

Home Is Where the Help Is Ltd

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Inspection report

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10 September 2020
22 September 2020

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service:

The service is a domiciliary care agency which provides personal care to people living in their own homes throughout Northumberland. At the time of this inspection there were 28 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.

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

People felt very safe with the staff who visited them. People's care needs were risk assessed and measures were in place to reduce risks. Accidents and incidents were investigated, recorded and acted upon to prevent a repeat occurrence.

Staff were fully aware of safeguarding processes. Solid systems were in place to protect people from the risk of harm or abuse. Medicines were well managed and there were good infection control measures in place.

Staff recruitment was safe and there were enough staff to safely deliver a consistent service. We have made a recommendation about the job application process to ensure best practice guidelines are followed.

The registered manager promoted a person-centred culture. There were good working relationships between staff, relatives and external professionals to ensure people got any additional support they needed.

Significant improvements had been made to the service and the whole staff team continued to learn and develop. The registered manager carefully monitored the quality and safety of the service. All regulatory requirements were met.

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 requires improvement (published 9 August 2019) where we identified one breach of the regulations. The provider completed an action plan after the last inspection to show what they would do and by when to improve. At this inspection we found improvements had been made and the provider was no longer in breach of regulations.

Why we inspected

We undertook this focused inspection to check the provider had followed their action plan and to confirm they now met legal requirements. This report only covers our findings in relation to the Key Questions Safe and Well-led which contain those requirements.

The ratings from the previous comprehensive inspection for those key questions not looked at on this occasion were used in calculating the overall rating at this inspection. The overall rating for the service has changed from requires improvement to good. This is based on the findings at this inspection.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Home Is Where the Help Is Ltd on our website at www.cqc.org.uk

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If we receive any concerning information we may inspect sooner.

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 well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

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Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

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 Care Act 2014.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

Service and service type

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

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. 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.

Notice of inspection

This inspection was announced. Having consideration of the coronavirus pandemic, we made suitable arrangements with the registered manager before we attended a site visit.

Inspection activity started on 10 September 2020 and ended on 22 September 2020. We visited the office location on 22 September 2020.

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 all this information to plan our inspection.

We used the information the provider sent us in the annual provider information return. This is information providers are required to send us with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. This information helps support our inspections.

During the inspection

We spoke with the registered manager and remotely reviewed a variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures. At the site visit we looked at three people's care records and multiple medication records. We looked at three staff files in relation to their recruitment, training and supervision.

We contacted people, relatives, external professionals and staff for their feedback of the service. We spoke with three people and two relatives by telephone. We received feedback from one relative, seven staff and four external professionals via email.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At the last inspection this key question was rated as requires improvement. At this inspection this key question has now improved to good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management; Using medicines safely; Learning lessons when things go wrong

At our last inspection we recommended the provider ensured there were regular checks of people's medicine records and risk assessments to make sure they were accurate and fully completed. The registered manager had made the necessary improvements.

- People's needs were assessed to identify and mitigate any risks they faced. Staff followed the safety measures in place to reduce risks. Risk assessments were improved. They were detailed and accurate.
- The registered manager thoroughly investigated any accidents and incidents and acted to avoid repeated events.
- The management of medicines was safe. Staff had regard for the medicine policy and followed procedures correctly to ensure medicines were safely administration and recorded. Medicine records were improved and had been regularly checked.
- Learning from incidents was shared with the staff to raise their awareness and promote safe working practices.
- The registered manager said they had learned a lot from the past two inspections. They had implemented many improvements throughout the service.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were protected from the risk of harm or abuse.
- Staff understood safeguarding processes and the registered manager followed the systems in place to investigate and report any concerns to external agencies.
- People and relatives thought the service was very safe. One person said, "I feel very safe with them. They are all very nice, no trouble whatsoever."

Staffing and recruitment

- There were enough staff to safely meet people's needs.
- People received regular visits from a consistent small group of care workers. One relative said, "(Person) knows exactly who is coming and what time they are coming."
- The recruitment process was safe. Checks were carried out to ensure new staff were suitable. However, there were aspects of the application process which could be further improved. The registered manager addressed this during the inspection.

We recommend the provider reviews the application process to ensure best practice guidelines are followed in relation to pre-employment checks.

Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff acted to protect people from the risks of infection and cross contamination.
- Staff were trained in infection control and prevention and had increased their knowledge in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.
- The registered manager ensured staff were equipped with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Everyone we spoke with confirmed staff wore PPE and adhered to guidance.

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 the last inspection this key question was rated as requires improvement. At this inspection this key question has improved to good. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

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

At our last two inspections the provider failed to have a fully effective quality and assurance system in place to monitor, assess and improve the care provided to people. This was a breach of regulation 17 (Good governance) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had now been made and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 17.

- There was a strong quality assurance process in place. The registered manager regularly carried out audits and checks on the quality and safety of the service.
- Record keeping had significantly improved. Records were detailed, accurate and up to date.
- The registered manager and staff team understood their role and responsibilities. All regulatory requirements were met.

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; Continuous learning and improving care;

- The registered manager understood their obligations in relation to duty of candour. There had been no incidents which required them to act on that duty.
- The registered manager was open and transparent with regards to the findings of the last inspections and the actions taken to improve the service. They gave us multiple examples of the continuous improvements which demonstrated their learning.
- The registered manager welcomed new ideas, suggestions and learning during this inspection to further improve the service.

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

- The registered manager demonstrated caring values such as compassion, empathy and commitment. They had shown resilience and perseverance through difficult times, to ensure the service was safe and achieve the high-quality expected of them.
- The registered manager was motivated to provide a person-centred service which helped people achieve goals. The whole staff team had a good understanding of how providing high-quality care helped people to experience positive outcomes. One relative said, "(Registered manager) does care, she is a caring business-

woman."

- People and relatives thought the service was well-led. They said they would recommend it to others, and they spoke very highly of the staff. One person said, "I would give them 10 out of 10, I don't think I could get any better."

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics; Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager and senior care staff had engaged a lot with people, relatives and care staff throughout the coronavirus pandemic. One person said, "(Staff member) rang me to ask how I was."
- People and staff were kept very well informed of any changes and best practice guidance in relation to the pandemic. They had many opportunities to share their concerns and make suggestions.
- Staff felt valued and said the registered manager was supportive and approachable.
- The registered manager had a good working relationship with external professionals. They referred people directly to other services and worked in collaboration with the external professionals to improve people's overall health, safety and well-being.