

Unannounced Care Inspection Report 14 December 2017



The Heathers Supported Living Services (Armagh)

Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency
Address: 39 Ballynahonemore Road, Armagh, BT60 1JD
Tel No: 02837522209
Inspector: Jim McBride

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 Heathers is a supported living type domiciliary care agency based in Armagh. The agency provides a range of personal care and supported housing services to individuals with a learning disability; service users have their care commissioned by the local Trust (Southern Health and Social Care Trust) and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

At the time of the inspection there were 21 individuals in receipt of a service.

3.0 Service details

Organisation/Registered Provider: Inspire Disability Services Responsible Individual: Prof Peter Arthur James McBride	Registered Manager: Mrs Susan Margaret McBride
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Mrs Susan Margaret McBride	Date manager registered: 07/08/2015

4.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 14 December 2017 from 09.00 to 14.00.

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

Evidence of good practice was found in relation to:

- Staff training
- Staff recruitment
- Service user consultation
- Quality monitoring

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 Susan Mc Bride, 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 24 October 2016

No further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 24 October 2016.

5.0 How we inspect

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

- Previous RQIA inspection report
- Records of notifiable events
- Any correspondence received by RQIA since the previous inspection.

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

- Discussion with a range of staff
- Discussion with service users
- Examination of records
- Evaluation and feedback.

The following records were viewed during the inspection:

- Service users care records
- Monthly quality monitoring reports
- Tenants' meeting minutes
- Staff meeting minutes
- Staff induction records
- Staff training records pertaining to:
 - Safeguarding
 - Challenging behaviour
 - Medication
 - Manual handling
 - RESPECT
- Service users monies
- Records relating to staff supervision
- Complaints records
- Staff rota information
- Safeguarding Policy (2017)
- Statement of Purpose (2017)
- Service User Guide (2017).

During the inspection the inspector met with the registered manager, deputy manager two team leaders and three support workers. The inspector also had the opportunity to speak with two service user.

Service user comments made to the inspector:

- "I feel safe and secure here."
- "My keyworker is good."
- "I can talk to all the staff."
- "I enjoy all my activities."
- "I get good help from the staff."

Staff comments made to the inspector:

- “Good communication with all staff.”
- “My induction prepared me for my role.”
- “Good working relationships.”
- “Excellent ongoing training and development.”
- “Good person centred care.”
- “I was well supported by other staff during my induction.”
- “We support tenants in a professional manner.”
- “The manager has an open door policy and we have good relationships with all seniors.”

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

At the conclusion of the inspection a poster was left with the manager to encourage staff to contact RQIA via Survey Monkey to provide their views on the quality of this service.

At the time of issuing this report it was disappointing to note that no staff views had been returned to RQIA via Survey Monkey. The inspector spoke with a team leader on the 29 December 2017 who stated that the manager had issued the poster to staff.

The inspector also asked the manager to distribute ten questionnaires to tenant’s. Five questionnaires returned highlight positive feedback and comments have been included into the report.

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 24 October 2016

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

6.2 Review of areas for improvement from the last care inspection dated 24 October 2016

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.

Staff recruitment is co-ordinated and processed by the organisation's human resources (HR) department. Documentation viewed and discussions with the manager indicated that the agency has in place robust recruitment systems to ensure that staff are not provided for work until required pre-employment checks as outlined within the minimum standards have been satisfactorily completed and verified. The manager could describe the process for obtaining confirmation that staff are available to commence employment.

The agency's training and development policy outlines the induction programme lasting at least three days, which is in accordance with the regulations. Records viewed and discussions with the manager show that staff are required to attend corporate induction training and are required to complete an induction competency workbook. Staff are required to shadow other experienced staff employed by the agency for approximately two weeks during induction. The expectation is that staff complete the full induction programme within their initial nine month probationary period. Staff are provided with the agency's staff handbook and have access to the agency's policies and procedures online.

The agency retains a record of the induction programme provided to staff; documentation viewed by the inspector contained details of the information provided during the induction period and learning outcomes achieved by staff. The manager is required to sign all records to confirm that the staff member has been deemed competent at the end of the probationary period.

Discussions with the manager indicated that the agency endeavours to ensure that there is at all times an appropriate number of skilled and experienced persons available to meet the assessed needs of the individual service users. The agency's staff rota information viewed by the inspector reflected staffing levels as described by the manager; the rotas denoted the person in charge on each shift. The inspector viewed rota information for weeks ending: 17/12/17, 24/12/17 and 31/12/17, the records in place were satisfactory.

The agency's supervision and appraisal policies outline the timescales and processes to be followed. The inspector noted from documentation viewed that the agency provides staff with a supervision contract and maintains a record of individual staff supervision and appraisal. Records viewed by the inspector indicated that staff are provided with supervision and appraisal in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures.

It was identified that the agency maintains an individual record for all staff detailing dates of competency assessments, training completed and details of registration status with relevant regulatory bodies such as Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC).

The agency has an electronic system in place for managing staff training; the manager could describe the process for identifying gaps in training in conjunction with the organisations training department. Staff are required to complete required mandatory training and in addition a range of training specific to the needs of individual service users. Training provided to staff is a combination of classroom based and E Learning. The inspector viewed the agency's training matrix and training records maintained for individual staff members; those viewed indicated that staff had completed relevant training.

The inspector reviewed the agency's provision for the welfare, care and protection of service users. The person in charge could describe the agency's response to the DHSSPS regional policy 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership' July 2015. The agency has updated their policy and procedures to reflect information contained within the policy. The organisation has identified an Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC); the manager could describe their key areas of responsibility. The agency's policy and procedures clearly detail the process for staff on reporting concerns.

The manager demonstrated a clear understanding of safeguarding issues; and could clearly describe the procedure to be followed which is in accordance with the agency's policy and procedures.

Training records viewed by the inspector indicated that staff had received training in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults. From training records viewed staff are required to complete safeguarding vulnerable adults training during their induction programme, an online update annually and a classroom based update two yearly.

During the inspection 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 risk management policy outlines the procedure for assessing and reviewing risk; it details that comprehensive risk assessment and safety management plans are required to be completed in conjunction with service users. Service users are supported to participate in a six monthly review involving their HSC Trust keyworker and that care and support plans are reviewed six monthly or as required. The inspector noted some of the comments made by service users during their annual review:

- "I'm happy with the people I share with."
- "I enjoy the staff supporting me."
- "I engage well with staff."
- "I'm happy living in the Heathers."

A number of service users have more frequent reviews in conjunction with their identified HSC Trust representative due to the nature of their individual needs. The inspector viewed a range of risk assessments in place relating to individual service users; it was identified that the monthly governance arrangements include an audit of risk assessments and any practices deemed to be restrictive.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to: Recruitment, induction, training, supervision and appraisal; adult safeguarding and management of risks.

Five returned questionnaires from service users indicated that safe service meant:

- there are enough staff to help you
- you feel protected and free from harm
- you can talk to staff if you have concerns

Comment:

- “I feel safe care helps me with happy feeling.”

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 agency’s data retention policy details the procedures for the creation, storage, retention and disposal of records. The inspector noted that records viewed during the inspection were maintained in accordance with legislation, standards and the organisational policy. It was identified that records are retained securely. Staff records indicated that they had received training relating to record keeping, confidentiality and data protection. On the day of inspection the agency’s staff personnel and service users’ records were retained securely and in an organised manner.

The manager could describe how service users are encouraged and supported to be fully involved in the completion of individual risk assessments and development of their care plans. During the inspection the inspector viewed a number of service user care records; staff record daily the care and support provided and that the views and choices of service users are reflected.

Discussions with the manager indicated that there are arrangements in place to monitor, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of care delivered to service users. The inspector identified that monthly quality monitoring visits are completed by a range of service managers and assistant directors and an action plan developed.

The inspector viewed records of quality monitoring visits and noted that there is evidence that the system is robust; it was noted that comments made by service users, and where appropriate their representatives were included. The record includes details of the review of accidents, incidents or safeguarding concerns and in addition details of the review of staffing arrangements, documentation, finance and training.

Comments received during the monthly quality monitoring:**Service users' comments:**

- "I'm well supported."
- "I'm happy with the care and support."
- "Staff provide good support."

Staff Comments:

- "Good staff team."
- "I'm well supported and there is good team morale."
- "I have been able to put all my training into practice."
- "Staff and management are very supportive."
- "I've been through all my induction and training."

Relative's comments:

- "I'm more than happy with the quality of the service and in particular staff member*****."

HSC Trust representatives' comments:

- "I'm happy with the quality of care and support."
- "***** has been of great support ensuring consistency of approach during the transition process."

The manager could describe a range of ways in which the agency seeks to maintain effective working relationships with relatives, HSC Trust representatives and other stakeholders.

Discussions with the manager and observations made during the inspection indicated that the agency has systems to promote effective communication between service users, staff and other key stakeholders. Observations of interactions with service users during the inspection indicated that they communicate appropriately with service users. The agency facilitates service user meetings. The agency maintains a record of items discussed; they also include the views of service users. The inspector noted some of the areas discussed during meetings:

- staff changes
- activities
- concerns/issues
- outings

Staff meetings are facilitated; staff are required to sign the minutes of meetings to indicate that they have read and understood the matters discussed and the information provided. The inspector noted some of the areas discussed during meetings:

- medication
- confidentiality
- service users
- health and safety
- risk assessment
- support planning

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to communication between service users, agency staff and other relevant stakeholders and the monitoring of the quality of the services provided.

Five returned questionnaires from service users indicated that effective service meant:

- you get the right care, at the right time in the right place
- the staff knew their care needs
- you are kept aware of your care plans
- your care meets your expectations

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.

Discussions with the manager and observations made by the inspector indicated that the promotion of values such as choice, dignity and respect were embedded in the culture and ethos of the organisation. The manager could describe examples of how staff support service users to take positive risks to enable them to live a more fulfilling life. Staff have been provided with training and information in relation to human rights and confidentiality during their induction programme. The agency has provided service users with information relating to human rights, advocacy and adult safeguarding.

From observations of the staffs interactions with service users during the inspection it appears that all staff endeavour to provide care in an individualised manner and strive to ensure that service users are encouraged and supported to make informed choices. Records of service user meetings reflected the involvement of service users and contained comments/suggestions made by service users.

Comments made by service users and where appropriate their representatives were detailed throughout a range of the agency's documentation. Processes to effectively engage and respond to the comments and views of service users and where appropriate their representatives are maintained through the agency's complaints process, one to one meetings with service users, monthly quality monitoring visits, six monthly care review meetings involving HSC Trust keyworkers, stakeholder and service user satisfaction surveys and tenant meetings. It was identified from records viewed that the agency's quality monitoring process assists in the evaluation of the quality of the service provided and in identifying learning outcomes and areas for improvement.

Observations made by the inspector during the inspection indicated that service users are encouraged to make choices regarding their individual daily routine and activities. The inspector noted that service users could speak to staff at any time.

Positive feedback was received from the annual customer satisfaction survey completed by the agency including the areas that service users had the opportunity to comment on:

- Staff support me to ensure my house looks well inside and out and everything is in working order
- I am happy with my house and the support and care I receive
- I feel safe in my own home & where I live
- I can understand the information given to me. It is easy to read
- Staff ask me about what is important to me and what I like
- Staff talk to me about changes within Inspire or within my own services
- Staff treat me fairly and with respect
- Staff talk to me when something is bothering me and staff support me to make a complaint when I need to
- Staff support me to attend activities in my local area
- Staff support me to do things I want to do on my own.

Comments received from service users during the survey:

- "*** Is happy with *** care & support."
- "*** Is happy with the care & support *** get."
- "*** Is happy with the supported living and no issues with the service and the care."
- "*** states that *** would like to get out more."

The agency also sought the views of next of kin during the survey. They were given the opportunity to comment on the following with positive results being highlighted.

- Are you happy with the service provided by staff at The Heathers?
- Are you happy with the care and support provided to your family member?
- Do you see any improvement in your family member's health and wellbeing since they came to The Heathers?
- Do you feel your relative is more content in this environment?
- Are there any issues or recommendations you would like to share in order for us to improve the quality of the service?

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to the provision of individualised compassionate care and the effective engagement of service users.

Five returned questionnaires from service users indicated that compassionate care meant:

- staff treat you with kindness
- staff ensure you are respected and that your privacy and dignity is maintained
- staff inform you about your care
- staff support you to make decisions about your care

Comments:

- “The one to one care is good.”
- “The care I need to continue is all good.”

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.

A range of policies viewed by the inspector were noted to have been reviewed and updated in accordance with timescales outlined within the minimum standards. The inspector noted that the agency had a process where staff are required to access the organisation’s policies and to indicate they have read them.

The agency’s complaints policy clearly outlines the procedures and timescales for managing complaints. Staff stated that they had received training in relation to complaints management during their induction; discussions with the manager indicated that staff have a clear understanding of the actions to be taken in the event of a complaint being received. This was verified during discussion with staff. It was identified from records viewed that the agency has received one complaint since the previous inspection which was resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. The agency has systems in place for auditing and reviewing complaints on a monthly basis with the aim of improving the quality of service provided to service users.

There are management and governance systems in place within the agency to promote and drive quality improvement. Discussions with the manager indicated that the agency's governance arrangements promote the identification and management of risk; these include provision of and review of relevant policies and procedures, monthly audit of compliments and complaints, accidents, safeguarding referrals, staffing arrangements and incidents notifiable to RQIA. During the inspection the inspector viewed records that evidenced staff receive appropriate staff induction, training, supervision and appraisal.

The manager could describe the benefits of continually reviewing the quality of the services provided in identifying areas for improvement and highlighting good practice.

The inspector identified from records viewed and discussion with agency staff that the agency has processes in place to encourage and achieve effective collaborative working relationships with relevant stakeholders.

The organisational and management structure of the agency is outlined in the Statement of Purpose; it details lines of accountability.

The manager stated that all staff are required to be registered with the Northern Ireland social Care Council (NISCC) or other regulatory bodies as appropriate; it was noted that the agency's policy details the procedure for managing this process. The agency retains a list of staff registration details and expiry dates; a record is also maintained by the human resource department. Records viewed by the inspector indicate that staff are registered appropriately.

The registered person has worked effectively with RQIA to operate and lead the organisation in maintaining compliance with Regulations and Minimum Standards. The agency's Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide were noted to have been reviewed and updated. The agency's premises are suitable for the operation of the agency as described in the Statement of Purpose (2017).

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice identified throughout the inspection in relation to the agency's management and governance arrangements, management of complaints, incidents, quality monitoring and improvement.

Five returned questionnaires from service users indicated that a well led service meant:

- you always know who is in charge at any time
- you feel the service is well managed
- your views are sought about your care and the quality of the service
- you know how to make a complaint

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.



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