

Inspection Report Adult Placement Agency

26 June 2023



Lakeview Adult Placement Agency

Type of service: Adult Placement Agency

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Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

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1.0 Service information

Organisation/Registered Provider: Western Health and Social Care Trust	Registered Manager: Ms Glenda Barnett
Responsible Individual: Mr Neil Guckian	Date registered: 27 June 2022
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Ms Glenda Barnett	
Brief description of the accommodation/how the service operates: Lakeview Adult Placement Agency is a community based shared care project that promotes the rights of the individual users to access a home from home adult placement in the community. This is through the provision of permanent placement/host placements in family homes where the individual has the opportunity to share family life. The agency currently has 45 adults within placements supported by 36 Adult Placement Carers.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection took place on 26 June 2023, at 9.45 a.m. and 1.30 p.m. by the care inspector.

This inspection focused on carer recruitment and induction, adult safeguarding, notifications, complaints, whistleblowing, deprivation of liberty safeguards (DoLS), service user involvement, monthly quality monitoring and dysphasia. Policies and procedures relating to the agency's governance and management arrangements were also reviewed.

Good practice was identified in relation to service user involvement. There were good governance and management arrangements in place.

Adult placement carers who spoke with us demonstrated strong caring values and were familiar with the choices and preferences of service users.

No areas for improvement were identified.

3.0 How we inspect

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how they were performing at the time of our inspection, highlighting both good practice and any areas for improvement. It is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure compliance with legislation, standards and best practice, and to address any deficits identified during our inspections.

As a public-sector body, RQIA have a duty to respect, protect and fulfil the rights that people have under the Human Rights Act 1998 when carrying out our functions. In our inspections of adult placement agencies, we are committed to ensuring that the rights of people who receive services are protected. This means we will seek assurances from providers that they take all reasonable steps to promote people's rights. Users of adult placement agencies (APAs) have the right to expect their dignity and privacy to be respected and to have their independence and autonomy promoted. They should also experience the choices and freedoms associated with any person living in their own home. The model "We Matter" Adult Learning Disability Model for NI 2020 states, 'We want individuals with a learning disability to be respected and empowered to lead a full and healthy life in their community'.

RQIA shares this vision and want to review the support individuals are offered to make choices and decisions in their life that enable them to develop and to live a safe, active and valued life. RQIA will review how service users are respected and empowered to lead a full and healthy life in the community and are supported to make choices and decisions that enables them to develop, and live safe, active and valued lives.

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4.0 What people told us about the service

We spoke with a selection of APA carers prior to the inspection. Information was also provided to APA carers and those supported on how they could give feedback on the quality of service provided and this included questionnaires. A number of questionnaires were returned in which people stated that they were very satisfied with the service provided.

APA carers' comments:

- "I have good communication with the manager. If I had any concerns, I would share them with the manager or the social worker. If I need anything extra the manager is very good and would try to sort it out. I have no complaints. The manager is very compassionate. I receive enough training; some of the training is delivered through the laptop and some is hands on; it is all very good."
- "I have been a carer for a very long time and I enjoy it. The communication with the service is very good. I know who to contact, if I had any concerns. The social worker has come to my home to provide me with training and the training is very good. It is all going very well."
- "The whole placement was made simple and pain free because of staff."

- “I believe that as a respite carer the allowance I receive is inadequate for the care and attention I give or to allow use to give treats or breaks away for the day etc.”
- “The recruitment process seems to be lacking. We had no replacement social worker for nine months.”

5.0 The inspection

5.1 What has this service done to meet any areas for improvement identified at or since last inspection?

The last inspection to Lakeview Adult Placement Agency was undertaken on 9 May 2022 by a care inspector; no areas for improvement were identified.

5.2 Inspection findings

5.2.1 Are there systems in place for identifying and addressing risks?

The agency's provision for the welfare, care and protection of service users was reviewed. The organisation's policy and procedures reflect information contained within the Department of Health's (DOH) regional policy 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership' July 2015 and clearly outlines the procedure for staff in reporting concerns. The organisation has an identified Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC).

Discussions with the manager demonstrated that they were knowledgeable in matters relating to adult safeguarding, the role of the ASC and the process for reporting adult safeguarding concerns. Carers were required to complete adult safeguarding training during their induction programme and updates thereafter in line with legislation and draft standards.

Staff and carers had a clear understanding of their responsibility in identifying and reporting any actual or suspected incidences of abuse. They could describe their role in relation to reporting poor practice and their understanding of the agency's policy and procedure with regard to whistleblowing.

The agency had a system for retaining a record of any referrals made to the Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust in relation to adult safeguarding. Records viewed and discussions with the manager indicated that no adult safeguarding referrals have been made since the last inspection.

Carers who spoke to us stated that they had no concerns regarding the safety of those supported; they described how they could speak to agency staff if they had any concerns in relation to safety or the care being provided.

There were systems in place to ensure that notifiable events were investigated and reported to RQIA or other relevant bodies appropriately. It was noted that incidents had been managed in accordance with the agency's policy and procedures.

The manager and staff demonstrated that they had an understanding that service users who lack capacity to make decisions about aspects of their care and treatment have rights as outlined in the Mental Capacity Act (MCA). The MCA requires that, as far as possible, service users make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed; any decisions made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible. MCA training had been completed by all carers as part of their induction programme.

Staff had completed Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) training appropriate to their job roles and carers had been provided with awareness training. Where service users were subject to DoLS, the required documentation was in place and was kept under regular review.

5.2.2 Are their robust systems in place for Carer Recruitment?

A review of the recruitment records confirmed that recruitment was managed in accordance with the Regulations and Minimum Standards; criminal record checks (AccessNI) had been completed for all current carers.

5.2.3 People supported involvement?

RQIA was assured that service users were central in directing their care plans as far as possible. This was confirmed by carers and staff. Easy read reports were provided which allowed service users to fully participate in all aspects of their care. The service users' care plans contained details about their likes and dislikes, the level of support they required and how this should be delivered; annual reviews of care were signed by service users, their family or representative or by an advocate. Care plans and associated risk assessments were noted to be written in a professional and respectful manner which promoted the dignity and confidentiality of the service user and all other relevant parties.

The agency completed an annual quality review which gave service users, families, carers and HSC Trust staff opportunity to comment on the service. The report noted feedback which was overwhelmingly positive:

Service users' comments:

- "Everything's great at home, we have good craic ... looks after me really well."
- "She is like my mum when I am with her."
- "I did enjoy being there."
- "... is really easy to talk to."

Service users' representatives' comments:

- "I'm very confident in sending him on his break ..."
- "We receive respite care for our son ... It is essential for him and us to get the breaks especially during the current pandemic ... many thanks to all those (staff) involved in putting services into place for him and our family. He really enjoys the breaks. We really appreciate it."

Carers' comments:

- "He is a delight to have in my home, he has grown so much in confidence, is good fun, has become so integrated into the family."
- "He's one of the family, it's always a tonic to have him. We look forward to him coming for his break. He's in the best form and is enjoying himself."
- "My best experience is my on-going learning experience"

Feedback provided by HSC Trust:

- "... these additional short break dates have been vital during the pandemic."
- "... have gone way above and beyond in the support they offer to the service users and ourselves."
- "Care provided by ... is essential to maintain community placement."

5.2.4 Carer induction in line with regulations?

The manager confirmed that an induction programme was available for newly recruited carers. The induction record reviewed was found to be in line with regulations and the draft standards.

5.2.5 Are there robust governance processes in place?

There were monitoring arrangements in place in compliance with regulations and draft standards. Records reviewed showed that monitoring visits were undertaken on a regular basis. This was where an agency staff member visited a carer's home when the service user was present, so that daily tasks could be observed in order to verify that carers were meeting the required standards. Reports relating to the agency's monitoring visits were reviewed and found to be satisfactory.

The manager had ensured that the quality assurance systems in place were effectively and positively impacting the quality of the service received by those supported. The service delivered was regularly reviewed through a range of internal audits and there was an annual satisfaction survey where feedback from people supported and their carers was sought. A review of the feedback indicated a high level of satisfaction.

There is a process for recording complaints in accordance with the agency's policy and procedures. It was noted that no complaints were received since the last inspection.

5.2.6 Are their arrangements in place for carer training?

Carers consulted with prior to the inspection spoke positively about the variety and level of training they had received to enable them to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of their role.

A review of the agency's training records confirmed that carers had received mandatory and other training relevant to their roles and responsibilities; for carers who required refresher training, dates were being arranged to complete the training.

5.2.7 Is there a system in place for identifying service users' Dysphagia needs in

The manager confirmed that the agency had received one recommendation from Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) in relation to a current service user. Records in place were reviewed and were satisfactory. A review of training records confirmed that Carers were provided with Dysphagia/swallowing awareness training.

6.0 Conclusion

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Ms Glenda Barnett, Registered Manager, as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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