop end of life care plans. The end of life care plans that we looked at contained details of people's preferences in relation to their care and how they wanted their cultural and religious needs met.

The service had a process of managing and responding to concerns and complaints. A complaints policy had been developed which clearly detailed the responsibility of the service and how complaints would be responded to. The registered manager demonstrated a good understanding of the complaints policy and could outline how they would respond to a complaint. Where concerns had been raised, we saw that these had been managed appropriately.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

There was a registered manager in post who had been registered with CQC since October 2017. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run. The registered manager was supported by a deputy manager.

People spoke positively about the management of the service and told us the service had good leadership. The relatives we spoke with told us they were happy with the management of the service. Comments included; "The manager is good. I can speak to them whenever I need to". Staff also spoke positively about the leadership and management of the service. Our discussions with staff indicated there was a positive culture within the organisation. Their comments included, "The Manager is organised, committed and enthusiastic. There is an open-door policy and I would recommend Cott's Care Solutions as a company to work for." Another said "Everyone works as a team. There is a very positive work ethic. Staff are treated well."

There were quality assurance systems in place and the registered manager completed regular checks to monitor the quality of the service provided. These consisted of a schedule of audits including health and safety, record keeping and care plans. The management team undertook regular spot checks on staff members providing care. The registered manager told us they also used this time to talk to the people using the service to obtain their opinions of the care they received.

The provider conducted online surveys to seek the views of people who used the service and their relatives. We looked at the responses from these surveys and found that they were generally very positive. Comments online included "Cott's care have been extremely caring, considerate and kind to my mum. They treat her with dignity and respect and any minor problems have been dealt with quickly and promptly". The manager checked feedback regularly and responded to any complaints and concerns promptly learning lessons and improving the service through this feedback.

The provider worked in partnership with other organisations. For example, one person had discharged from hospital with a standard "hospital" bed. This was deemed to be unsuitable as the person had fallen and a family member was concerned. The deputy manager responded by liaising with the district nurse team and ensured that a high-low bed was secured with a mat on the floor for additional safety. This was achieved within 24 hours of the concern being noted.

The registered manager knew when notification forms had to be submitted to CQC. These notifications inform CQC of events happening in the service. CQC had received appropriate notifications from the service.

Accidents, incidents, complaints and safeguarding alerts were appropriately reported by the service. The manager investigated accidents, incidents and complaints. This meant the service could learn from such events.

The policies and procedures we looked at were regularly reviewed. Staff we spoke with knew how to access these policies and procedures. This meant clear advice and guidance was available to staff.