

Inspection Report

27 April 2023



Cranny Close

Type of service: Domiciliary Care 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: Mrs. Denise O'Hagan
Responsible Individual: Mr. Neil Guckian	Date registered: 11 September 2018
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Mrs. Denise O'Hagan	
Brief description of the accommodation/how the service operates: Cranny Close is a domiciliary care agency supported living type which provides services to 15 service users who require care and support with mental health wellbeing. Service users live in their own homes and have the use of communal indoor and outdoor space. The manager leads a team of support staff who provide personal care services and support to maintain a tenancy.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 27 April 2023 between 10.15 a.m. and 2.50 p.m. The inspection was conducted by a care inspector.

The inspection examined the agency's governance and management arrangements, reviewing areas such as staff recruitment, professional registrations, staff induction and training and adult safeguarding. The reporting and recording of accidents and incidents, complaints, whistleblowing, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), service user involvement, restrictive practices, Dysphagia management and Covid-19 guidance was also reviewed.

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

No areas for improvement were identified.

The inspector would like to thank the manager, service users and staff for their help and support in the completion of the inspection.

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.

In preparation for this inspection, a range of information about the service was reviewed. This included any registration information and any other written or verbal information received from service users, relatives, staff or the Commissioning Trust.

As a public-sector body, RQIA has 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 domiciliary care 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 domiciliary care services 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 individual choices and freedoms associated with any person living in their own home.

Information was provided to service users, relatives, staff and other stakeholders on how they could provide feedback on the quality of services. This included questionnaires and an electronic survey.

4.0 What did people tell us about the service?

During the inspection we spoke with a number of two service users and three staff members.

The information provided indicated that there were no concerns in relation to the agency.

Comments received included:

Service users' comments:

- "Staff support me well...they give me lots of choice."
- "I'm very happy here...Staff support me great, especially with my medication and appointments...I love living here...I would speak to the staff if I was unhappy."

Staff comments:

- "The care is safe...we know what to do if a service user presents as ill or expresses a concern about something"
- "We are well supported ...staff meetings are regular and our supervisions are up to date."
- "I have worked here for years...the manager is great and has an open door policy."

No responses were received to the survey or questionnaires.

5.0 The inspection

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

The last care inspection of the agency was undertaken on 18 November 2021 by a care inspector. No areas for improvement were identified.

5.2 Inspection findings

5.2.1 What are the 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 adult safeguarding policy and procedures were reflective of the Department of Health's (DoH) regional policy and clearly outlined the procedure for staff in reporting concerns. The organisation had an identified Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC).

Discussions with the manager established that they were knowledgeable in matters relating to adult safeguarding, the role of the ASC and the process for reporting and managing adult safeguarding concerns.

Staff were required to complete adult safeguarding training during induction and every two years thereafter. Staff who spoke with the inspector had a clear understanding of their responsibility in identifying and reporting any actual or suspected incidences of abuse and the process for reporting concerns in normal business hours and out of hours.

Service users said they had no concerns regarding their safety; they described how they could speak to staff if they had any concerns about safety or the care being provided. The agency had provided service users with information about keeping themselves safe and the details of the process for reporting any concerns.

RQIA had been notified appropriately of any incidents that had been reported to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in keeping with the regulations. Incidents had been managed appropriately.

Staff were provided with training appropriate to the requirements of their role. This included medicines management.

The manager reported that none of the service users currently required the use of specialised equipment. They were aware of how to source such training should it be required in the future.

Care reviews had been undertaken in keeping with the agency's policies and procedures. There was also evidence of regular contact with service users and their representatives, in line with the commissioning trust's requirements.

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) provides a legal framework for making decisions on behalf of service users who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves.

The MCA requires that, as far as possible, service users make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When service users lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

Staff had completed appropriate Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) training appropriate to their job roles. The manager reported that none of the service users were subject to DoLS

The process for notifying RQIA in relation to individual service users' monies was confirmed with the manager.

5.2.2 What are the arrangements for promoting service user involvement?

From reviewing service users' care records it was good to note that service users had an input into devising their own plan of care. The service users' care plans contained details about their likes and dislikes and the level of support they may require. Care and support plans are kept under regular review and services users and /or their relatives participate, where appropriate, in the review of the care provided on an annual basis, or when changes occur.

It was also good to note that the agency had service users' meetings on a regular basis which enabled the service users to discuss the provisions of their care. Some matters discussed included:

- Kitchen equipment
- Organising a cleaner

Some comments included:

- "I am happy in Cranny Close."
- "Everything is ok."

5.2.3 What are the systems in place for identifying service users' Dysphagia needs in partnership with the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT)?

New standards for modifying food and fluids were introduced in August 2018. This was called the International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative (IDDSI). One service user was assessed by SALT with recommendations provided. A review of training records confirmed that staff had completed training in Dysphagia and in relation to how to respond to choking incidents.

Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of the service user's wishes, preferences and assessed needs. These were recorded within care plans along with associated SALT dietary requirements.

5.2.4 What systems are in place for staff recruitment and are they robust?

A review of the agency's staff recruitment records confirmed that all pre-employment checks, including criminal record checks (AccessNI), were completed and verified before staff members commenced employment and had direct engagement with service users. Checks were made to ensure that staff were appropriately registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) or the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) or any other relevant regulatory body; there was a system in place for professional registrations to be monitored by the manager.

There were no volunteers working in the agency.

5.2.5 What are the arrangements for staff induction and are they in accordance with NISCC Induction Standards for social care staff?

No new staff had recently been appointed to the service. The need for new staff to receive a robust, structured, three-day induction programme which also included shadowing of a more experienced staff member was highlighted to the manager. Written records were retained by the agency of the person's capability and competency in relation to their job role.

The agency has maintained a record for each member of staff of all training, including induction and professional development activities undertaken.

5.2.6 What are the arrangements to ensure robust managerial oversight and governance?

There were monitoring arrangements in place in compliance with Regulations and Standards. A review of the reports of the agency's quality monitoring established that there was engagement with service users, service users' relatives, staff and HSC Trust representatives. The reports included details of a review of service user care records; accident/incidents; safeguarding matters; staff recruitment and training, and staffing arrangements.

The Annual Quality Report was reviewed and was satisfactory. Comments from some service users' relatives were noted:

- "I am happy with the level of care my xxxx receives."
- "My relative's mental health has much improved since moving to Cranny Close."

No incidents had occurred that required investigation under the Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs) or Significant Event Audits (SEAs) procedures.

The agency's registration certificate was up to date and displayed appropriately.

There was a system in place to ensure that complaints were managed in accordance with the agency's policy and procedure. Where complaints were received since the last inspection, these were appropriately managed and were reviewed as part of the agency's quality monitoring process. It was positive to note that the agency had received a number of compliments since that last inspection

The Statement of Purpose required updating with RQIA's contact details. The person in charge agreed to submit the revised Statement of Purpose to RQIA post inspection.

Where staff are unable to gain access to a service user's home, there is a system in place that clearly directs staff from the agency as to what actions they should take to manage and report such situations in a timely manner.

6.0 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)/Areas for Improvement

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Mrs. Denise O'Hagan, Registered Manager as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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