

# Unannounced Inspection Report 11 August 2016



## Mid and South Antrim Supported Living Service

Domiciliary Care Agency/Supported Living Service  
2 The Courtyard, Off Main Street, Ballytromney, Crumlin, BT29 4UP  
Tel No: 028 94470009  
Inspector: Jim McBride

## 1.0 Summary

An unannounced inspection of Mid and South Antrim Supported Living Scheme took place on 11 August 2016 from 09.20 to 14.00.

The inspection sought to assess progress with any issues raised during and since the last care inspection and to determine if the supported living service was delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the service was well led.

### **Is care safe?**

On the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering safe care. The service provision was outstanding. Staff could demonstrate how they work in partnership with service users to address their needs and develop their capacity for independence, as well as respect and act on people's wishes and choices. The agency operates a staff recruitment system and induction training programme to ensure sufficient supply of appropriately trained staff at all times. The welfare, care and protection of service users is ensured through the identification of safeguarding issues, implementation of safeguarding procedures and working in partnership with the HSC Trust. There was evidence over time of positive outcomes for service users. No areas for quality improvement were identified.

### **Is care effective?**

On the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering effective care. The service provision was outstanding. The agency responds appropriately to the needs of service users through the development and review of individual care and support plans. The agency's systems of quality monitoring were found to be in line with regulations and standards, providing continuous review of services in conjunction with service users and their representatives. The agency engages in partnership working with service users to meet the needs/choices of the individual. There was evidence over time of positive outcomes for service users. No areas for quality improvement were identified.

### **Is care compassionate?**

On the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering compassionate care. The service provision was outstanding. The agency asks people who use their services what they need and want from the agency. The agency's daily operation includes communicating with, listening to and valuing the views and wishes of service users and their representatives. Agency staff aim to help service users work towards the achievement of individual outcomes as described within individual care and support plans, as well as individual task analysis and goal achievement. No areas for quality improvement were identified.

### **Is the service well led?**

On the day of the inspection the agency was found to be providing a well led service. The service provision was outstanding. Staff working within the agency had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the management structure, and had confidence in the lines of accountability.

The agency aims to ensure that managers and staff listen and are accessible to people who use services and their representatives including the HSC Trust and relatives.

Service users and their representatives are provided with information on the organisational structure and how to contact the agency as necessary. The agency has policies and procedures in place that go beyond statutory requirements to embrace good practice. The inspector reviewed evidence of effective communication by the agency with the HSC Trust regarding changes in service users' needs. The agency evidenced supports systems that enable service users to get involved e.g. advocacy services, user-led groups. There was evidence over time of positive outcomes for service users. No areas for quality improvement were identified.

This inspection was underpinned by the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards.

### 1.1 Inspection outcome

	Requirements	Recommendations
<b>Total number of requirements and recommendations made at this inspection</b>	0	0

This inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations being made. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Miss Elizabeth Clare Duff registered manager, as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.

Enforcement action did not result from the findings of this inspection.

### 1.2 Actions/enforcement taken following the most recent care inspection

There were no further actions required to be taken following the most recent inspection.

### 2.0 Service details

<b>Registered organisation/registered person:</b> Praxis Care Group Andrew Mayhew	<b>Registered manager:</b> Elizabeth Duff
<b>Person in charge of the agency at the time of inspection:</b> Elizabeth Duff	<b>Date manager registered:</b> 11 July 2016
<b>Number of service users receiving care during this inspection:</b> 15	

### 3.0 Methods/processes

#### Specific methods/processes used in this inspection include the following:

Prior to inspection the following records were analysed:

- Previous inspection report
- Records of notifiable events.

The inspector visited the offices of Praxis Care Group on the 28 July 2016 to review a selection of records relating to the agency's recruitment practices. These records were found to have been satisfactory.

#### During the inspection the following processes used include the following:

- Discussion with the registered manager
- Examination of records
- Consultation with staff
- File audits
- Discussions with service users
- Evaluation and feedback
- Discussions with relatives
- Discussions with HSC Trust staff.

#### The following records were examined during the inspection:

- A number of care and support plans
- Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust assessments of service user needs and associated risks assessments
- Care review records
- Recording/evaluation of care used by the agency
- Monthly monitoring reports from January to June 2016
- Minutes of staff meetings held in: March, May and August 2016
- Minutes of tenants meetings held in: June, July and August 2016.

Staff training records in relation to:

*Vulnerable adults*

*MVA*

*Medication*

*Confidentiality*

*Autism awareness*

*Needs assessment*

*Support planning*

*Recording skills*

- Records relating to staff supervision
- Complaints records
- Induction procedure
- Staff rota information.

## 4.0 The inspection

The agency provides care and support to individuals with a learning disability and or overlapping challenging behaviours, who are assessed as requiring this input to enable them to live as independently as possible in the community.

The service is provided over two sites in mid and south Antrim and is managed by Elizabeth Duff supported by sixty one staff providing service to fifteen service users. During the inspection the inspector spoke with the registered manager, three support workers and two service users. The inspector had the opportunity to speak with a relative and a representative from the local HSC Trust. Their feedback has been included throughout this report.

At the request of the inspector the manager was asked to distribute ten questionnaires to staff for return to RQIA. Nine questionnaires were returned. The manager was also asked to distribute ten questionnaires to service users. Seven questionnaires were returned. Further detail of staff and service user feedback is included throughout this report.

Following discussion with the registered manager, staff and service users, it was noted there was evidence overtime of positive outcomes for service users. This has been demonstrated by the agency throughout this report.

The inspector would like to thank the service users, agency staff and Praxis Care Group human resources staff for their warm welcome and full cooperation throughout the inspection process.

## 4.1 Review of requirements and recommendations from the most recent care inspection

There were no requirements or recommendations made as a result of the last care inspection.

## 4.2 Is care safe?

The registered premises are suitable for the purposes of the agency as set out in the Statement of Purpose. The Statement of Purpose was reviewed by the agency in July 2015. The inspector was advised by the manager that service users are introduced to, and advised of the names of staff that will be providing care and support; this information is also included in the statement of purpose and the service user's guide April 2016. This approach was felt to be appropriate and important both in terms of the service user's security and the staff's knowledge of the required care.

Service user referral information received from the HSC Trust care managers contained information regarding the service user and/or their representatives. The inspector examined six care plans in place during the inspection. The referrals detailed the services being commissioned and relevant risk assessments. The agency care plans and risk screening tools completed contained evidence that service users and/or representative's views had been obtained and incorporated.

Risk assessments examined provided clear evidence of safe effective care and support being provided to service users. The agency delivers excellent outcomes for people who use their services on an ongoing basis. The agency's risk management policy was reviewed by the agency 15 October 2015.

The agency has in place a written policy and procedure for the recruitment of staff. Employment procedures reviewed evidenced the completion of pre-employment checks. The recruitment policy was updated by the agency on the 4 September 2014. The agency has in place a comprehensive checklist in place for personnel file documents.

A number of staff files were examined by the inspector on the 28 July 2016 and they included the required information in line with the agency's policy and good practice guidelines.

The agency has a structured comprehensive six week staff induction programme which includes shadowing by an experienced mentor for all newly appointed staff, as well as induction of staff for short notice/emergency arrangements. The agency's induction standards are in line with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council standards for new workers in social care. The agency's induction procedures were reviewed by the agency in February 2015. Three staff members interviewed during the inspection suggested that the induction helps you to get to know the tenants care needs and prepares you for the role.

The person centred part of the induction includes:

- Safeguarding & Protection of

Vulnerable Adults & Child protection;

- Service User Awareness;
- Understanding Behaviour which
- Challenges;
- Values and Attitudes;
- Needs Assessment and Support Planning;
- Person Centred Planning;
- Behaviour Management Recovery.

Records examined evidenced that staff have received core mandatory and other relevant training. Including:

- Person centred planning;
- Positive behavioural support;
- Restrictive practice;
- Personality disorders.

Records of staff induction, including short notice procedures and mandatory training, were retained within staff files reviewed. A staff member stated: *"The staff were all very helpful during my induction."* Staff confirmed that they have direct access to all relevant policies and procedures which are held centrally within the agency via the agency's intranet. The agency has a policy and procedure on staff supervision and appraisal reviewed by the agency 5 March 2015. The manager and staff reported that the manager undertakes supervision with Team Leaders who in turn supervise care staff.

The inspector examined staff rotas for weeks commencing 14, 21, 28 August 2016 and 4 September 2016 and was satisfied that the agency's staff resources were appropriate to meet service user needs. Discussions with the manager, staff and service users indicated that an appropriate number of suitably skilled and experienced staff were available at all times. It was noted that the agency's operational plan states an objective of "*Agreed minimum safe levels of staffing will be maintained at all times.*" with an agreed escalation policy if minimum standards are not or cannot be met.

Staff interviewed demonstrated an awareness and knowledge of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults and Whistleblowing. Staff were aware of their obligations in relation to raising concerns about poor practice. The manager stated that all suspected, alleged or actual incidents of abuse are fully and promptly investigated in accordance with procedures. Where shortcomings in systems may have been highlighted as a result of an investigation, additional identified safeguards are put in place. There was a record of monthly monitoring available on the day of inspection which evidenced working practices being systematically reviewed.

Service users interviewed by the inspector stated that they felt safe and secure in their home and that the care they received was excellent. The inspector noted that staff make every attempt to increase people's choice and control.

Other comments included:

- "Staff are very helpful."
- "My support is good."
- "I feel really safe now with the staff here."

Staff comments:

- "We support the tenant's daily in all their choices."
- "We keep the tenant's safe and secure in line with their care and support plans."

Relative's comments:

- "I'm very happy that \*\*\*\* is safe and secure here and that the care provided is good."

HSC Trust comments:

- "Excellent outcomes for service users are achieved here."

Nine questionnaires returned from staff indicated that:

- Current staffing arrangements meet service user's needs
- Any complaints from service users are listened to.

Comments:

- "Risk assessments are ongoing and reviewed."
- "The care is very safe."
- "Service users are well managed and looked after."
- "I feel that care plans accurately reflect the needs of service users."

- “Up to date person centred plans are in place as well as risk assessments.”

Seven questionnaires returned from service users indicated that:

- The care they receive meets their needs and expectations
- The service is managed well.

Comments:

- “Staff know me very well and always support me and listen to me about what I want for my future.”

The inspector found the care provided was of a high standard and it was good to note that in the returned questionnaires.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

<b>Number of requirements:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Number of recommendations:</b>	<b>0</b>
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**4.3 Is care effective?**

Service users interviewed by the inspector were aware of whom to contact if there any issues regarding care or support: Both felt they could approach all staff.

Service user records viewed by the inspector evidenced regular contact and feedback received from service users had been followed up. These records evidenced that the agency and the HSC Trust carries out care reviews with service users if changes to their needs are identified. The inspector noted some of the comments made during annual reviews:

Service users:

- “Staff are always helpful, good, kind and help support my life.”

HSC Trust:

- “I can see the increase in \*\*\*\* levels of self-esteem and confidence.”
- “Good support for service users from staff.”
- “I’ve good communication with staff.”

Relatives:

- “I’m pleased with all the support \*\*\*\*\*gets.”
- “I’m very happy with the service provided to \*\*\*\*\*” .
- “\*\*\*\*\* is so well settled here.”

The agency maintains a daily contact record for each service user. The agency’s individual activity records show what service users did, including how they link activities with the community if appropriate. Staff interviewed on the day of inspection confirmed that they were provided with details of care planned for each new service user, and gave a comprehensive overview of their roles and duties.



The agency's Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide makes appropriate references to the nature and range of service provision. Service users and their representatives are advised of independent advocacy services within the Service User Guide.

Staff interviewed provided examples to demonstrate how they promote service user independence, choices and respect. Following engagement with staff it was evident that staff focus is on people as individuals with different needs and wishes. The service users interviewed were aware of whom they should contact if any issues arise regarding the service. The most recent monthly quality monitoring reports reviewed, evidenced that working practices are being systematically reviewed.

Staff confirmed that they worked very well as a team and that staff meetings are held on a regular basis. Staff described the manager as "*Great*".

Care records examined reflected individualised assessments and person centred care plans, including choice and preferences, dignity and respect recorded in a manner which promotes the interests of each service user. It was good to note that service users or their representatives are included in decision making regarding their care plan. Service users and their relatives are also given the opportunity to comment on the quality of service.

Service users' comments:

- "My support is good."
- "Staff are helpful and like helping me."

Staff comments:

- "Training is beneficial and keeps you updated."

HSC Trust comments:

- "My communication with the manager and staff is effective."
- "Choice and independence are encouraged by all the staff, thus previous episodes of behaviours has settled."

Relative's comments:

- "The staff are good at what they do and they all have the right approach."

Nine returned questionnaires from staff indicated:

- Service users get the right care, at the right time and with the best outcome for them.
- There are systems in place to monitor the quality/safety of the service you provide

Staff comments:

- "The best care is always given to service users."
- "Overall care is excellent very person centered."
- "Not everything can be done on time, but every attempt is made to facilitate activities."

Seven returned questionnaires from service users indicated that:

- Staff are trained to meet our needs.
- They get the right care, at the right time and with the best outcome for them.

Comments:

- “My keyworker reads my monthly reports to me and I add things to this.”
- “I update my everyday living plan and write my report for my review.”

The inspector found the care provided was of a high standard and it was good to note that in the returned questionnaires.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

<b>Number of requirements:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Number of recommendations:</b>	<b>0</b>
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#### 4.4 Is care compassionate?

The agency’s Statement of Purpose and Service Users Guide reflects that staff will ensure that the beliefs and values of each service user are embedded in the day to day operation of the service. The staff described to the inspector that values form an important part of care provision including privacy, dignity, independence, choice, rights and fulfilment. And make every attempt to increase tenant’s choice and control.

Service users interviewed by the inspector raised no concerns regarding their care or the quality of care being provided by staff.

The inspector noted the agency’s annual quality survey and positive results in relation to the following:

- Are you happy with the way staff help you?
- Do staff treat you the way you like to be treated?
- Has the scheme helped you?
- Has your life changed since you started to get help from the scheme?
- Do staff help you make your goals happen?
- Do you have a review once per year?
- How safe do you feel?
- Are you told about changes?

The agency involves everyone in consultation activities and considers that everyone has the capacity to be involved.

Comments received during the annual survey:

- “\*\*\*\*\* has had a great change on my life. Through the encouragement of staff, I have been able to do things my family are so pleased to see.”
- “Staff are nice to be with, helpful and good craic with them all.”
- “The courtyard is the place to be and become more independent.”
- “Staff are the best.”

No concerns were raised regarding the staff treating the service users with dignity or respect. Service users, as far as possible, are offered choices and are encouraged to complete tasks themselves when appropriate. Training records examined including induction records show clear evidence that staff are encouraged to promote independence and choice to service users.

Reports of monthly quality monitoring completed on behalf of the registered person were reviewed. The reports evidenced how the agency ascertains and respond to the views of service users, professionals and staff. The agency's reports of monthly monitoring provide assurance of quality monitoring and service improvement. The inspector recorded some comments from service users, staff and HSC Trust professionals:

Service user's comments:

- "I enjoy living here and get good support from staff."
- "I'm very happy with staff."
- "I'm well supported."
- "Great choice and involvement."

HSC Trust comments:

- "There's a great improvement in the service."
- "A good positive experience for my service user."
- "I have no concerns."
- "I do hope the improvement to the service continues."
- "Good approachable contact with the HSC Trust staff."

Staff comments:

- "Training is very good."
- "The service is very transparent and open."
- "I'm settled and enjoy the work."
- "Good service user experiences."

Relative's comments:

- "I'm very happy with the service provided."
- "My relative has received good support here."

Nine returned questionnaires from staff indicated:

- Service users are treated with dignity and respect and involved in decisions affecting their care
- That the people who use the service have their views listened to.

Comments:

- "Service users are treated with respect and well looked after."
- "In my experience service users are always treated with respect by staff when interacting with them."
- "Compassionate care is evident through the approach of staff, who are aware of how service users display their views through verbal and non-verbal communication."

- “I’m very impressed by the empathy and compassion provided.”

Seven returned questionnaires from service users indicated that:

- They were treated with dignity and respect and involved in decisions affecting their care.
- Their views and opinions sought about the quality of the service.

Comments:

- “Staff always listen to me and I’m asked my opinion.”

The inspector found the care provided was of a high standard and it was good to note that in the returned questionnaires.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

<b>Number of requirements:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Number of recommendations:</b>	<b>0</b>
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**4.5 Is the service well led?**

Feedback provided to the inspector indicated that there are effective collaborative working relationships with external stakeholders, including the HSC Trust. This relationship is valued by staff who reported improvements in outcomes for service users.

A number of policies and procedures in place are accessible to staff via the staff intranet. Staff interviewed were aware of the complaints procedure and their role if they receive a complaint. It was noted that the monthly monitoring reports show evidence of complaints auditing and records of action taken in relation to trend identification.

The agency has a complaints policy and procedure in place April 2016, which is also reflected within the Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide.

Incidents are reported to RQIA when required and it is evident that agency procedures are followed in relation to these. Incidents form part of the monthly monitoring and the agency’s operational plan objectives. Required actions are taken to address concerns; this is ongoing within the agency to enable them to reflect on any learning from incidents. The incident reporting policy was reviewed by the agency in November 2015.

A number of staff training events have taken place and mandatory training was up to date for all staff at the time of the inspection. Staff interviewed were positive and stated that they were well supported to manage the challenges of their job.

Supervision records examined by the inspector showed clear evidence of compliance with the agency’s own policy and procedures. Feedback provided to the inspector indicated that staff feel respected and supported by the management structure within the agency. Staff reported that they had a very good working relationship with the manager. Staff stated:” *The manager is very supportive and helpful, \*\*\*\*\* has an open door policy for all staff.*”

There was strong evidence of staff working in partnership with the commissioning HSC Trust. This was confirmed via records, within care plans and through discussions with the manager and staff. There is a whistleblowing policy and procedure and staff interviewed were aware of this. The policy was reviewed by the agency in March 2014.

There was evidence that staff were encouraged to be involved in the development and improvement of the service including measuring the outcomes for service users in relation to their care and support. This was noted within the staff meeting agendas, minutes and the agency's operational plan. The agency has a policy and procedure on staff supervision and appraisal. The manager reported that she undertakes supervision with team leaders who in turn supervise care staff. Training and development activities provided by the agency, develops the skills and knowledge of the staff.

There is a defined organisational and management structure that identifies the lines of accountability, specific roles and details responsibilities of all staff. This is included in the agency's Statement of Purpose.

The agency returned to RQIA a summary of complaints received between 1 January 2015 and 31 March 2016. The agency had received three complaints during this period which were fully satisfied. The agency's system for reviewing policies and procedures was in place and had been actioned. The agency has policies and procedures in place that go beyond statutory requirements to embrace good practice and these are followed by staff. The inspector noted a number of key policies that were subject to systematic review.

The inspector noted that the governance systems within the agency identify and drive quality improvement the agency considers everything to be a suitable topic for consultation. The agency's operational plan states a number of objectives that ensure outcomes for service users beyond statutory requirements:

- Measured outcomes for service users;
- Service users involvement in staff recruitment;
- Individual task analysis and goal achievements;
- Tenant compatibility discussions;
- Volunteer development;
- Local community involvement;
- Identification of quality improvement.

There was evidence of regular and effective staff supervision, appraisal, and management of performance issues. The arrangements in place to manage incidents and complaints include measures to prevent recurrence of issues. The inspector saw evidence of systematic audit within the agency which results in effective improvement plans with measured outcomes.

This included monitoring of training, supervision, complaints and incidents. The audits within the agency are there to improve the quality of service delivery and individual outcomes for service users. The agency aims to make it possible for people to have control over decisions about their life and day-to-day decisions, as well as enabling people to do activities that they find important, enjoyable and meaningful. This was evidenced by the HSC Trust staff member who stated: *"Such a change in the life of the service users who have control over daily living and are enjoying the challenge with staff support."*

Following discussions with staff and service users, it was evident that service users are able to play a key role in how the service is managed. The central focus of provision is person centred. The agency reflects on its work using the outcome focus of the operational plan including, action plans and uses this information to challenge its own performance outcomes.

The registered provider has worked effectively with RQIA and maintained their roles and responsibilities in accordance with legislation. The Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide are kept under review, and have been revised when necessary. The registered person has shown an ability to respond appropriately to regulatory matters and led the organisation in maintaining compliance with Regulations and Minimum Standards.

Staff comments receive during inspection:

- “The service provides good care and support.”

Service users’ comments:

- “Staff have helped me with the change I have had and have always helped me through them.”
- “The staff support me at all times and have my best interests in mind.”

Relative’s comments:

- “The service is excellent and provides more support than I thought possible to \*\*\*\*.”

Nine questionnaires returned from staff indicated that:

- Current staffing arrangements meet service user’s needs
- Any complaints from service users are listened to.

Comments:

Seven staff returned questionnaires raised a number of issues relating to employment and staff recruitment. This was discussed with the registered manager on the 18 August. The inspector was satisfied that the manager will discuss these concerns with staff to try and resolve and issues.

Seven questionnaires returned from service users indicated that:

- The care they receive meets their needs and expectations
- The service is managed well.

Comments:

- “There is always a team leader on shift that I can talk to about important issues.”
- “The manager will talk to me about any important issues.”

The inspector found the care provided was of a high standard and it was good to note that in the returned questionnaires.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

<b>Number of requirements:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Number of recommendations:</b>	<b>0</b>
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### 5.0 Quality improvement plan

There were no issues identified during this inspection, and a QIP is neither required, nor included, as part of this inspection report.

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and areas for improvement that exist in the service. The findings reported on are those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not exempt the registered provider from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with the regulations and standards.



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