

Personal Choice Carers At Home Limited

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## Inspection report

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Date of inspection visit:  
06 February 2017

Date of publication:  
01 March 2017

### 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

The Inspection took place on the 6th February 2017.

Personal Choice Carers at Home is a domiciliary care agency which offers personal care, companionship and domestic help to support people living in their own home. The service provides approximately 300 hours of care per week to 19 people.

At our last inspection the service was rated as Good. At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

The service was safe. Care and treatment was planned and delivered in a way that was intended to ensure people's safety and welfare. People were cared for safely by staff who had been recruited and employed after appropriate checks had been completed. There were sufficient staff to meet people's needs consistently. People were supported to take their medication by staff who had received training to do so.

The service was effective. People were cared for and supported by staff who had received training to support people to meet their needs. The registered manager had a good understanding of their responsibilities in relation to the Mental Capacity Act 2005. People were supported to eat and drink enough to ensure they maintained a balanced diet and referrals to other health professionals were made when required.

The service was caring. Staff cared for people in an empathetic and kind manner. Staff had a good understanding of people's preferences of care. Staff always worked hard to promote people's independence through encouraging and supporting people to make informed decisions.

The service was responsive. People and their relatives were involved in the planning and review of their care. Care plans were reviewed on a regular basis and also when there was a change in care needs. People were supported to follow their interests and participate in social activities. The registered manager responded to complaints received in a timely manner.

The service was well-led. Staff, people and their relatives spoke very highly of the registered manager. The service had systems in place to monitor and provide good care and these were reviewed on a regular basis.

## The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

<b>Is the service safe?</b> The service remains Good.	<b>Good</b> ●
<b>Is the service effective?</b> The service remains Good.	<b>Good</b> ●
<b>Is the service caring?</b> The service remains Good.	<b>Good</b> ●
<b>Is the service responsive?</b> The service remains Good.	<b>Good</b> ●
<b>Is the service well-led?</b> The service remains Good.	<b>Good</b> ●

# Personal Choice Carers At Home Limited

## **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.

This inspection took place on the 6th February 2017 and was announced. The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

Before the inspection, we reviewed previous reports and notifications that are held on the CQC database. Notifications are important events that the service has to let the CQC know about by law. In addition we reviewed questionnaires received as part of the Provider Information Return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We also reviewed safeguarding alerts and information received from a local authority.

During our inspection we spoke with four people, the registered manager, care manager and two care staff. We reviewed four care files, two staff recruitment files and their support records, audits and policies held at the service.

## Is the service safe?

### Our findings

At this inspection we found the same level of protection from abuse, harm and risks as at the previous inspection and the rating continues to be good.

People told us that they felt safe using the service, one person said, "I have used the service for three years and they have never forgotten me." Another person said, "They (staff) always make sure I am safe, they check the doors and windows are locked for me before they leave and always make sure I have my careline on." A careline is an alarm people can wear in their own home which when pressed will summon assistance for them.

Staff received training in how to safeguard people from abuse. Staff were knowledgeable of the signs of potential abuse and what they should do to report this. One member of staff said, "If I had any concerns I would report them to the manager. If I was not satisfied they had been dealt with I know I can go to outside authorities like the CQC or council." The registered manager worked well with local authorities to resolve any safeguarding issues. One healthcare professional commented, 'I am very impressed with the registered manager and how they dealt with a safeguarding in relation to one of my clients.'

The registered manager made sure they recruited staff of good character and ensured all staff completed enhanced disclosure and barring checks (DBS). The registered manager ensured staff did not have gaps in their employment history and obtained references of their previous work and character. People received care from a consistent staff team. The registered manager did not use any agency and any shortfalls of staff were covered by them or other members of staff. People told us that they received support from the same staff consistently, and staff told us that they worked with the same people on set rounds.

Staff had the information they needed to support people. Staff undertook risk assessments to keep people safe. These assessments identified how people could be supported to maintain their independence and to ensure people were safe in their own homes. The risk assessments included making sure the environment was safe, for example, that there were not any loose rugs or carpets that people could trip over. Staff were trained in first aid, should there be a medical emergency and they knew to call a doctor or paramedic if required.

People who used the service were responsible for their own medication. These were usually provided in a monitored dosage system for medicines. The system supported people to manage their medicines more easily because each dose of medicine was pre-dispensed by the pharmacist in a sealed tray. Where required staff supported people to take their medication. Staff told us that they had received training to support people with taking medication and records confirmed this. From medication administration records we reviewed we saw that these were all completed correctly.

## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

At this inspection, we found staff had the same level of skill, experience and support to enable them to meet people's needs effectively, as we found at our previous inspection. People continued to have freedom of choice and were supported with their dietary and health needs. The rating continues to be good.

The registered manager was very keen for staff to develop and attend training courses. Staff had attended specific courses that would develop their skills and support them within their role, for example they had undergone training on delivering trachea care before accepting to deliver care to a person who needed support with this. The registered manager arranged for staff to attend training at the hospital with a trachea care nurse specialist and when they initially began delivering the care the nurse came and supported staff with this. All the staff we spoke with said that they were well supported by the registered manager to complete training. Staff told us that they had recently completed training on Dementia and this had included role play so that staff could experience what it felt like to live with Dementia. One member of staff said, "The course made me realise that it is the small things we can forget, like remembering to introduce ourselves every time as the person will not remember us, also instead of writing things down like your sandwich is in the fridge, drawing pictures instead as they might not be able to recognise letters anymore."

Staff felt supported at the service. Staff told us that they were supported to achieve nationally recognised qualification, and new staff had been enrolled into completing the Care Certificate, which is an industry recognised best practice award. In addition staff said that they had regular opportunities to reflect on their practice and to discuss the running of the service during staff meetings, supervision sessions and spot checks.

People who used the service had capacity to make their own decisions and choices about their care. Staff were aware that people had to give their consent to care and had the right to make their own decisions. The registered manager was aware of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and was aware of how to apply for capacity assessments and how to protect people's rights.

Where required people were supported with their dietary needs. Staff assisted people with their meals by preparing food for them. People told us that they chose their meals and staff would prepare the meals for them. Staff would cook full meals for people or make light snacks such as sandwiches. Staff had also been trained to monitor people when eating for example if they had swallowing difficulties and were in danger of choking on their food. We saw from records that staff had also identified when a person had been losing weight and had referred them to their GP who provided a prescription for nutritious milkshakes. We saw that the staff regularly monitored this person's diet and that they had gained weight again.

People were supported to access healthcare as required. The service had good links with other healthcare professionals, such as, community nurses, occupational therapists and GPs. The registered manager made referrals where appropriate for assessments from the district nurses and occupational therapists if people required support or equipment for them to continue living at home independently.

## Is the service caring?

### Our findings

At this inspection people remained happy using the service, they continued to be very complimentary of the staff and felt cared for. The rating continues to be good.

People were very complimentary of the support they received from staff and how caring the staff were. One person told us, "The staff are absolutely marvellous, they do everything for me, they are really good and caring, they even feed my dog." Another person said, "I am very happy with the care, I have the same regular carers, they are always on time and do everything I need."

Staff knew people well, including their life histories and their preferences for care. People told us that they had their own regular carers and staff confirmed that they had a regular round of people they supported. This meant people were cared for consistently. One member of staff said, "I look after two people who have early signs of dementia, it means they have got use to me and I know how to support them. For example after doing the dementia course I have found just by placing my hand on their arm when I am talking to them they are better able to engage with me and you can see in their face that they physically relax."

People were actively involved in decisions about their care and treatment and their views were taken into account. The registered manager discussed people's care needs with them so that they could develop a care plan that was tailored to their needs. This care plan would then be reviewed at least monthly or sooner if required. When appropriate, staff supported people to have other professionals involved in their care who could act as advocates, such as social workers and relatives.

People were always treated with dignity and respect. The registered manager ensured staff were trained properly and knew how to show dignity and respect to people. Before staff began working with people they would initially shadow the care manager who would introduce them to the person and ensure that they knew how they wished to be supported. One person told us, "They always treat me with respect, and call out when they first come in so that I know who it is."

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

At this inspection we found staff were as responsive to people's needs and concerns as they were during the previous inspection. The rating remains Good.

People continued to receive care that was individual and personalised to their needs. The registered manager and care manager ensured people had a thorough assessment before they agreed to deliver their care. Once care was agreed the initial calls were completed by either the care manager or registered manager to ensure that the care plan worked and that everything was running smoothly before they introduced the person to the member of staff who would become their regular care worker. People's care needs continued to be reviewed regularly and adjustments made where required. This meant people received up to date and consistent care.

The service continued to be responsive to people's changing needs. People's care needs were kept under constant review and adjusted as required. For example we saw that some people had their call times increased where it was found they needed more time to attend to their care needs. One person told us, "I am a bit slower now due to my arthritis so they (staff) spend longer with me now." The registered manager also ensured that they worked with other professionals to ensure that the service could meet people care needs and sourced extra training for staff if required.

Staff supported people to follow their hobbies. For example listening to the radio or watching television, some people liked to read, so staff made sure they had access to these things. Staff would act as companions and talk to people or sometimes walk to the shops with them. Some people followed their own social interests in the community and went to local clubs and groups.

The registered manager had a robust complaints process in place that was accessible and all complaints were dealt with effectively. People and relatives said if they had any concerns or complaints they would raise these with the registered manager. However people told us they generally did not have any complaints.

# Is the service well-led?

## Our findings

At this inspection we found the service was as well led as at the previous inspection. The rating remains Good.

The service had a registered manager. 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.

People told us that they were happy with the quality of the service, one person said, "They are a very good service, I have been with them for a few years." Another person said, "You won't find any fault with the service they are very good, we are very happy with them." A relative commented, 'I am very happy with the service and care my Mother receives from this company.'

The registered manager and staff were very passionate and enthusiastic about the service and staff shared the manager's vision and values. The registered manager was keen to run a bespoke service that met people's individual needs to help them maintain their independence at home. All the staff we spoke with were enthusiastic about the service, one member of staff said, "When I first started working here I realised the service was different and that they really care about what they are doing and looking after people. It is a really good team."

Staff felt supported and valued by the management team. Staff told us that the registered manager and care manager were always available to give them support. In addition to this they had regular staff meetings to talk about the running of the service and to receive any updates on training or other relevant information. Staff also had meetings to discuss the care that people were receiving to check this was still appropriate or if they had any suggestions for changes that maybe required. In addition staff were in regular contact through email and text message groups.

The registered manager and care manager visited people at home to receive their feedback and review their care. One person told us, "(manager's name) often pops in to check everything is okay." In addition when completing spot checks on staff the care manager would complete a survey with people to check that everything was okay and that they were getting the support they required. This showed that the management listened to people's views and responded accordingly, to improve their experience of the service.

The registered manager had a number of quality monitoring systems in place to continually review and improve the quality of the service provided to people. They carried out regular audits, for example, on people's care plans and medication management. This information was used as appropriate to continually improve the care people received.