

Unannounced Care Inspection Report 18 August 2020



Age NI

Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency
Address: 3 Lower Crescent, Belfast, BT7 1NR
Tel No: 028 9089 2632
Inspector: Corrie Visser

www.rqia.org.uk

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 service provider from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with legislation, standards and best practice.

1.0 What we look for



2.0 Profile of service

This is a domiciliary care agency which provides personal care and housing support to 38 individuals with dementia in their own homes. Service users receive support and care in relation to their daily living skills and emotional wellbeing and are encouraged to become more independent. The agency has a current staff compliment of eight staff that provides services commissioned by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT).

3.0 Service details

<p>Organisation/Registered Provider: Age NI</p> <p>Responsible Individual(s): Ms Linda Robinson</p>	<p>Registered Manager: Mrs Sharon Fitzpatrick</p>
---	--

Person in charge at the time of inspection: Sharon Fitzpatrick	Date manager registered: 14 May 2009
--	--

4.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 18 August 2020 from 09.00 to 11.45 hours.

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic the Department of Health (DOH) directed RQIA to continue to respond to ongoing areas of risk identified in services.

Since the inspection on 12 June 2018, RQIA have not completed a primary inspection, therefore RQIA decided to undertake an inspection of the service. This inspection was carried out using an on-site approach in line with social distanced guidelines.

This inspection was underpinned by the Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, 2007 and The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Workers Prohibition) and Fitness of Workers (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards, 2011.

The inspection assessed progress with any areas for improvement identified during and since the last care inspection and to determine if the agency was delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the service was well led.

No areas for improvement were identified during this inspection.

Evidence of good practice was found in relation to Access NI and staff registrations with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC), the evaluation of the quality of services on a yearly basis including consultations with stakeholders and the monthly quality monitoring reports. Good practice was also found in relation to all current Covid-19 guidance, the use of PPE guidelines and Covid-19 education.

The findings of this report will provide the agency with the necessary information to assist them to fulfil their responsibilities, enhance practice and service users' experience.

4.1 Inspection outcome

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Mrs Sharon Fitzpatrick, 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.

4.2 Action/enforcement taken following the most recent care inspection dated 12 June 2018

Other than those actions detailed in the QIP no further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 12 June 2018.

5.0 How we inspect

Prior to inspection we reviewed the information held by RQIA about this agency. This included the previous inspection report, the returned QIP, notifiable events, and written and verbal communication received since the previous care inspection.

During our inspection we focused on contacting the service users, their relatives and staff to find out their views on the service. We also spoke with HC professionals involved with the service.

We ensured that the appropriate staff checks were in place before staff visited service users.

- Recruitment records specifically relating to Access NI and NISCC registration.
- Covid-19: guidance for domiciliary care providers in Northern Ireland, updated on 16 June 2020.

RQIA provided information to service users, staff and other stakeholders that will support feedback on the quality of service delivery.

“Tell us” cards were provided for care workers, service users and visitors to the service to give them the opportunity to contact us after the inspection with their views. No responses were received prior to the issue of the report.

A poster was provided for care workers detailing how they could complete an electronic questionnaire to give their views. No responses were received prior to the issue of the report.

Ten questionnaires were also provided for distribution to the service users and their representatives; no responses were received prior to the issue of the report.

During the inspection the inspector met with the manager and following the inspection communicated with two service users, four staff, one professional and three service users' relatives.

Areas for improvement identified at the last care inspection were reviewed and assessment of compliance recorded as met.

The inspector would like to thank the registered manager, service users, service user's relatives and staff for their support and co-operation throughout the inspection process.

The findings of the inspection were provided to the manager at the conclusion of the inspection.

6.0 The inspection

Areas for improvement from the last care inspection dated 12 June 2018		
Action required to ensure compliance with the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards, 2011		Validation of compliance
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Standard 8.12 Stated: First time	The registered person shall ensure that the quality of services provided is evaluated on at least an annual basis and follow-up action taken. Key stakeholders are involved in this process.	Met
	Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: The inspector was provided with an annual report as well as the monthly quality monitoring reports which included consultations with stakeholders in relation to the quality of services being provided.	

6.1 Inspection findings

The service's staff recruitment processes were noted to be managed in conjunction with the organisation's Human Resources (HR) Department, located at the organisation's head office. Discussion with the manager identified that she was knowledgeable in relation to safe recruitment practices in accordance with Regulation 13, Schedule 3 of the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and Standard 11 of the Domiciliary Care Minimum Standards, 2011 which relate to Access NI. The inspector reviewed communication received from HR in relation to pre-employment checks which provided assurances that all checks were completed including Access NI checks before commencement of employment. Robust pre-employment checks are important to ensure that the persons employed are suitable to be working with service users.

The inspector reviewed the matrix held by the manager in relation to the staff's registration with NISCC. This is to ensure that the persons employed are suitable to deliver safe care to service users. It was noted that every staff member was appropriately registered. The inspector noted that the manager had a system in place each month for monitoring the registration of staff with NISCC and confirmed that all staff are aware they are not permitted to work if their NISCC registration had lapsed. It is important to note that NISCC has allowed a period of grace until 1 October 2020 for NISCC registrations to be renewed due to Covid-19 pandemic. The manager is aware to retain communication from NISCC in relation to this on the staff members' files.

Comments from service users include:

- "I am more than pleased."
- "They have helped me get through some bad times."
- "I can't thank them enough for what they do."
- "The staff go above and beyond for me."
- "Brilliant."
- "I am very happy."
- "I couldn't do without them."

- “They are all very efficient, effective and very helpful.”

Comments from service users’ relatives include:

- “Everything is great.”
- “X (care worker) is great with x (service user).”
- “X (service user) smiles when x (care worker) come in.”
- “It is a fantastic service.”
- “If it wasn’t for Age NI, we wouldn’t be able to get out.”
- “x (care worker) is part of the family.”
- “We can relax when we go out as we know x (service user) is being well looked after.”
- “The care workers are very good and very kind.”
- “It is a great service.”
- “I am happy with the service.”
- “I am grateful for the contact they had.”
- “They got x (service user) involved in social groups within the service.”

Comments from staff members include:

- “I am happy in my job.”
- “I get a lot of support from my manager and even from management further up. Support has come from the Chief Executive.”
- “I feel we have enough time to deliver the care to our service users. If we need more time, we speak to the Mental Health Team to review the package of care. It works.”
- “We are looked after well and are given a lot of support.”
- “There is always someone there if I have any concerns.”
- “I can approach my line manager at any time.”
- “Training is done on line but I miss group training as we are able to bounce ideas off each other.”
- “Covid-19 has been handled well and we have been well advised.”
- “Induction was very informative.”
- “The organisation is very well run.”
- “The needs of the services users are really taken into consideration.”
- “I do mostly a sitting service so I have enough time to provide the care that is required.”
- “It can be stressful at times but that’s the nature of the job.”

Comments from professionals include:

- “It’s a good service.”
- “Service users are very appreciative of the service.”
- “Care workers would do an activity with the service users rather than stay in the house.”
- “Age NI are trying to set up groups for service users. This was put on hold due to Covid-19.”

Areas of good practice

Areas of good practice were identified in relation to the completion of checks with Access NI in conjunction with the HR Department and staff registrations with NISCC. It was also positive to note good feedback during the annual quality review.

Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

Covid-19:

The inspector spoke with the manager and to four staff members, who were knowledgeable in regards to their responsibility in relation to Covid-19. Staff stated they were aware of the guidance on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for activities that brought them within two metres of service users. Staff were also aware of the need to replace PPE between service users and how to appropriately dispose of used PPE.

The inspector reviewed the current practices relating to the following areas of guidance and good practice relating to Covid-19:

- Dissemination of information to staff
- Monitoring of staff practice
- Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) policies and procedures were updated to ensure they addressed all current guidance in relation to Covid-19
- Used PPE storage and disposal
- Staff training and guidance on: (a) infection prevention and control
(b) the use of PPE equipment, in line with guidance.

The inspector reviewed records relating to Infection prevention and control policies which were in-line with the current guidance. The policies and procedures had been updated to include Covid-19 guidance. Policies and guidance were available to all staff in hard copy within the agency office.

Hand sanitisers were placed in different areas throughout the service for staff and visitors to use to ensure good hand hygiene.

There was evidence that clear guidance with regards to IPC, donning (putting on) and doffing (taking off) of PPE. There was evidence that staff had completed training with regards to IPC; this was facilitated by the agency.

The staff spoken with by the inspector following the inspection demonstrated that they had a good understanding of the donning and doffing procedures and were able to describe how they are using PPE appropriately. The manager discussed the procedures that both she and senior staff spot check the use of PPE by care workers.

The procedure and guidance in place show that:

- Robust systems are in place to ensure that current infection prevention and control guidance is available and accessible to staff.
- There are effective systems in place to monitor staff compliance with good infection prevention and control practices.
- Staff working in the service were able to describe their knowledge of infection prevention and control practice commensurate to their role and function in the service.

It was noted that staff were committed to working in line with Covid-19 guidance to ensure that the impact of current measures strikes the correct balance between keeping people safe and promoting a good quality of life. Staff are being vigilant in terms of monitoring their service users for symptoms and are adhering to the public health guidance in order to minimise the risk of introducing or spreading Covid-19 within the agency.

Areas of good practice

Compliance with Covid-19 guidance and comprehensive training and monitoring relating to IPC and PPE had been provided to staff.

Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

7.0 Quality improvement plan

There were no areas for improvement identified during this inspection, and a QIP is not required or included, as part of this inspection report.



The Regulation and
Quality Improvement
Authority

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor
Riverside Tower
5 Lanyon Place
BELFAST
BT1 3BT

Tel 028 9536 1111
Email info@rqia.org.uk
Web www.rqia.org.uk
Twitter @RQIANews