

Mrs Valerie Randall

Caring Hands

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Caring Hands is a domiciliary care agency providing personal care to adults living with families or in their own homes in the community. 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. At the time of our inspection the service was providing personal care to 21 people living with frailty of old age and other health related conditions.

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

People were encouraged to make decisions about the care they received and were treated with dignity and respect by compassionate, caring staff who promoted independence and choice. People told us they were asked what they wanted or needed before care was delivered. One person said, "They try to help with independence, and don't do things I can do for myself."

Care was delivered by staff who were trained and understood their roles and responsibilities. The registered manager and senior staff carried out spot checks on staff to monitor the quality of the service provided, and to seek people's views. People, relatives and staff were encouraged to offer feedback both formally and informally. Changes were made as a result of feedback.

Staff felt well supported and people were confident in the service they received. Quality assurance systems and practice identified potential issues, enabling prompt actions to be taken.

Staff were proactive in supporting people's health and well-being and were responsive to changes in people's needs. Care plans were detailed and person-centred and contained guidance for staff to support people's known health conditions. Management and staff worked in partnership with other agencies and health care professionals.

There were systems and processes to effectively monitor the quality of care delivery; people's records were clear, informative and securely maintained.

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.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection and update

The last rating for this service was requires improvement (published 26 February 2020) and there was a breach of regulation 17 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. The registered person had not established systems and processes to audit and monitor the safety and quality of

the service provided. At this inspection we found improvements had been made and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation.

Why we inspected

This was a planned inspection based on the previous rating.

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection of this service on 10, 13 and 15 January 2020. A breach of legal requirements was found. The provider completed an action plan after the last inspection to show what they would do and by when to improve systems and processes to audit and monitor the safety and quality of the service provided.

We undertook this focused inspection to check they 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 caring 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 Caring Hands 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 caring?

Good 

The service was caring.
Details are in our caring findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good 

The service was well-led.
Details are in our well-Led findings below.

Caring Hands

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

One inspector carried out this inspection.

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 with three people who used the service about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with four members of staff including the registered manager and care workers.

We reviewed a range of records. This included three people's care records and medication records. We looked at two staff files in relation to recruitment and staff supervision. 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. We spoke with two health professionals who regularly visit the service.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

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

At the last inspection this key question was rated as requires improvement. This was because the management team and staff did not always consider or respect people's right to confidentiality because information was not always shared securely. At this inspection this key question has now improved to good. The provider had put in a system and process for securely sharing information which effectively protects people's confidentiality. This meant people were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

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

- Staff treated people equally according to their diverse needs.
- People told us they were treated with respect and kindness by staff who knew them well.
- People spoke highly of the staff. One person felt that staff were, "All very kind and respectful." Another person said, "They are kind, I generally get the same carers and they put someone else in every so often to keep them in the loop so they can come if my regular is not able to come."
- Staff were knowledgeable about people's preferences and wider life and explained how this information was important. One staff member said, "(Name) really enjoys films; it's in their care plan so allows a topic to start a conversation."

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

- People were involved in the care planning and decision-making process.
- One person told us, "We talk about my care and that's been written down."
- Staff explained how they supported people to be involved in making decisions. One staff said, "I respect people's decisions, I may disagree but allow for difference of opinion. People make their own choice and I make sure that I have all the information. I ask before doing anything and use whatever communication that works for them."
- Care plans were regularly updated and people told us they were involved in reviewing their care plans.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Staff were respectful of people's privacy and promoted their independence and dignity.
- People told us that staff promoted their independence and took care to respect their dignity.
- Staff told us and records confirmed their induction and ongoing learning put emphasis on the importance of promoting people's independence.
- Staff demonstrated a good understanding of how to maintain people's confidentiality. One staff member told us, "We have a system that's password protected, the password is changed every week or if someone leaves."
- The registered manager explained the electronic care monitoring system (ECM) they used to ensure staff have all the information they need whilst maintaining people's data securely. People have access to the

information held about them via a secure portal.

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 now 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 the last inspection the provider had not established systems and processes to audit and monitor the safety and quality of the service provided. The provider had failed to maintain securely an accurate, complete and up to date record in respect of each person. The auditing processes had not identified shortfalls in people's records which may have led to risks. Information was shared electronically without appropriate safeguards. This was a breach of regulation 17 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014

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

- The provider's systems had improved enough to effectively monitor quality and safety across areas of the service. A new electronic care monitoring system was in place and working effectively, giving the registered manager oversight in real time of the care delivered. The system produces reports that the registered manager demonstrated they use to look for trends and identify changes in people's needs. Short falls were promptly identified and addressed.
- Care plans and risk assessments had been overhauled and contained detailed information and guidance to staff that was person centred. They were updated when information about people was amended, giving staff secure and immediate access to those changes. Staff told us they valued the information the new system gave them.
- The service had developed a new confidentiality policy to consider information shared digitally. Staff were fully aware of the policy and were able to discuss the content in detail.
- There were systems and processes to monitor and analyse accidents and incidents and these were used to identify key issues and mitigate the risk. For example, a person had an incident that reflected a change of need; the registered manager spoke with them and arranged for their care plan and risk assessment to be updated. This considered the person's wish to remain as independent as possible.
- The registered manager told us that staff called the office or the 'out of hours' staff member, if there was an incident or change, so immediate action could be taken. They recorded this on the electronic care monitoring system which was checked weekly.
- The registered manager was clear about their role and responsibilities and fostered an open person-centred culture. One staff told us, "I think the registered manager is amazing, 24/7 works really hard. Always

very approachable. I get praise and feel valued in my job." Another said, "The registered manager always employs kind people. I think everyone is kind and respectful. I can go to them with anything."

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

- The culture was open and inclusive. One person said, "I am fully involved with developing care plans; I can discuss and make sure it is done my way. I am confident they listen to me."
- People and staff were able to share ideas or concerns with the management. Staff understood their responsibilities and told us that they were listened to and valued. One staff member told us, "I love working for them, very nurturing and accommodating, well organised."

How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

- The registered manager understood their responsibility under the duty of candour.
- The registered manager notifies us of significant events, as they are required to by law. Notifications had been sent to us in a timely manner and were completed in line with statutory requirements.
- We saw evidence of the registered manager informing a person's family after an accident involving the person and a staff member, and kept the family up to date with the actions they took. They then worked with the person and family to prevent it from happening again. The registered manager reported the accident to the local authority, CQC and safeguarding and apologised to the person and their family.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics, Continuous learning and improving care

- People's views were sought of the care they received. Feedback was also sought from relatives, professionals and staff. The management team analysed the feedback and incorporated this into the daily running of the service, and to drive improvement. For example, a comment in the survey conducted in April 2021 about some staff's bed-making skills prompted discussions with staff around how to make a bed properly to ensure that all sheets and blankets were lying flat.
- People generally expressed satisfaction with the engagement they had with the registered manager and the staff. Comments from the April 2021 survey included, "Very helpful, look forward to their coming, like an extended, family. They make sure my needs are met." And, "All the carers are very professional and dedicated to caring for (name), making them feel at ease and special. Nothing is too much trouble."
- People and staff told us that senior staff did regular "spot checks" to make sure people were receiving care in the way they wanted and to check staff practice.
- There were systems and processes to ensure staff received the training and learning they needed to support people. There was an ongoing process of learning and practice assessments. One staff told us, "Superb induction and shadowing (by experienced staff) showed me everything and was very supportive, and I wasn't left by myself until I was confident. I'm still able to shadow for people new to me where I need it."

Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager worked professionally with outside agencies. The management team were open to new ideas and had formed good partnership working and relationships.
- One professional told us, "The agency has kept me up to date with the patient's thoughts and any other environmental factors which may have been affecting their mood." Another said, "I have nothing negative to say about the service, if there are any problems the staff inform me about any concerns."

