

# Announced Care Inspection Report 14 March 2017



## Southern Health & Social Care Trust Adult Placement Scheme

**Adult Placement Agency**  
**Drumcashel House, 2a Rathfriland Road, Newry, BT34 1HU**  
**Tel no: 028 3025 6780**  
**Inspector: Rhonda Simms**

[www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

## 1.0 Summary

An announced inspection of Southern Health & Social Care Trust Adult Placement Scheme took place on 14 March 2017 from 10.00 to 15.00.

The inspection sought to assess progress with any issues raised 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.

### **Is care safe?**

During the inspection the inspector found a range of evidence to indicate that the agency was delivering safe care. The agency maintains a stable provision of appropriately trained and supported carers who understand the needs of service users. The arrangements to protect service users include the provision of safeguarding training which reflects the most up to date regional guidance. There are established systems of person centred assessment, and review of needs, wishes, and risks which contribute to the safety of care delivered to service users. There were no areas for improvement identified as a result of the inspection.

### **Is care effective?**

During the inspection the inspector found a range of evidence to indicate that the agency was delivering effective care. The agency has systems in place to ensure an effective response to the assessed needs of service users. Service users are involved in the development of care and support plans which are reviewed regularly with HSC Trust professionals. The quality monitoring arrangements include consultations with service users, their representatives and carers, and provide a system of audit and service improvement. The agency maintains effective communication with service users, relatives and key stakeholders including the HSC Trust. The inspector received feedback which indicated that service provision had resulted in positive outcomes in the lives of service users. There were no areas for improvement identified as a result of the inspection.

### **Is care compassionate?**

During the inspection the inspector received feedback and found evidence which indicated that the dignity and promotion of independence of service users are upheld through service delivery. There was evidence of the agency's maintenance of systems to ascertain the wishes and feelings of service users, and involve them in decision making. There were no areas for improvement identified as a result of the inspection.

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

During the inspection the agency was found to be delivering a well led service where clear management and governance systems are maintained to meet the needs of service users. The inspector found that carers are aware of their roles, responsibility and accountability within the organisational structure. There are effective working relationships with key stakeholders including service users, relatives, carers and the HSC Trust. There were no areas for improvement identified as a result of the inspection.

This inspection was underpinned by The Adult Placement Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

### 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 Angela Murnion, registered manager, as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.

### 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 of 8 March 2016.

### 2.0 Service details

<b>Registered organisation/registered person:</b> Southern Health and Social Care Trust Francis Rice	<b>Registered manager:</b> Angela Murnion
<b>Person in charge of the agency at the time of inspection:</b> Angela Murnion	<b>Date manager registered:</b> 4 January 2017

### 3.0 Methods/processes

Prior to inspection the following records were analysed:

- Previous inspection report
- Records of notifiable incidents to RQIA
- Correspondence with RQIA.

During the inspection the inspector spoke with the registered manager Angela Murnion, the adult placement agency social worker, two service users, and two HSC Trust community professionals.

Prior to the inspection the User Consultation Officer (UCO) spoke with four adult placement agency carers and three relatives, either in their own home or by telephone, on 9 March 2017, to obtain their views of the service provided by the Southern Health & Social Care Trust's Adult Placement Scheme.

As part of the inspection and at the request of the inspector, questionnaires were distributed for completion by carers; twelve were returned. At the request of the inspector, questionnaires were distributed for completion by service users and/or their relatives; six were returned.

Feedback received by the inspector and the user consultation officer during the inspection process is included throughout this report.

The following records were provided to the inspector during the inspection:

- Recruitment of host families protocol 2016
- Pre-approval checks
- Home study assessment
- Carers' agreements
- Service user agreements
- Records relating to induction process
- Records relating to content of training, attendance at training, training evaluations
- Records of monitoring visits undertaken by adult placement agency social worker
- Adult safeguarding operational procedure 2016
- Incident reports and records relating to management of incidents
- Incident reporting protocol 2016
- SHSCT risk management strategy 2014
- Incident management procedure 2014
- Examples of record keeping maintained by the agency
- Risk assessments
- Review records of care provided
- Records relating to communication/referral to Trust professionals
- Records management procedures 2016
- Record keeping protocol 2016
- Confidentiality guidance 2012
- Guidelines relating to information sharing
- Restrictive practice guidelines
- Medicines management protocol and procedure
- Statement of Purpose 2017
- Service user handbook 2017
- Carers' handbook 2017
- Pictorial communication aid
- Monitoring visit schedule
- Service user evaluation questionnaires
- Host family evaluation questionnaires
- Shared Care leaflet
- Host family file
- Home safety check report
- Human rights information
- Examples of information provided to host families: human rights, equality scheme, traveller information, complaints leaflet
- Easy read complaints leaflet
- Monitoring Quality in Adult Placement Agency report of February 2017
- Records of meetings with HSC Trust
- Whistleblowing guidelines

## 4.0 The inspection

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust Adult Placement Scheme (Shared Care Scheme) offers long and short term placements to service users with a learning disability who have been assessed and referred by an HSC Trust professional. The scheme is located in the Newry and Mourne and Craigavon and Banbridge localities; operated by Angela Murnion, registered manager, and one social worker.

Shared Care host families (carers) provide weekend or short term planned support in order to provide existing carers with a short break (respite) and to provide individuals with opportunities to have new experiences. Long term placements are provided when an adult requires long term accommodation, similar to a fostering arrangement.

The agency has currently placed 22 adults within 24 placements.

The inspector would like to thank everyone who contributed to the inspection process.

## 4.1 Review of requirements and recommendations from the most recent inspection dated 8 March 2016

The most recent inspection of the agency was an announced care inspection on 8 March 2016; no requirements or recommendations were made as a result of this inspection.

## 4.2 Is care safe?

During the inspection arrangements for the recruitment of carers were reviewed by the inspector. The agency has a policy in place relating to the recruitment and assessment of carers. The inspector found that the agency ensures appropriate pre-approval checks are completed in accordance with regulations; an example of the completed checklist used was seen by the inspector. The inspector saw carer agreements completed by all carers prior to the commencement of an adult placement.

The agency has in place a structured induction programme for carers which is implemented in accordance with the agency's referral, matching and introduction protocols. The inspector saw a range of training evaluation forms completed by carers. The inspector was advised that evaluation forms completed by carers in the induction process form the basis of discussion and provision of information as appropriate to carers. Induction training includes safeguarding, home safety, medication management, and information specific to the person who will be supported. The inspector saw a sample handbook and home file provided to all carers, which includes key policies and procedures and support contact information for inside and outside of business hours.

The User Consultation Officer (UCO) was advised that as part of induction, introductions between the people supported and carers are carried out over a period of time in the carer's home prior to the placement commencing. The relatives and social workers were also included in these meetings to ensure that everyone involved was satisfied with the match.

The inspector was advised that the agency does not provide placements at short notice or in emergencies, unless the carer has already been inducted and matched to provide care for the person requiring support.

The registered manager discussed the arrangements for the provision of training to carers. The inspector was advised, and saw evidence to indicate the agency provides training sessions in a format suitable to meet the needs of carers. Areas covered by training include safeguarding, managing money, medication management, human rights, health and safety, infection control, and record keeping and sharing information. The registered manager advised that specialist HSC Trust professionals have been involved in providing specific training, such as epilepsy training, eating and drinking, and Makaton. A specialist HSC Trust professional provided feedback about their role in providing training to adult placement carers, and how they valued the opportunity to do so.

Carers interviewed by the UCO confirmed that training takes place both as part of their induction and on a regular basis. Examples of training received by the carers included health and safety, safeguarding and communication. The UCO was also informed that the carers can request additional training depending on the needs of the person supported. Carers told the UCO that training was of a high quality and the agency provides a choice of locations, dates and times to suit the carers.

The inspector viewed a range of evaluation questionnaires completed by carers after training, which enable the agency to evaluate the effectiveness of training sessions. The agency social worker described how they use an information awareness checklist to assess carers' needs for additional training or information. The inspector was provided with training materials which detailed all areas presented to carers at training. It was noted that the carer's commitment to taking part in training is stated in the carer placement agreement.

The inspector was provided with records which showed how the importance of attendance at training is addressed with carers. The registered manager and agency social worker advised the inspector that they have undertaken 'Training for Trainers' in the area of safeguarding, which will enable them to directly deliver training to carers. A further key area of 'Training for Trainers' has been identified by the agency; this will be accessed in future.

The agency has in place a system to ensure that all carers receive appropriate placement monitoring visits and that records are retained. The inspector was provided with a schedule of monitoring visits for 2016-17, and a range of completed placement monitoring visit reports, including announced and unannounced visits to carers. Carers providing long term placements receive three monitoring visits each year, one of which is unannounced; carers providing short term placements receive two monitoring visits each year. The inspector noted that a range of subjects are covered by monitoring reports, including areas which could impact on the provision of safe care to service users.

The UCO was advised by carers that unannounced monitoring visits are carried out on a regular basis by the agency and, when possible, include the person supported to gain their views of the placement. The UCO was also informed that the agency regularly contacts the relatives to ensure their satisfaction with the placement.

The agency's provision for the welfare, care and protection of service users was examined by the inspector. The inspector viewed a policy maintained by the agency in relation to the safeguarding of adults, which reflects most up to date guidance.

Safeguarding training information and hand-outs provided to carers and seen by the inspector reflect the regional guidance and ‘Adult Safeguarding Operational Procedures’ September 2016. The inspector was advised that carers receive safeguarding training as part of induction and on an ongoing basis to reflect best practice; records confirmed this. Carers’ understanding of safeguarding training is assessed by evaluation and analysis of training events; records of responses are maintained. The inspector noted that evaluation forms completed by carers contained positive feedback regarding safeguarding training.

The inspector noted that safeguarding issues are discussed and recorded as part of monitoring visits and review meetings. The agency has appointed a safeguarding champion and safeguarding referrals are included as part of the quality monitoring process. The information pack provided to carers includes details of how to contact the agency social worker, or report concerns directly to the HSC Trust, including out of hours arrangements.

The registered manager and agency social worker discussed two safeguarding incidents, the agency’s response and co working arrangements with the HSC Trust. Records reviewed by the inspector indicated that safeguarding concerns were appropriately responded to and plans agreed with the HSC Trust were implemented.

The inspector examined the safety of the agency’s arrangements to identify and manage risk to service users. The agency operates within a risk management strategy and restrictive practice guidelines. The inspector examined appropriate risk assessments completed with individual service users in conjunction with the HSC Trust, which are regularly evaluated and reviewed. It was noted that the area of restrictive practice is included at each review; at present no service user is subject to a restrictive practice. Records of monitoring visits and review meetings seen by the inspector included areas of risk management, including health and safety aspects of the carer’s home environment and the service user’s knowledge of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Examples of some of the comments made by the carers or relatives are listed below:

- “Very much content with the placement; XXX is happy to go.”
- “Good communication between the carer and myself. Regular contact if the dates don’t suit or if anything is wrong.”

Of questionnaires returned by carers, ten were ‘very satisfied’ that care is safe and two were ‘satisfied’. Of questionnaires returned by service users/relatives, six were ‘very satisfied’ that care is safe.

**Areas for improvement**

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

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

The agency’s arrangements for appropriately assessing and meeting the needs of people who use the service were examined during the inspection. The full nature and range of service provision is laid out in the Statement of Purpose (2017), Carer Handbook (2017) and Service User Handbook (2017).

The inspector reviewed a range of care plans and risk assessments for service users. The registered manager and agency social worker informed the inspector that care plans and risk assessments are developed with service users and their relatives in conjunction with referral information provided by the HSC Trust referring social worker. The inspector noted that care plans included the wishes and signatures of service users and/or their relative. The inspector saw an example of how the agency involved a speech and language therapist to use a 'talking mat' communication aid, to facilitate a service user to express their views about the placement.

The UCO was advised by carers that their induction was very detailed and that they were provided with training and information regarding the service by the agency. Prior to a placement commencing the carer was provided with a risk assessment and care plan regarding the needs of the person supported and the agency amends the information as and when required.

The inspector was provided with 'easy read' placement agreements for service users which provide details of the placement offered. Records maintained by agency social workers outlined arrangements for the carer and service user to participate in a series of introductory meetings, as appropriate.

Records and feedback from the registered manager and agency social worker indicated that reviews of care and support plans take place three months after the commencement of a placement, and then annually, or if indicated by a change in circumstances. Records indicated that the Trust key worker, service user, relative and adult placement carer are invited to attend the review. The views of service users, carers and relatives are included in the review report produced by the agency. The inspector noted that care plans were updated accordingly in response in changes in the needs or wishes of service users, and carers advised in writing.

The UCO was advised by carers and relatives that multi-disciplinary reviews take place annually to discuss the placement. Relatives and carers provided feedback that they attend the meeting and the person supported is given the opportunity to attend if they wish to do so. The UCO was advised that if appropriate, the social worker meets separately with the service user to obtain their views.

The inspector examined a range of records maintained by agency social work staff in accordance with agency policy, legislation and standards. It was noted that records are clear, professionally written and include contribution from service users.

The agency maintains a system of quality monitoring to oversee, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of care delivered to service users. The inspector reviewed the Monitoring Quality in Adult Placement Agency report of February 2017 which was completed by the Head of Service. The comprehensive report included the views of service users, their relatives, adult placement carers, and referring professionals, ascertained specifically for the progress of annual quality monitoring. The inspector noted that the agency had received positive feedback from those consulted with. Progress from areas for action noted on the quality monitoring report of 2016 was commented on, analysis of incidents included, and areas for improvement for the coming year were set out. The agency has set out plans for further development of the adult placement agency, including enhancement of the professional staffing arrangements.



The agency maintains a schedule for the monitoring and review arrangements of adult placements, in accordance with regulatory requirements. Monitoring of the placement is undertaken on a regular basis by agency social workers, on an announced and unannounced basis; records of these visits were reviewed by the inspector. The views of service users are maintained formally via monitoring records, review records, and annual evaluation survey.

Records reviewed by the inspector provided examples of how the agency has responded to the views of service users and their families, including the involvement of professional keyworker or other specialist HSC Trust professionals to enhance service provision where appropriate. The Service User handbook included details of advocacy services.

The inspector found that the agency has a range of systems in place to promote effective communication between service users, relatives, adult placement carers and HSC Trust professionals. Methods of communication include: monitoring visits, review meetings, informal contact, carers' support events, training sessions, the carers' home file and the Shared Care leaflet. Information provided to carers and service users/their relatives included guidance on who to contact with concerns or if advice is needed, how to make a complaint, and contact details for the Regional Emergency Social Work Service and RQIA. A carer who provided feedback during the inspection process commented: "Shared care team keep regular contact re changes in service users circumstances."

The inspector found a range of examples of effective communication with HSC Trust professionals, including review meetings and contact records. As part of the inspection, the inspector received positive feedback from HSC Trust professionals regarding the communication with the agency and the quality of care provided by the adult placement to a service user.

The carers and relatives interviewed informed the UCO about the good communication that takes place between the carers, relatives and the agency regarding the placement. Examples given included holiday arrangements and handovers at the end of short term placements.

Examples of some of the comments made by the carers or relatives to the UCO are listed below:

- "Very fortunate with the support."
- "XXX doesn't like to attend formal meetings so the agency arranges the meetings at my house."
- "No issue with changing days for holidays etc."

Of questionnaires returned by carers, ten were 'very satisfied' that care is effective and two were 'satisfied'. Of questionnaires returned by service users/their relatives, six were 'very satisfied' that care is effective.

### **Areas for improvement**

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

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

The inspector found evidence to indicate that the culture and ethos of the agency support the values of dignity and respect, independence, rights, equality and diversity, choice and consent of service users.

Feedback received by the inspector as part of the inspection process from service users, carers, relatives, and agency social work staff, indicated that the needs and wishes of service users are central to service provision. During the inspection the inspector had the opportunity to observe the registered manager interacting with service users. It was evident to the inspector that the registered manager had a good relationship with service users, understood their needs, and responded to their views. The agency social worker commented “(Shared Care) contributes to the lives of service users in a positive way.”

Discussion with the registered manager and agency social worker indicated that service users are treated with dignity and respect throughout the matching, introduction, and review processes. The inspector viewed a range of records completed by the agency social worker which were clearly written and reflected values of dignity and respect for service users’ wishes and opinions.

The views of service users are recorded in reports of monitoring visits and placement reviews. A range of documents seen by the inspector contained the views of carers, including monitoring visit reports, review forms, and information awareness report forms. The annual survey completed by service users and carers provided positive feedback regarding the agency, and the service users’ experiences of shared care.

Examples of feedback in the annual evaluation survey include:

##### **Service users’ comments:**

- “It’s a happy place.”
- “When I go to \*\*\*\*’s home I feel happy, good, relaxed and loved.”
- “I feel part of the family and I belong there.”
- “I feel safe there.”

##### **Carer’s comments:**

- “Our social workers are all so supportive and approachable.”

Records seen by the inspector reflected examples of how the agency has worked to promote the equality and diversity of service users; for example by maintaining processes where the views of service users are central to service provision. The inspector received feedback and saw documentation which indicated that the consent of service users is ascertained and valued appropriately; for example, when considering the shape or future of a placement. The inspector spoke with an HSC Trust speech and language therapist who was involved in facilitating a service user to express their views about their placement by use of a pictorial communication aid specific to their needs.

The inspector found that the agency has published a range of information in a format suitable to the needs of service users, including the service users' handbook, service user agreement, annual evaluation survey and complaints form. The agency provides examples of 'easy read' format human rights guide and equality scheme leaflet provided to service users. The registered manager discussed how communication during training sessions has been provided in a manner which meets the needs of carers. The inspector was shown examples of information in a written format provided to carers to help them understand the specific needs and cultural background of a service user.

The inspector found that the agency has a range of processes in place to support communication with carers, service users and/or their relatives, in a manner which indicates their responses are listened to and valued. Records indicated that the agency social worker have regular contact with carers, relatives, and service users through announced and unannounced monitoring visits and review meetings. In addition, records indicated that the registered manager and agency social worker provide support to carers through support events, training sessions, and visits or phone calls when indicated. Discussion with the agency social worker showed that the agency is sensitive and responsive to the support needs of carers, relatives and service users.

#### **Agency social worker's comments:**

- "I can see the connection they've made (service user) with the host carer."
- "It is very uplifting to see their (service users') enjoyment."

The agency has established and maintained systems to evaluate the quality of services provided, including; announced and unannounced placement monitoring visits, quality monitoring report undertaken by a senior manager and an annual evaluation survey. The inspector read the Monitoring Quality in Adult Placement Agency report of February 2017, which included the views of a range of stakeholders including carers and service users, progress on actions planned from the previous year's report, and actions for improvements going forward.

The agency maintains a policy in relation to record keeping, information security, and confidentiality; training records indicated that carers receive guidance on this aspect of the caring role.

The UCO was informed by all of the carers and relatives interviewed that service users are asked to provide feedback regarding the placement to their reviews and monitoring visits. The method used depends on the wishes of the person supported.

No concerns regarding the care being provided to service users were raised with the UCO.

#### **Carers and relatives comments:**

- "Fitted in straight away."
- "It's like home from home. XXX joins in with the family's activities. If we have a family outing, they go too."
- "Just like part of the family. We all sit down and decide what we are going to do at the next visit." "Never had an issue. They treat XXX like part of the family."
- "Never had an issue. They treat XXX like part of the family."

**Professional's comments:**

- “Shared care is like extended family, \*\*\*\* is happy in shared care.”
- “The (host) family are understanding of \*\*\*\*’s disability and personality.”

**Service users' comments:**

- “\*\*\*\* (carer) is my friend. I go dancing, watch TV, do colouring in.”
- “I love her (carer). I like going to \*\*\*\*’s house, it’s good fun.”

Of questionnaires returned by carers, eleven were ‘very satisfied’ that care is compassionate and one was ‘satisfied’. Of questionnaires returned by service users/relatives, six were ‘very satisfied’ that care is compassionate.

**Areas for improvement**

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

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

The inspector examined management and governance systems in place to meet the needs of service users. It was noted that the agency maintains a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are reviewed at least every three years. Policies and procedures are maintained on an electronic system accessible to all agency social work staff, and relevant policies are included in a handbook provided to carer. The Statement of Purpose (2017), Carers’ handbook (2017) and Service user handbook (2017) are kept under review.

The agency maintains and implements policy relating to complaints and compliments. The inspector noted that no complaints were recorded during the reporting period of 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

The inspector saw evidence of review of information with the aim of improving service quality for service users at the agency. This includes the agency’s governance of risk which includes appropriate policies and procedures, regular audit and learning from adverse incidents including safeguarding incidents and incidents notifiable to RQIA.

The management structure of the agency is clearly defined and was well understood by agency social work staff, carers, and service users. The inspector found that carers were informed of their responsibilities and understood their roles; this was evidenced through carers written comments to the agency, through information provided to the UCO and feedback from RQIA questionnaires. Written and verbal guides to roles and responsibilities have been made available to carers through the carers’ handbook, training sessions and monitoring visits. The inspector was advised by the registered manager and agency social worker that carers are encouraged to contact them for advice and guidance at any time. The inspector noted that the agency had recorded comments from carers and relatives who indicated that good support had been available from agency social work staff. A carer provided feedback to the inspector: “Excellent relationship between shared care team and host families.”

Feedback provided to the inspector indicated that there are effective collaborative working relationships with key stakeholders, including the HSC Trust. Two HSC Trust professionals provided positive feedback to the inspector regarding their working relationship with the agency.

All of the relatives and carers who spoke with the UCO confirmed that they receive good support from the agency’s team of staff as well as the service user’s social worker. Regular communication was confirmed, either through home visits or phone calls to ensure that there were no concerns regarding the placement.

All carers and relatives who provided feedback to the UCO were aware of whom they should contact with concerns regarding the placement and were aware of the out of hours support available to them.

Examples of some of the comments made by the carers or relatives are listed below:

- “The agency staff are all very, very nice. Can talk openly with them.”
- “Good support from the social worker.”
- “Very pleased with them.”
- “The service is a great help to me. Would be lost without it.”

Of questionnaires returned by carers, eleven were ‘very satisfied’ that the service is well led and one was ‘satisfied’. Of questionnaires returned by service users/relatives, six were ‘very satisfied’ that the service is well led.

**Areas for improvement**

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

<b>Number of requirements</b>	0	<b>Number of recommendations</b>	0
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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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