

# Unannounced Care Follow Up Inspection Report 5 September 2019



## M Care Ltd

**Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency**  
**Address: Graham House, Knockbracken Healthcare Park,  
Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH**  
**Tel No: 02890703703**  
**Inspector: Aveen Donnelly**

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

M Care Ltd is a domiciliary care agency based in Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast. The agency provides domiciliary care provision to approximately 798 service users living in their own homes. The agency has a current staff compliment of 225 domiciliary care workers offering services which incorporate both personal care and domestic support. The service users in the main are older people, but some have physical disabilities, learning disabilities and mental health care needs. The services are commissioned by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (HSC trusts).

### 3.0 Service details

<b>Registered Organisation/ Provider:</b> M Care (NI) Ltd  <b>Responsible Individual:</b> Patrick John Miskelly	<b>Registered Manager:</b> Caroline Smyth (Acting)
<b>Person in charge at the time of inspection:</b> Operations manager	<b>Date manager registered:</b> Not applicable

### 4.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 5 September 2019 from 10.00 to 13.15.

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

Information received by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) prior to this inspection identified concerns in relation to the recruitment processes in place; that a number of staff had been employed without robust checks having been done. Whilst it is not the remit of RQIA to investigate whistleblowing concerns made by or on behalf of individuals, as this is the responsibility of the registered providers and the commissioners of care, where RQIA is notified of a potential breach of regulations or minimum standards, it will review the matter and take appropriate action as required.

In light of the concerns received, the inspection sought to examine the agency's recruitment processes.

On the day of inspection concerns were identified in relation to the recruitment processes, specifically in relation to the processing of AccessNI checks, employment references and the lack of governance and management oversight of the recruitment processes.

In accordance with RQIA's Enforcement Policy and Procedures, RQIA wrote to the registered person to advise of the intention to issue two notices of failure to comply with regulations. A meeting was held at RQIA offices on 16 September 2019 to discuss these matters. At this meeting, the responsible person provided clarity and satisfactory assurances that the actions and arrangements made and planned will ensure compliance with the required regulations.

On this basis RQIA were assured that M Care Ltd were taking appropriate action in respect of Regulation 13 (d) and Regulation 14(a)(b) and (d). RQIA have advised the registered person of their responsibility to maintain compliance with the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards, 2011.

RQIA will continue to monitor and review the quality of service provided in M Care Ltd. and may carry out an inspection to assess compliance with these regulations.

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
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	2	0

Areas for improvement and details of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) were discussed with the person in charge, as part of the inspection process. The timescales for completion commence from the date of inspection.

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

#### 4.2 Action/enforcement taken following the most recent care inspection dated 29 April 2019

No further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 29 April 2019.

#### 5.0 How we inspect

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

- information recently received anonymously by RQIA
- previous inspection report
- any correspondence or information received by RQIA since the previous inspection

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- recruitment records relating to four staff

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 29 April 2019

The most recent inspection of the agency was an unannounced care inspection. No areas for improvement were identified.

### 6.3 Inspection findings

During the inspection the inspector reviewed the agency's systems in place to avoid and prevent harm to service users; this included a review of the agency's staff recruitment procedures.

Whilst there was evidence that improvements had been made recently in relation to the recording of Access NI disclosures, the inspector was unable to evidence that the agency's recruitment policy had been adhered to in this regard for all staff. This related specifically to the recording of employment decisions following enhanced checks with Access NI. Concerns were also identified in relation to the appropriateness of employment references. RQIA were also concerned regarding the lack of governance and management oversight of the recruitment processes.

Following the inspection, a meeting was held at RQIA offices on 16 September 2019 to discuss these matters. At this meeting, the responsible person provided clarity and satisfactory assurances that the actions and arrangements made and planned will ensure compliance with the required regulations. Two areas for improvement have been made in relation to the recruitment processes and in relation to the governance and management oversight of the recruitment processes. A further unannounced inspection will be planned to ensure compliance with the regulations.

During the meeting held at RQIA offices on 16 September, the management arrangements of the agency were discussed. The agency is currently managed on a day to day basis by the acting manager. The responsible person has provided assurances to RQIA that they will be in the position to appoint a new manager within the next few months. When received, RQIA will review the application for registration.

#### Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement were made in relation to the recruitment processes and in relation to the governance and management oversight of the recruitment processes.

	Regulations	Standards
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	2	0

### 7.0 Quality improvement plan

Areas for improvement identified during this inspection are detailed in the QIP. Details of the QIP were discussed with the person in charge, as part of the inspection process. The timescales commence from the date of inspection.

The registered provider/manager should note that if the action outlined in the QIP is not taken to comply with regulations and standards this may lead to further enforcement action including possible prosecution for offences. It is the responsibility of the registered provider to ensure that all areas for improvement identified within the QIP are addressed within the specified timescales.

Matters to be addressed as a result of this inspection are set in the context of the current registration of the agency. The registration is not transferable so that in the event of any future application to alter, extend or to sell the premises RQIA would apply standards current at the time of that application.

### **7.1 Areas for improvement**

Areas for improvement have been identified where action is required to ensure compliance with the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

### **7.2 Actions to be taken by the service**

The QIP should be completed and detail the actions taken to address the areas for improvement identified. The registered provider should confirm that these actions have been completed and return the completed QIP via Web Portal for assessment by the inspector.

## Quality Improvement Plan

### Action required to ensure compliance with The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007

<p><b>Area for improvement 1</b></p> <p><b>Ref:</b> Regulation 13 (d) Schedule 3</p> <p><b>Stated:</b> First time</p> <p><b>To be completed by:</b> Immediate from the date of the inspection</p>	<p>The registered person shall ensure that no domiciliary care worker is supplied by the agency unless full and satisfactory information is available in relation to each of the matters specified in schedule 3.</p> <p>This refers specifically to the procedure for processing AccessNI checks, the accessibility of records and the appropriateness of references.</p> <p>Ref: 6.3</p>
	<p><b>Response by registered person detailing the actions taken:</b></p>
<p><b>Area for improvement 2</b></p> <p><b>Ref:</b> Regulation 14 (a)(b)(d)</p> <p><b>Stated:</b> First time</p> <p><b>To be completed by:</b> Immediate from the date of the inspection</p>	<p>The registered person shall ensure that there is governance and management oversight of the recruitment practices in place, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of service users.</p> <p>Ref: 6.3</p>
	<p><b>Response by registered person detailing the actions taken:</b></p>





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