

Announced Care Inspection Report 27 February 2017



Learning Disability Supported Housing

Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency

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Inspector: Caroline Rix

www.rqia.org.uk

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

1.0 Summary

An announced inspection of Learning Disability Supported Housing took place on 27 February 2017 from 09.50 to 15.45 hours.

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?

During the inspection the inspector found evidence to indicate the delivery of safe care. Examination of the staffing arrangements showed that the agency maintains a provision of appropriately trained and supervised staff who understand the needs of service users. Staff provided feedback that managers are approachable and accessible for consultation at all times. The arrangements to protect service users include the provision of safeguarding training which reflects the most up to date regional guidance. The arrangements for the provision of care and support include appropriate involvement of service users, the HSC Trust and relatives. The inspector found evidence of positive outcomes for service users through a process of person centred assessment, and review of needs, preferences, and risks.

Is care effective?

During the inspection the agency was found to be delivering effective care. The agency has systems in place to ensure an effective response to the assessed needs of service users. Service users are fully involved in the development of care and support plans which are appropriately reviewed. The agency maintains effective communication with service users, relatives and key stakeholders. The quality monitoring arrangements include consultations with service users, their representatives and relevant HSC Trust professionals, and provide a thorough system of audit and service improvement. The inspector received feedback from a service user and staff which indicated that service provision had resulted in positive outcomes for service users' lives.

Is care compassionate?

During the inspection the agency was found to be delivering a high standard of person centred, compassionate care. The inspector observed interactions between staff and a service user and received feedback from service users and relatives which indicated that the human rights, choice and respect of service users are upheld through service delivery. There was evidence which indicated that the views and wishes of service users are consistently sought by staff on a day to day basis, in addition to formal processes such as monthly quality monitoring and the annual service user survey. The agency maintains systems to seek the views of service users and there was evidence of regular involvement of representatives as appropriate. The inspector noted that the provision of a high standard of compassionate care has enabled service users to enhance the quality of their lives.

Is the service well led?

During the inspection evidence confirmed delivery of a well led service. Management and governance systems are in place and implemented by the agency to ensure that the needs

of service users are met and quality improvement systems are maintained. Support staff are aware of their roles, responsibilities and accountability systems within the organisational structure. It was noted that staff have access to a manager who has knowledge of the needs of service users at all times. The inspector noted evidence of effective team working to the benefit of service users. Constructive working relationships with key stakeholders, including relatives and the HSC Trust, have contributed to positive outcomes achieved with service users.

This inspection was underpinned by the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards 2011.

1.1 Inspection outcome

	Requirements	Recommendations
Total number of requirements and recommendations made at this inspection	0	0

This inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations being made. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Jill Masterson, Acting Manager and Anne Campbell, the Operations 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

Registered organisation/registered person: Belfast HSC Trust/Martin Joseph Dillon	Registered manager: Jill Masterson (Acting Manager)
Person in charge of the service at the time of inspection: Jill Masterson	Date manager registered: 16 January 2017 (Acting Manager)

3.0 Methods/processes

Prior to inspection we analysed the following records:

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

During the inspection process the inspector spoke with Jill Masterson, the acting manager; a deputy manager; one support worker and one service user.

Service user comment

- 'I have good support but am waiting to find another place to live.'

Staff comment

- 'The support and care we provide in their homes is very valuable; we all put the service users' needs and rights first and work together as a team.'

As part of the inspection and at the request of the inspector, questionnaires were distributed for completion by staff; two were returned. At the request of the inspector, questionnaires were distributed for completion by service users/representatives; four were returned. Feedback received from questionnaires is included throughout this report.

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- Statement of Purpose
- Service User Guide
- Three care and support plans
- HSC Trust assessments of needs and risk assessments
- Care review records
- Recording/evaluation of care used by the agency
- Tenants meeting minutes
- Monthly monitoring reports
- Service user evaluation survey results
- Staff meeting minutes
- Records relating to staff training
- Records relating to staff supervision and appraisals
- Complaints records
- Compliments records
- Incident records
- Records relating to safeguarding of adults
- Staff communication records
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- A range of policies relating to the management of staff

4.0 The inspection

Learning Disability Supported Housing is a supported living type domiciliary care agency operated by the Belfast HSC Trust. The service provides care and supported housing services to 43 service users with mild to moderate learning disability. Service users live within their own homes' environments in Belfast, which are owned by various housing associations and landlords. Services provided include support with shopping, laundry, social and recreational activities, budgeting, maintaining service users' tenancy, support to attend medical appointments and support with personal care, as necessary.

4.1 Review of requirements and recommendations from the last care inspection dated 4 September 2015

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

4.2 Is care safe?

During the inspection staffing arrangements were reviewed by the inspector.

The agency has in place a recruitment policy and procedure; the organisation has a dedicated human resources department which oversees the recruitment process, including the completion of appropriate pre-employment checks. The procedure includes written confirmation provided by the human resources manager that the required pre-employment information and documentation was in place in line with the regulations. The inspector was informed that in the past 18 months, there had been no newly appointed support workers within the service.

Feedback from the support worker interviewed indicated that sufficient numbers of staff are available to meet the needs of service users. The inspector noted that vacant shifts had been covered by the current staff team. However, the manager confirmed that due to recently increased staff sick levels, there is now a need for the use of employment agency staff to commence as soon as possible. The manager explained that the use of employment agency staff will be limited to a small core of staff to meet their service users' needs. The inspector found evidence that the agency recognises the importance of staffing arrangements that maximise the provision of familiar staff to service users.

It was noted that the agency has an induction procedure in place. The induction programme for support workers was viewed, which includes a detailed induction programme and support mechanisms in place for both permanently appointed staff and employment agency staff. The registered manager discussed the agency's procedure for use of staff supplied by an employment agency and showed the inspector documentation relating to this process which was satisfactory.

Staff confirmed they have access to the organisations policies, procedures, and guidance.

Records of training and staff feedback indicated that staff attend a range of training necessary to meet the needs of service users. The organisation has a system of requiring staff to complete competency assessments subsequent to key training events, to ensure that learning objectives have been met, and to identify future learning needs.

The inspector received feedback from the manager and from a staff member, which indicated that the agency is committed to the ongoing development of staff through the provision of quality training. The manager advised the inspector that staff have attended training specific to the needs of individual service users, such as swallow awareness and challenging behaviour awareness training. The staff member provided very positive feedback regarding the quality and relevance of this training.

Staff commented:

- 'The training provided has been very good and tailored to our service users' particular needs. We can ask for any training we feel is needed to meet the service users' needs.'

Examination of records indicated that a system to ensure that staff supervision and appraisals are planned and completed in accordance with the agency's policy has been maintained. Staff feedback and the examination of records relating to supervision and appraisals confirmed that staff had received these in line with their policy and procedure. The staff member interviewed described how they can access informal supervision or consultation with a senior member of staff at any time if required.

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 (2016) in accordance with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety Northern Ireland (DHSSPSNI) updated vulnerable adults guidance issued in July 2015: 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership'. The inspector received feedback from staff and examined documentation which indicated that safeguarding training provided by the agency includes the updated regional guidance.

The inspector examined documentation relating to safeguarding referrals made to the HSC Trust safeguarding team and discussed the agency's implementation of appropriate support plans. The manager described effective partnership working with the HSC Trust multidisciplinary teams, including amendment of support plans and review of the process. Staff commented that they had felt listened to by the HSC Trust professionals.

Assessments of need and risk assessments examined by the inspector reflect the views of individual service users. Assessments of need and risk assessments are reflected in their care and support plan documentation. There was evidence of positive risk taking in collaboration with the service user and/or their representative, the agency and the HSC Trust.

The agency manager and staff member provided feedback which indicated that they had an understanding of the management of risk, and an ability to balance risk with the wishes and human rights of individual service users. It was evident from these discussions and review of records in respect of service users, that the agency is open to person centred positive risk taking and is able to work collaboratively with professionals to maximise independence of service users and manage potential risk.

Records of reviews showed that care is regularly evaluated and reviewed. The agency has a process of reviewing care and support plans monthly with service users, with at least a yearly review including a community worker from the HSC Trust. The views of service users and/or their representatives were recorded in review records. The inspector viewed a range of care and support plans which were written in a person centred manner, clearly included the service users' views throughout, and showed evidence of updating.

Of questionnaires returned by staff, all indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' that care was safe.

The questionnaires returned by service users/relatives indicated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' that care was safe.

During the inspection the inspector was able to observe staff communicate effectively with a service user whilst they were going about daily activities.

The inspector was able to speak to one service user who expressed satisfaction with the service received. The service user indicated that a recent change of accommodation had been unsettling, however, was being supported to identify a suitable new home.

Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of requirements	0	Number of recommendations	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 and Service User Guide.

The inspector reviewed three service users' care and support plans. The inspector was informed by staff that person centred care plans are developed with service users and their representatives, in conjunction with relevant assessments provided by the HSC Trust multi-disciplinary team. Examination of these care and support plans indicated that information from relevant assessments are incorporated accurately into care and support plans. Feedback received by the inspector from a staff member indicated that service users have a genuine influence on the content of their care and support plans.

Care and support plans reviewed by the inspector had a strong person centred focus, were up to date, and clearly detailed service users' needs and how they wished these to be met.

The service user and staff provided feedback to the inspector which indicated that the provision of care and support by the agency had resulted in positive outcomes for service users. The service user described the positive value of involvement in a range of activities and interests which are facilitated by staff support.

The agency has maintained a thorough quality monitoring system to oversee, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of care and support delivered to service users. Monthly quality monitoring is undertaken by a designated HSC Trust manager who has a good working knowledge of the service. Quality monitoring reports included consultation with a range of service users, staff and as appropriate HSC Trust professionals; and progress on improvement matters.

The inspector viewed evidence of effective communication with service users and their representatives, including a complaints process, tenants' group meetings, quality monitoring reports, and monthly support plan reviews between keyworker and service users.

During the inspection the inspector observed staff interactions with a service user and noted that the service user appeared to enjoy a positive relationship with staff; chatting freely about health issues, dietary choices and day centre activities enjoyed. Staff described how they

have learnt to communicate effectively with service users who have particular communication needs, for example by the use of sign language and visual aids.

The agency maintains communication systems to ensure that staff receive information relevant to the care and support of service users. Staff described effective verbal and written communication systems within the agency. It was noted that staff meeting minutes recorded the discussion of information regarding service users and a range of relevant issues including guidance provided by HSC Trust professionals. A staff member provided feedback to the inspector that they can contribute to the staff meeting agenda and feel that their views are heard.

Of questionnaires returned by staff, all indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' that care was effective. The questionnaires returned by service users/relatives indicated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' that care was effective.

Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of requirements	0	Number of recommendations	0
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4.4 Is care compassionate?

The inspection sought to assess the agency's ability to treat service users with dignity and respect, and to fully involve service users in decisions affecting their care and support. The inspector found that an ethos of dignity and respect, independence, rights, equality and diversity was reflected throughout staff attitudes and the delivery of the service.

Discussion with staff and observation of interactions with a service user during the inspection showed that staff understand and respect the needs and wishes of service users. The inspector observed that the language and behaviour of staff promoted the independence and choice of the service user throughout their interactions. For example, a service user was planning to attend the doctor's surgery for a blood test and also considering a return appointment to the dentist and was supported in this activity by staff.

Feedback from staff indicated that they have developed knowledge of individual service users through careful observation and interaction over time. The inspector noted that staff have made particular efforts to facilitate service users to achieve goals and do activities of their choice. It was evident from discussion with the service user and staff that the agency promotes the independence, equality and diversity of service users. Service users are encouraged and facilitated to participate in activities in the local and wider community, with appropriate staff support.

The inspector noted that service users' care and support plans was person centred, specific to the individual, which reflected service users' wishes or needs. The likes and dislikes of each service user were noted in detail in their file, alongside information about preferred means of communication and delivery of care and support.

The inspector reviewed examples of information provided to service users, such as how to make a complaint, human rights information, and how to stay safe. The documents were displayed in an easy to read pictorial format in the dining room and within individual service user files.

Questionnaires returned by staff all indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' that care was compassionate. The questionnaires returned by service users/relatives indicated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' that care was compassionate.

Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of requirements	0	Number of recommendations	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 robust systems of management and governance established by the organisation have been implemented at the agency. The day to day operation of the agency is overseen by an acting manager, supported by two deputy managers and a team of community support workers.

The management structure of the agency is clearly defined and was well understood by staff. The inspector saw evidence of a systematic approach to reviewing information with the aim of improving safety and quality of life for service users. This includes the agency's governance of risk, which includes appropriate policies and procedures; regular audit of adverse incidents, including safeguarding incidents and matters notifiable to RQIA; and service improvement strategies implemented by the senior management team.

The agency operates a robust training system and the organisation has a training department, who develop the training plan and timetable for all grades of staff and are available for consultation with staff on training and safeguarding issues.

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 staff, and paper policies are retained in the office used by staff daily.

The agency maintains and implements a policy relating to complaints and compliments. The inspector noted four complaints were received during the reporting period of 1 April 2015 to inspection date 27 February 2017. The inspector reviewed two of the complaints records which supported appropriate management, review and resolution.

The service user interviewed confirmed that she was aware of whom they could contact if had any concerns regarding the service.

The inspector reviewed compliments records received which included:

- 'Thanks to all the staff, which, for over 23 years have given support to xxxxx and helped to enable him to have an excellent quality of life. You worked tirelessly to ensure he was fully

supported and built an excellent relationship and rapport with him. Staff now continue to visit him in the care home which is much appreciated.’ (Letter from a relative).

- ‘Can’t say enough good things about the various people involved. The care and support xxx receives is excellent.’ (Thank you card from a relative).

The inspector examined the annual quality review report for 2015, which contained a wide variety of information including views of service users/representatives. This report had been shared with all service users, however declined to contribute or be involved in future surveys. The manager confirmed that the annual quality review for 2016 had been completed but the feedback had not yet been collated into a report. The manager gave satisfactory assurances that the 2016 annual quality review report would soon be completed and shared with service users.

The inspector noted that the agency had received positive feedback through the quality monitoring reports from HSC Trust professionals regarding the ability of the agency staff to work in partnership to meet the needs of service users. It was evident to the inspector that effective partnership working with other professionals has resulted in positive outcomes for service users.

Questionnaires returned by staff indicated they were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ that the service was well led. The questionnaires returned by service users/relatives indicated that they were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ that the service is well led.

Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of requirements	0	Number of recommendations	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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