

Announced Care Inspection Report 20 March 2018



Southern Health & Social Care Trust Adult Placement Scheme

Type of Service: Adult Placement Agency

**Address: Drumcashel House, 2a Rathfriland Road, Newry,
BT34 1HU**

Tel No: 028 3025 6780

Inspector: Jim McBride

User Consultation Officer: Clair Mc Connell (UCO)

www.rqia.org.uk

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

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

1.0 What we look for



2.0 Profile of service

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 a HSC Trust professional. The scheme is located in the Newry and Mourne, Craigavon and Banbridge localities; operated by Angela Murnion the registered manager.

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 26 adults within placements with 28 Adult Placement Carers.

3.0 Service details

Organisation/Registered Provider: Southern Health and Social Services Trust	Registered Manager: Angela Murnion
Responsible Individual: Mr Francis Rice	
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Angela Murnion	Date manager registered: Angela Murnion – 04 January 2017

4.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection took place on 20 March 2018 from 09.00 to 13.00.

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

Evidence of good practice was found in relation to:

- carer recruitment
- induction
- communication and engagement with service users and other relevant stakeholders
- person centred care
- carer training
- quality monitoring
- home monitoring visits announced/unannounced

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 Angela Murnion, 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 14 March 2017

No further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 14 March 2017.

5.0 How we inspect

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

- discussion with the manager
- discussion with a service user
- examination of records
- user consultation officer report (UCO)
- evaluation and feedback

Prior to the inspection a range of information relevant to the service was reviewed. This included the following records:

- the previous inspection report
- any correspondence received by RQIA since the previous inspection
- records of any notifiable events

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- quality monitoring reports
- a number of care and support plans
- carer training records including; safeguarding , medication, data protection, fire safety, record keeping, complaints, communication, managing service users' monies, whistleblowing
- records management policy 2016
- safeguarding policy 2016
- data protection 2017
- record keeping 2016
- carers recruitment 2016
- statement of purpose 2018
- carer handbook 2018

The agency requires carers to evaluate training following each session the inspector has noted some of the comments received from carers following training:

- "Very good easy to understand."
- "Excellent and enjoyable."
- "Training was very effective."
- "Good training."

As part of the inspection the UCO spoke with three carers, by telephone, on 29 March 2018 to obtain their views of the service provided by the Agency.

During the inspection the inspector spoke with the manager regarding the care and support provided by the agency, carer training and carers' general knowledge in respect of the agency. The inspector also had the opportunity to speak with a service user.

Service user comments:

- "Happy with activities at carer's house."
- "I feel safe with them."

The inspector would like to thank the agency staff and service user for their warm welcome and full co-operation throughout the inspection process.

Prior to the inspection the manager was asked to distribute a number of questionnaires to service users/relatives and carers seeking their views on the quality of the service. The responses show clear evidence that people were satisfied or fully satisfied with the quality of the service highlighting that it is safe, effective, compassionate and well led.

The findings of the inspection were provided to the person in charge at the conclusion of the inspection.

6.0 The inspection

6.1 Review of areas for improvement from the most recent inspection dated 14 March 2017

The most recent inspection of the agency was an announced care inspection.

6.2 Review of areas for improvement from the last care inspection dated 14 March 2017

There were no areas for improvement made as a result of the last care inspection.

6.3 Inspection findings

6.4 Is care safe?

Avoiding and preventing harm to service users from the care, treatment and support that is intended to help them.

The carers interviewed informed the UCO that the person supported was treated like a family member. One carer has recently gone through the process to be approved as a carer; and advised that they received an appropriate level of support and induction from the agency. The carers interviewed confirmed that training takes place both as part of their induction and on a regular basis. Additional training can be requested depending on the needs of the person being supported. Training was felt to be beneficial and the agency provides a choice of locations, dates and times.

The inspector reviewed the agency's systems in place to avoid and prevent harm to service users; this included a review of carer arrangements in place within the agency.

The agency's carer recruitment policy outlines the process for ensuring that required checks are completed prior to commencement of any placement. The manager stated that they ensure that carer checks are in place. Documentation viewed and discussions with the registered manager indicated that the agency's recruitment systems are effective for ensuring that carers are not provided with a placement until required checks have been satisfactorily completed.

The agency's induction policy outlines the carer induction programme required within the adult placement regulations.

A record of the induction programme provided to carers is retained; the inspector viewed records of individual induction and noted that they are verified by the registered manager. Discussions with manager indicated that current carers had the appropriate knowledge and skills to fulfil the requirements of their role.

The inspector viewed details of training completed by carers; it was noted that they are required to complete induction training, a range of mandatory training and training specific to the needs of individual service users.

The agency's policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding adults and whistleblowing were reviewed. The 'Safeguarding' policy and procedure provided information and guidance in accordance with the required standards. The policy has been updated in line with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI) updated adult safeguarding guidance issued in July 2015 ('Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in (Partnership)'). The agency has highlighted the identification and role of an Adult Safeguarding Champion.

The agency maintains a record of referrals made to the Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) safeguarding team and other relevant stakeholders relating to alleged or actual incidences of abuse. Documentation viewed and discussions with the manager indicated that the agency has made no referrals in relation to adult protection matters since the previous inspection.

It was identified that carers are required to complete safeguarding training during their induction programme and a three yearly update.

The inspector reviewed the agency's arrangements for identifying, managing and where possible eliminating unnecessary risk to service users' health, welfare and safety. The agency's protocol for assessment of needs and risk outlines the process for assessing and reviewing risk.

It was identified that the agency receives a range of relevant information and assessments relating to individual service users prior to them receiving care and support. The agency has a range of risk assessments and care plans in place relating for individual service users. The manager described how service users and/or their representatives are supported to be involved in the development and review of their care plans; these are reviewed and updated as required. The inspector noted some comments made by service users and relatives during their annual care review:

- "I'm satisfied with the placement."
- "This is my second home."
- "I have a role in this family."
- "I' happy ***** is good to me."

- “Mrs ***** is the best I enjoy going there.”

Returned questionnaires from service users indicated that safe care meant:

- Carers are always there to help you
- You feel protected and free from harm
- You can talk to carers if you have concerns

Returned questionnaires from carers indicated that safe care meant:

- They meet the needs of the adult placed in their home
- They have received all mandatory training
- They have received safeguarding training
- They are aware of your responsibility and the process for reporting any concerning or unsafe practice.

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Areas of good practice:

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to the agency’s carer recruitment processes, training and adult protection.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

6.5 Is care effective?

The right care, at the right time in the right place with the best outcome.

The UCO was advised that the carers receive an induction, training and information regarding the person supported from the agency. Communication was noted to be very good between the agency and carers regarding any concerns or changes to the care plan. Reviews take place annually to discuss the care package, and the person supported and carers have an opportunity to attend if they wish to do so.

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

- “Made the process so easy. Took us through it step by step.”
- “XXX (social worker) is fantastic.”
- “Always on the end of a phone if I need them.”
- “I can’t always make the training as the times don’t suit. More morning sessions would be better for me.”

The agency’s arrangements for appropriately responding to and meeting the assessed needs of service users were reviewed. Details of the nature and range of services provided are outlined within the Statement of Purpose and Carers Handbook.

The agency's management of records policy details the procedures for the creation, storage, retention and disposal of records. Records viewed during the inspection were noted to be maintained in accordance with legislation, standards and the organisational policy. Carer and service user records viewed by the inspector were noted to be retained securely.

The manager could describe the methods used for supporting service users to be effectively engaged in the development of their care plans; it was noted that carers are provided with a copy of the care plan and service users have access to this.

The inspector reviewed the agency's arrangements in place to monitor, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of care delivered to service users. The agency has a system in place for monitoring the quality of the service provided; it was noted that the process involves an annual audit being completed by a senior manager. The inspector noted that the annual quality review was completed by the Head of Service in January 2018. The annual report shows clear satisfaction levels pertaining to:

- placements
- good service from the staff team
- the growth of the scheme
- training

The agency also ensures the effectiveness of the care and support by completing regular monitoring visits. Records of monitoring visits were noted to include details of the review of the agency's systems and an improvement plan. The documentation includes details of the review of accidents, incidents or safeguarding referrals, complaints, medication, care plans and staffing arrangements. The person completing the monitoring visit records the comments made by service users, and where appropriate their representatives. The inspector noted some of the comments made by service users during the visits:

- "I love living with **** &**** I love the room."
- "I look forward going to my new family."
- "I love my tea here."
- "I like going to ***** and going out on Saturday night."
- "If I have a problem I can talk to*****".
- "We love coming to *****&***** , I love the interaction with the children and discussion with *****".

The inspector noted the areas monitored during visits to carers homes:

- record keeping
- data protection
- safeguarding adults/child protection
- communication
- medication management
- fire & home & safety
- managing service users' money
- complaints procedures
- RQIA

This area of good practice is to be commended.

The agency's systems to promote effective communication between service users, carers and relevant stakeholders were reviewed during the inspection. Discussions with the manager indicated that carers communicate appropriately with service users and where appropriate there representatives.

Returned questionnaires from service users indicated that effective care meant:

- You get the right care, at the right time in the right place
- The carers know your care needs
- Your care plan is discussed and agreed with you
- Your care meets your expectations

Returned questionnaires from carers indicated that effective care meant:

- They believe that the adult placed has been assessed and are in the right place for their needs to be met?
- They are kept informed of changes to the adult placed care plan
- They have good working relationships with their social worker?

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to the agency's auditing arrangements, quality monitoring and communication with service users and carers.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

6.6 Is care compassionate?

Service users are treated with dignity and respect and should be fully involved in decisions affecting their treatment, care and support.

The UCO was informed by all of the carers interviewed that the agency is in regular contact to obtain their views of the service being provided. No concerns regarding the care being provided to the person supported were raised with the UCO during the discussions.

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

- "Part of the family."
- "XXX is really happy. They would certainly let us know if they weren't."
- "It hasn't always suited us, but the agency does try and organise support groups and day trips for us. It's great to be able to talk with other carers."

The inspection assessed the agency's ability to treat service users with dignity, respect and compassion and to engage service users in decisions affecting the care they receive.

Discussions with manager indicated that the values such as choice, dignity and respect were embedded in the culture of the agency.

The manager could describe the methods used for supporting service users to make informed choices and for respecting their views and wishes.

There are a range of systems in place to promote effective engagement with service users and where appropriate their representatives in conjunction with the HSCT community keyworker; they include the agency's quality monitoring processes; complaints process, care review meetings and carers monitoring and training updates. It was identified that the agency's quality monitoring process assists in the evaluation of the quality of the service provided and in identifying areas for improvement.

The agency has processes in place to record comments made by service users. Quality monitoring reports viewed by the inspector provided evidence that the agency endeavours to engage with service users and carers and where appropriate their representatives in relation to the quality of the service provided. The agency completes an annual quality review seeking comments on the quality of the service from service users and relatives.

The inspector noted some of the areas service users have the opportunity to comment on:

- What do you think about your host family home?
- Who lives at your host family home with you?
- Do you like living with?
- What do you like about your host family home?
- What do you not like about your host family home?
- What help do you need at your host family home?
- Are you given choices at your host family home?

It was good to note the positive satisfaction levels with the above.

Returned questionnaires from service users indicated that compassionate care meant:

- Carers treat you with kindness
- Carers ensure you are respected and that your privacy choices and dignity is maintained
- Carers talk to you about your care
- Carers support you to make decisions about your care.

Returned questionnaires from carers indicated that compassionate care meant:

- They treat adults placed with kindness, dignity and respect
- Care is delivered by you in a person centred individual manner
- They communicate with the adult placed about their care and treatment in a manner which is understood.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice identified in relation to the agency's processes for engaging with service users, effective communication with carers and providing care in an individualised person centred manner.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

6.7 Is the service well led?

Effective leadership, management and governance which creates a culture focused on the needs and experience of service users in order to deliver safe, effective and compassionate care.

All of the carers who spoke with the UCO confirmed that they receive good support from the agency's team of staff. Regular communication was confirmed, either through home visits, phone calls and emails to ensure that there were no concerns regarding the placement. All were aware of whom they should they contact if they had any concerns regarding the placement and were aware of the out of hours support available to them.

The agency has systems of management and governance in place to promote the delivery of safe, effective and compassionate care. The agency is currently managed on a day to day basis by the registered manager.

The agency has a range of policies and procedures noted to be in accordance with those as required within the regulations. During the inspection the inspector viewed a number of policies; it was identified that a number viewed had been reviewed and updated in accordance with timescales. The manager stated that a number of policies are currently being reviewed by the SHSCT as outlined within the draft minimum standards.

The agency's systems for auditing and reviewing information with the aim of promoting safety and improving the quality of life for service users were reviewed. Records viewed and discussions with the manager indicated that the agency's governance arrangements promote the identification and management of risk; these include provision of required policies, audit of complaints, accidents, safeguarding referrals and incidents notifiable to RQIA.

The agency's complaints policy outlines the process for effectively handling complaints; discussions with the manager indicated a clear understanding of the actions required in the event of a complaint being received.

The agency retains a record of all complaints or compliments received. It was noted from discussions with staff and records viewed that the agency has received no complaints since the previous inspection.

Records viewed and discussions with the manager indicated that the agency has in place effective management and governance systems to monitor and improve quality.

The organisational and management structure of the agency is outlined in the agency's statement of purpose. The registered person has worked effectively with RQIA to operate and lead the organisation in maintaining compliance with regulations. There was evidence of ongoing, effective collaborative working relationships with relevant stakeholders, including other HSCT representatives. The agency's statement of purpose and service user handbook were noted to have been reviewed and updated in (2018)

The manager had a clear understanding of both her and the carer's roles and responsibilities.

The registered provider has worked effectively with RQIA and maintained their roles and responsibilities in accordance with legislation. The registered person has shown an ability to respond appropriately to regulatory matters and led the organisation in maintaining compliance with Regulations.

On the date of inspection the RQIA certificate was noted to be displayed appropriately and was reflective of the service provided.

Returned questionnaires from service users indicated that well led care meant:

- You are always informed about your carer
- You feel the service is good
- Your views are sought about your care and the quality of the service
- You know how to make a complaint

Ten returned questionnaires from carers indicated that well led care meant:

- There is a culture of carer involvement in the running of the service
- There is a culture of continuous quality improvement and all carers are encouraged to bring forward new ideas and innovations
- Social workers and agency staff are approachable and open to whistleblowing or raising concerns

Areas of good practice:

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to the agency's governance arrangements.

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 9051 7500
Email info@rqia.org.uk
Web www.rqia.org.uk
 [@RQIANews](https://twitter.com/RQIANews)