

Mary's Care Ltd

Right at Home

Borehamwood & Watford

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Outstanding 

Is the service safe?

Good 

Is the service effective?

Good 

Is the service caring?

Outstanding 

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding 

Is the service well-led?

Outstanding 

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Right at Home Borehamwood & Watford provides personal care to people in their own homes. 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. The service was providing support to 19 people with personal care needs at the time of our inspection.

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

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice. People and their relatives told us how staff listened to their wishes and respected the choices they made which made them feel happy and confident. Feedback from all those we spoke to evidenced that the provider had an extremely caring and highly motivated staff team to care for people.

There was an extremely effective and strong leadership at the service which led to people receiving an exceptionally personalised service. There was great commitment from management and teamwork to ensuring people continued to live in their own homes, fulfilling lives. There was joint effort made by staff and management to continually look for ways to develop and improve the service provided to people. The positive culture developed by the leadership team filtered down to each staff member and had a positive impact on people and relatives.

People told us the help and support they were getting from staff was invaluable and often meant they could enjoy life in their own home safely and worry free. They told us staff went over and beyond with supporting them to live independently and the way they wanted. We found numerous examples where staff exceeded their expected responsibilities to ensure people received the best support tailored to their needs.

The service involved the community in helping support people living with dementia to continue to live the life they wanted part of their community safely. This required extremely detailed plans and risk assessments as well as flexibility from staff which was achieved with joint efforts in people's best interest.

People and relatives told us they felt the service was not just safe but tailored to their needs as well as flexible and reliable.

We expect health and social care providers to guarantee autistic people and people with a learning disability the choices, dignity, independence and good access to local communities that most people take for granted. Right Support, right care, right culture is the statutory guidance which supports CQC to make assessments and judgements about services providing support to people with a learning disability and/or autistic people.

This service was able to demonstrate how they were meeting the underpinning principles of Right support, right care, right culture. People's independence and their right to live their life as they chose was fully respected and promoted. The provider and their management team led by example and promoted a positive culture based on strong values and beliefs which run through the core of the organisation.

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 the service under the previous provider was good, published on 16 May 2019.

Why we inspected

This service was registered with us on 22 March 2019 and this is the first inspection.

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?

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Good ●

Is the service effective?

The service was effective.

Details are in our effective findings below.

Good ●

Is the service caring?

The service was exceptionally caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Outstanding ☆

Is the service responsive?

The service was exceptionally responsive.

Details are in our responsive findings below.

Outstanding ☆

Is the service well-led?

The service was exceptionally well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Outstanding ☆

Right at Home Borehamwood & Watford

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 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 houses and flats.

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

We gave the service 48 hours' 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.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We used the information the provider sent us in the 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. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke the registered manager and the nominated individual. The nominated individual is responsible for supervising the management of the service on behalf of the provider.

We spoke with three people and five relatives about their experience using the service. We also spoke with five staff members over the phone and further two staff members e-mailed us feedback about their experience working for the service.

We reviewed a range of records. This included two people's care records and a variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures were reviewed.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found. We looked at training data and quality assurance records.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated Good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People told us they felt safe and well cared for by staff. Relatives agreed with this and told us they never had to worry about people's safety.
- The provider's safeguarding systems were effective in protecting people from harm or abuse but not restrictive of people's freedom or choice. Safeguarding measures were wrapped around people in a non-restrictive way involving staff, relatives and often the whole community to keep people safe but still promote their human rights.
- Staff were trained and knew how to report their concerns internally and externally to the local safeguarding authority. They were able to tell us how safeguarding procedures were individualised to each person.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risk assessments were in place to ensure people received care and support from staff in a safe way. The registered manager and the provider gathered as much information as possible from people and relatives when they carried out their initial assessment before people started using the service. This helped identify any potential risk and develop risk assessments which were reviewed regularly and further developed if needed.
- Risk assessments included fire risk and other environmental risks. There were also care related risk assessments for areas such as moving and handling, choking, nutrition, pressure care and falls.
- Staff were able to describe to us what risks were present for each individual they supported in great detail and how they ensured the risks were mitigated.

Staffing and recruitment

- People told us staff never let them down and they were always on time. They told us, staff were never rushed and if the support they needed took longer than the agreed times staff accommodated this. Relatives confirmed this. One relative said, "The carers are always on time and if for any reason they may be late I always receive a phone call and am kept up to date."
- Staff told us the management team did not pressure them to pick up extra shifts and if absences had to be covered these were easily covered by existing staff. The provider and manager only accepted new clients if they had enough staff to provide a stable and flexible service.
- Staff had been recruited safely with robust pre-employment checks completed to help ensure they were suitable to work in this type of service.

Using medicines safely

- People had their medicines administered by staff who were trained and had their competencies assessed. If people wanted to administer their own medicines staff found ways to ensure they could do this safely. For example, if people had difficulties opening medicine boxes, staff helped them do exercises to regain their motor skills.
- Staff signed electronic medicine administration (MAR) charts which were checked by office staff daily to ensure people had not missed their medicines.

Preventing and controlling infection

- During the Covid-19 pandemic the management team took effective measures to minimise the spread of infections to clients. These included allocating the same staff to visit the same clients. Staff also took over some responsibilities from relatives including picking up prescriptions for people or doing their shopping to limit the number of different contacts people had with other people.
- Staff had regular testing as well as access to sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE).
- These measures proved effective. Whilst there were a few staff members who tested positive for Covid-19 none of the people who used the service tested positive.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Learning lessons was an important part of the day to day running of the service. The provider and manager constantly looked for ways to improve the care people received and this was evident through people's feedback.
- Due to the constant communication between people, staff relatives and management team and the ability of the service to adapt to people's needs there were no occurrences when things went wrong as these were prevented.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated good. This meant people's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- People's needs were assessed prior to them starting using the service. These assessments at times took several days to ensure the process was thorough and captured people's needs, risks, likes and dislikes.
- Relatives told us they were reassured from the minute they met staff carrying out the assessments about how effective and thorough their approach was in concentrating on every aspect of people's needs.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff told us, and we saw evidence of the training they received. This included face to face training, on-line as well as bespoke training about individual people when there was a need for it.
- One staff member told us, how invaluable the training they received was. They had not worked in care previously and felt the training prepared them for their role as well as it gave them the knowledge, they needed to support people safely and effectively. They told us, "Without the training, it would not be possible to change people's life, but we do!"
- Staff were given opportunities to further their skills and knowledge. Several staff members told us they were encouraged to enrol on different training courses and progress their career further. One to one supervisions were used to give staff constructive feedback about their performance and agree where further developments were required.
- Some staff members achieved champions roles, for example, there was a falls champion in the service. They took their role seriously and implemented the training they received. This meant that they developed the falls risk assessments for people at risk as well as participated in the reviews and assesses the safety of the environment people lived in.

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People were helped to have good food and fluid intake. Having a consistent staff member or small team supporting individual people helped ensure, any concern about people's nutrition and hydration were identified.
- Staff recorded how much people ate and drank accurately and monitored the amount people drank from the fluids left in their reach in between the visits.

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care; Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- Relatives told us staff were extremely vigilant when they visited and always communicated to relatives or people if they felt people needed support from their GP or other health professionals.
- Staff supported people to attend appointments if necessary and participated in assessments carried out

by occupational health therapists to ensure the equipment used was in line with people's needs and wishes.

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular 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 particular 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. When people receive care and treatment in their own homes an application must be made to the Court of Protection for them to authorise people to be deprived of their liberty. We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA.

- People said staff respected their wishes and choices. They felt empowered by staff to live their life the way they wanted.
- People who had a diagnosis of dementia and lacked capacity to make certain decisions, were supported effectively and safely by staff to continue to make decisions about their day to day life. Where appropriate their family members were consulted in taking best interest decisions for people.

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.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated outstanding. This meant people were truly respected and valued as individuals; and empowered as partners in their care in an exceptional service.

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

- Equality and inclusion were strongly embedded in the organisation. Throughout our inspection the staff team and the management team truly demonstrated a non-judgmental, supportive approach towards people with protected characteristics. This had a significant impact on people who previously struggled to find the right support. One person wrote to us, "Right at Home (RAH) are my fifth care agency in three years. I have struggled to get appropriate support both physical and psychological support needs. In the two months I have been with RAH I have made more progress than I have over the entire three years prior to working with them. I'd genuinely go as far as to say that they not only changed my life, but it feels as though they saved it."
- Staff received training and truly understood Equality and Diversity as well as they received training to understand the LGBTQ+ community. One staff member said, "I never worked in care before, so the training I was given was truly amazing. I love my job and feel I have a better understanding about LGBTQ+ community. I am now able to support people effectively."
- People and relatives gave outstanding feedback about how caring staff, managers and the provider were. The positive attitude, empathy and kindness showed to people had a significant impact not just on people who received care and support but, on their families, as well.
- The provider's systems and processes placed people in the centre of their support. People feeling valued, empowered led very often to significant improvements in their mental and physical well-being. One person wrote to us to express their gratitude about the service. They wrote, "Since Right at Home started in January it's changed my life, when I'm in a down mood I know that someone is going to come in who is going to be able to help me and cheer me up. When they started, I was bed bound I hadn't got out of bed since June 2020, within a few days the carers had me out of bed and walking bit by bit. The difference being able to walk again has made to my life is tremendous, it's given me hope. I was so down and depressed before and now I've got a new lease of life. Right at Home has helped me enormously with getting on with my life and regained my relationship with my husband and assisted us in becoming husband and wife again!"
- Relatives used words like "excellent", "fantastic", "outstanding" when they spoke about staff and management. They emphasised how much their life changed to the better, knowing that their loved ones were supported by a staff team who truly understood and enabled people to live the life they wanted. One relative said, "My [relative] well-being has benefitted so much since having the carers. [Person] smiles more and moves more. They seem interested in life again. It has also given me my life back and helped with our whole family's mental wellbeing. Having people, we 100% trust has been life changing. It is without doubt that [relative] would not be living in their own home without the outstanding care Right at Home provides. It has always been their wish to stay in their own home and this has only been achievable due to the lovely

carers and all the team."

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

- Every person and relative told us they had a voice and staff helped them achieve what they wanted. One person told us how they relied on care in every aspect of their life which made them feel helpless and discouraged. They told us how kind and patient staff were to build up their confidence and improve their motor skills so that they could achieve the things they wanted. They said, "When my opinion differs from the carers I am always listened to carefully and respectfully. Doctors and other health care professionals have said that most progress is made in the first year after the initial illness but for me it was when Right at Home started being in charge of my care. They have made a profound difference to my life."
- A relative told us, staff made it possible for them to be involved in people's care. Staff helped them care for people over and beyond what was expected of them. They said, "I honestly cannot speak highly enough of both the organisation and the individual carers. They have become invaluable to us, If it wasn't for them, I don't think it would have been possible for my [relative] to remain living independently in their own home. Staff have also been great at responding, quite often at short notice, to needs that arise outside of the normal schedule. I am not able, for example, to manage [person] in and out of the car by myself, and they are always able to juggle things around so that someone can come with me to assist when we have had to do hospital or GP visits."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People told us their fear, depression and anxiety about receiving care was completely put at ease by staff who were incredibly attentive to protect their dignity and privacy. One person told us, "I was embarrassed to start with but not anymore, they have put me at ease, my biggest fear was, what am I going to do if I need the toilet (when staff were not around). The team gave me their number and said to call them if I ever need help or assistance, every time I rang them, they came. To give me maximum privacy one of the [staff] will wait outside the room and gave me a bell to ring which was a sign that I am ready, and [one staff] assist me with toileting which I really appreciated. It ensured I had privacy. I was also really nervous about having male staff. But [two staff members] have completely put me at ease and become my two main staff."
- People and relatives told us they liked everything about the service but out of everything they fully appreciated staff's approach in supporting them to maintain or even re-gain their independence. For example, a person approached Right at Home Borehamwood & Watford for support. They used a different service before and had a staff member living with them. They wanted the privacy of their own home back, however they required support in every aspect of their life. Staff very quickly built up a good relationship with them and the person started to share more about what was important to them. Over time the person re-gained more independence which made them confident and able to enjoy their life once again. For example, they could take their medicines independently when before this was managed by staff and in liquid form. At present due to the jaw exercises staff encouraged them to do were able to take tablets independently. From completely relying on staff for personal care they now managed to do this independently with little support from staff. They told us, "I thought I would like to try a dosset box, but the carers thought that this would need finer motor skills than I have. They said I should try to open individual packets and if this didn't work, we would try a different method. They were quite right! As part of my illness I consequently drop things. Although I do this less often now, the carers continue to pick things up with good humour so I feel very confident trying new things."
- Kindness and empathy had been deeply embedded in care practices. Management and staff were exceptionally caring and kind towards people they supported. Systems and processes were set up to ensure flexibility could be factored in when people could not commit to a certain time when they needed support. We found numerous examples where staff's kindness, commitment and support significantly improved not just people's mental health but also their physical health and meant the people were able to not just live in

their own home but enjoy and live the life they wanted. For example, a person living with dementia required support when they were ready to get up or go out. Staff were able to create such flexibility by understanding how important it was for the person and their family to feel safe and able to continue with the life they wanted. Their relative wrote, "My [relative] unfortunately has a condition which means that they do not require the norm., but something tailored for their individual and variable needs and demands. Although we have some set patterns, changes can occur without notice, and the support given by the team at "Right at Home" has shown tremendous understanding and flexibility in meeting that need."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated outstanding. This meant services were tailored to meet the needs of individuals and delivered to ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care.

Planning personalised care to ensure people have choice and control and to meet their needs and preferences

- People received an exceptionally personalised service to meet their specific needs, preferences and wishes. Every person we spoke with told us they received care and support that was completely personalised and fully adapted to them. One person wrote to us, "I wasn't sure how to express what a difference they [staff] have made to me in a way that would make obvious how unique and special their services are! I wish all care companies and carers had the same attitude and approach as Right at Home as they really do tailor to every client and listen to your needs." Another person told us, "They tailor a package to you, follow all safety protocols (which is extremely important to me) whilst ensuring you have the best and most appropriate care for your needs." A third person said, "I've never laughed so much before, I never thought care could be so easy and relaxed. One of the things I couldn't believe was that [two male staff] got given makeup training in order to assist me with doing my makeup when I go out! Just makes it so much more personal!"
- One relative told us, "I cannot tell you the difference it has made to my life, knowing that my [relative] is in such good hands. The carers are reliable, so caring and have built up a very fond relationship with my [relative]. Obviously having a [relative] with dementia is very worrying and stressful and I have taken over many jobs, however, to know that I have 100% reliability with the wonderful staff at Right at Home for my [relative's] daily care, shopping, appointments, is such an enormous weight off my mind." Another relative said, "The things I particularly value about them are the quality and compassionate nature of the care provided, their responsiveness and practical advice and their willingness to go above and beyond."
- Every person had a designated team of staff who got to know people well and were able to meet people's individual needs. A relative told us, "The team of carers that look after my [relative] are fantastic. On occasions when [person] has been upset, confused or worried about something, they have taken the time to sit with them and reassure them, even if this means going beyond their allotted slot. On numerous occasions I go around to find that one of the staff has bought a bunch of flowers to cheer them up or left some chocolates or a cake. Someone even bought [person] a windmill to sit in the plant pot that they can see from their patio window, to give them something to look at. It sounds simple, but [person] loves watching it and it is these little things that make the difference."
- Staff were exceptionally skilled and pro-active in identifying and working in innovative ways to help and support people identify and achieve goals. They spent time with people, listened to what they wanted to achieve and then discussed and supported people to accomplish them. This meant often involving other health professionals like occupational health therapists to get the right equipment for people. Throughout the inspection every person and relative told us that due to this attitude and individualised support staff were able to provide people could safely and happily continue to live in their own home. One relative said,

"[Person] is now really struggling to get in and out of bed in the night. The manager took the time to visit my mum along with one of the carers to assess the problem and came back to me with the idea of getting some furniture raisers. They were also able to recommend that I get a referral to Occupational Therapy, as they felt that longer term, [person] would benefit from a hospital bed, something which is now in train. If it wasn't for them, I don't think it would have been possible for my [relative] to remain living independently in their own home."

- One person told us how happy they were with the way staff supported them. They told us how they were enabled by staff to pursue their hobbies and interest they gave up when their support needs increased. They told us how responsive staff were to their needs, likes, dislikes and helped them research what equipment and tools they needed to have fun and do the things they liked. This person's relatives told us the person enjoyed life once again doing the things they liked. One staff member told us, "When I first started working [with the person] lockdown happened, during this period we [staff] took over their physio every week and helped them to find hobbies to do at home [Person] has become more independent we are now assisting them with cooking every week they are now able to peel and chop vegetables we have helped them to do this with supplying arm guards and finger guards and also a visor to wear when there is oil involved. This [person] has become an inspiration to me because of what they had overcome."

Supporting people to develop and maintain relationships to avoid social isolation; support to follow interests and to take part in activities that are socially and culturally relevant to them

- The management and staff recognised the risk of people living in the community becoming socially isolated especially during Covid-19, when their families were not able to visit them as often to keep them safe. Relatives and people praised staff for being responsive to their needs and although often this support was not funded, staff found ways to ensure people could do the things they liked. This meant they often picked up shopping for people before they visited, stopped for coffee or a quick fish and chips on the way back from appointments and researched in their own time for equipment to assist people to bake and cook safely. Managers organised visits, giving staff plenty of time in between so that they were not pressured into leaving at a certain time so they could assist people for an additional 10-15 minutes with a cup of tea in the garden. One relative told us, "On [relative] birthday the carers went out of their way to give [person] a cake and sing happy birthday. One carer visited with [person's] favourite ice cream and sat and chatted with them. This made me so happy and brought [person] so much joy."

- Staff understood how difficult was for some people to stop their social lives and stay at home often staff being the only visitors they had for weeks or months. For example, staff knew how much a person loved the Royal family and during lockdown they were sad not being able to watch a program with their family. Staff and managers arranged for staff to be able to watch this with the person just to ensure they had company for their favourite show. The pictures we saw taken during the event spoke of happiness and joy. The person had a big smile on and even did a bit of a dance with staff. Another person told us how with staff's help they re-gained their mobility and could enjoy life again with their partner which they never thought possible before.

Meeting people's communication needs

Since 2016 onwards all organisations that provide publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard (AIS). The standard was introduced to make sure people are given information in a way they can understand. The standard applies to all people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss and in some circumstances to their carers.

- In the initial assessment people had before using the service all aspects of their support needs were covered including communication needs, how and when they wished to communicate or receive information. The support plans reflected how each person wished to be addressed and if they had any specific communication needs. If there were any specific requests or aids required to facilitate communication systems and processes were in place to provide people with easy read format, Braille,

British Sign Language or other aids used such as white boards and electronic devices

- Communication with families, especially during Covid-19, happened through phone calls, emails or WhatsApp groups. All relatives praised this initiative and felt involved and up to date with the care people received. One relative said, "The team has particularly come into its own over the last couple of months. I raised a concern with them earlier this year about the fact I felt [relative] was beginning to show signs of dementia, and as a result, they suggested we set up a WhatsApp group, so that we could have a regular group call, where we can all share what behaviours we are seeing and discuss strategies we can put in place to help [person]. We use the group in between times to share information between all of us, which has been really useful and reassuring, while we wait for [person] to be assessed by the [health professional]."

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- People and relatives told us they had no reason to complain at all since they used the service. They used words, "excellent", "outstanding", "invaluable" when they described the service to us. They said they would not hesitate to discuss any concerns they may have had and had confidence that these would be listened and acted on. Every person and relative we received feedback from recommended the service. One relative told us, "I feel very lucky to have found such a fantastic care agency, as I know many people whose experiences in trying to find good care have not been as fortuitous. I would not hesitate to recommend, most highly, management and their team." Another relative told us, "All in all Right at Home are an outstanding care agency who listen and care for my [relative] like they are their own. I would recommend them to anyone and can honestly say they have become our family."

End of life care and support

- People received outstanding and compassionate end of life care from staff who put people's final wishes at the centre of the care they provided. Staff were trained and worked with community professionals to provide end of life care to ensure people had a comfortable, dignified and pain-free death. For example, a person who received care and support from the service following a hospital admission were discharged back home on a Sunday, being nearing the end of their life. Their relative contacted the on-call manager hoping that the service could provide night staff support for them on short notice, to ensure the person could be kept comfortable and had support. The support was provided immediately, and staff supported the person and the relative in a respectful and kind manner. The relative contacted the provider and shared their experience saying, "[Staff] were absolutely wonderful and allowed a peaceful and dignified death."
- One staff member told us, "I feel good and inspired by people when I manage to put a smile on their face. We are empowered to help people fulfil their last wishes and we see them live and die happy. This job changed my thinking and my life!"

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.

This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. This key question has been rated outstanding. This meant service leadership was exceptional and distinctive. Leaders and the service culture they created drove and improved high-quality, person-centred care.

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

- People and relatives told us the service was exceptionally well-led. Comments included, "The care agency is very well led, and all the carers appear happy and work together as one team. They all know [person's] needs and my needs and expectations too." and "This is a company who cares about the people they are caring for and the wellbeing of their staff and that is extremely rare and precious."
- The provider was extremely committed to creating a culture which put people at the heart of the service and there was a clear dedication by the whole team to helping people to remain at home in familiar surroundings, enjoying a stimulating and enhanced quality of life for longer. Throughout the report we have detailed how this personalised support impacted on people and relatives, often hearing incredible stories from people who made significant progress and recovery and were able to live more independent lives.
- Everyone working at the service was invested into the provider's visions and values which were shared by the whole staff team. Everyone working at the service believed that everyone deserved to be treated with care and dignity and receive the highest quality care in their own homes.
- Staff were highly valued by the provider and they invested time and effort to enable staff working at the service to feel supported and empowered to give the best care and support to people. Every staff member we spoke with had a story to tell not just about the support they received professionally at the workplace but also feeling supported with their morale and practical support in times of personal crisis. Staff told us and gave examples of how the whole team and management pulled together and supported each other.
- The support staff received ranged from training offered to build up confidence or progress in their career to childcare and support in period of sickness. All this contributed to a happy and stable staff team which benefitted people greatly. One staff member said, "Throughout my time working in the service, had (absence) which includes time off to recover but have been supported 100% throughout. Nothing is ever too much trouble and I know that I can go to either one [provider and registered manager] with issues and feel comfortable discussing anything. [registered manager] has become a great mentor and has helped me with [provider's] influence to go from a carer to senior carer and now in a team leader position climbing all the time. If it wasn't for the support, I get from both of them I wouldn't be where I am. They make a great team and the company is well led with both of them having their individual parts to play."
- The provider had won several awards for the support they gave to people, relatives and staff. These awards included Best Franchise Awards, Management Category, Homecare.co.uk Awards, Top 20 National Homecare Group (award won due to the positive feedback from people and relatives), WorkBuzz Surveys, National 5* Employer Winner (for being the most highly recommended care agency in the UK).

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

- The registered manager and the provider had a clear vision and strategy to deliver high quality care. They had effectively implemented best practice guidance and legislation to build a safe service ensuring that systems and processes were flexible enough for staff to provide extremely caring support to people.
- Each staff member took their roles extremely seriously. They were quick in identifying if any improvements were needed to the support people received. There was a drive from everyone to a structured approach to problem solving, high quality performance and robust risk management. The attitude of management and staff to think about ways to achieve, broke down barriers and enabled people to live in their own homes as they wished. We found numerous examples where staff suggested involving occupational health therapists to assess the environment people lived in and use appropriate equipment. Where people struggled to get into a bath staff fought and advocated for them to get a walk-in shower, purchased equipment to enable people to cook and bake, such as safety gloves.
- One person told us how staff managed get them to develop more precision in driving their mobility equipment by having them exercise on an eight ball. They were now feeling safer when operating their equipment. All these actions meant that people could continue to be independent and enjoy the things they loved safely.
- The service was an important part of its community and the team were extremely passionate about ensuring people in the community had access to the services they needed to stay living at home for longer. This often meant that staff had to educate members of the public about certain conditions people lived with like dementia.
- Staff developed close working relationships with workers in local shops, the local gym and a taxi company to ensure people living with dementia could safely continue to be involved in their local community and enjoy regular daily activities they liked.
- People told us they felt actively involved in the service. People and relatives felt empowered to give feedback about staff and the support they received. Annual surveys were sent out to people, relatives and staff. Surveys were extremely positive, no negative responses. Responses to questions like `staff have an excellent understanding of my care needs, staff go above and beyond to make sure I get the support I need, and staff make a positive difference to my life` all scored 100%.

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

- There was an effective management structure with clear roles and responsibilities and hierarchy in decision making. However, everyone working in the service felt included and involved as all decisions and actions to improve any aspect of the service were taken after discussions with everyone's involvement. The management team often worked with staff delivering care and support to people. They used every opportunity to get feedback and keep close contact with people so they could effectively monitor the quality and the safety of the service being hands on in addition to the audits they regularly conducted.
- Each staff member we spoke with told us they had discussions with the registered manager and provider about their strengths and weaknesses and were supported to develop the areas where they were less confident or skilled. One staff member said, "I never worked in care before and training for me was very important. I am best at working with people who need enabling with their mobility and motivation. I absolutely love my job." This staff member told us how different their previous occupation was and how they found their vocation in supporting people and were now in a more senior position.
- Regular and robust checks took place to monitor and improve the service. Systems and processes were in place to ensure staff received regular observations and one to one support. The observations ensured staff were delivering care in line with people's personal

preferences and the provider's values.