

Unannounced Care Inspection Report 31 October 2017



Triangle Housing Association

Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency
Address: 33-35 Adelaide Avenue, Coleraine, BT52 1LT
Tel No: 02870357229
Inspector: Kieran Murray

www.rgia.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

This is a domiciliary care agency (supported living type) which provides personal care (and housing support) to 13 people who have a learning disability and complex needs.

3.0 Service details

Organisation/Registered Provider: Northern Health & Social Care Trust Responsible Individual(s): Mr Christopher Alexander	Registered Manager: Ms Colette Marie Sheppard
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Service Manager	Date manager registered: Colette Marie Sheppard - 19/09/2012

4.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 31 October 2017 from 09.15 to 17.00.

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 recruitment
- care reviews
- training and development
- supervision and appraisals

No areas requiring improvement were identified.

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 the Service 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 30 August 2016

No further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 30 August 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 inspection report
- record of complaints
- correspondence with RQIA

During the inspection the inspector met with three service users, the service manager, two support assistants, one visiting Trust professional and two service users' representatives.

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- a range of care and support plans
- HSC Trust assessments of needs and risk assessments
- care review records
- recording/evaluation of care used by the agency
- monthly monitoring reports
- staff meeting minutes
- staff training records
- records relating to staff supervision
- complaints records
- incident records
- records relating to safeguarding of adults
- induction records
- staff rota information
- recruitment policy
- a range of policies relating to the management of staff
- supervision policy
- induction policy
- safeguarding vulnerable adults policy
- restrictive practice policy
- risk management policy
- incident policy.
- whistleblowing policy
- policy relating to management of data
- complaints policy
- statement of purpose
- service user guide

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 30 August 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 30 August 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.

The inspector reviewed staffing arrangements during the inspection. The agency has a recruitment policy and a mechanism in place to ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are completed and satisfactory. The inspector was satisfied that the agency's arrangements for obtaining all pre-employment information were satisfactory.

The agency has a structured induction programme lasting up to two weeks shadowing experienced staff, plus an additional five days training before the end of the six month probationary period. The agency maintains a record of the induction provided to staff, including details of the information provided during the induction period. Staff are provided with a handbook, and have access to policies, procedures and guidance which are available in the office, desktop computer and on a team tablet. The inspector spoke to staff whose feedback supported the above information. Staff provided positive feedback to the inspector regarding how the induction prepared them for their roles and responsibilities and how they felt supported by staff, and the service manager.

The inspector observed evidence of staff's registration with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) in their personal files. The service manager provided the inspector with documentary evidence received from the agency's human resources department verifying staffs up to date registration with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC).

Staff rotas and feedback from staff and service users indicated that sufficient numbers of staff are available to meet the needs of service users at all times. The service manager advised the inspector that the agency uses a small pool of staff from an employment agency which is also a domiciliary care agency to meet the needs of service users.

The service manager provided the inspector with a detailed list of the domiciliary care agency staff, their photographic evidence and evidence of their NISCC registration and the induction programme provided to them.

Staff comments:

- 'The rota is alright, its good.'
- 'Staff are flexible in relation to changes with the rota.'
- 'The rota is made out in advance, usually two to four weeks ahead.'
- 'Training was brilliant.'

Examination of records indicated that a system to ensure that staff supervision and appraisals are planned and completed in accordance with policy has been maintained. It was noted that the agency maintains robust systems to assess the competency of staff, particularly in relation to administering medication and handling service users' finances. Staff who spoke to the inspector provided feedback that they had received supervision and appraisal in line with policy and procedure; records provided to the inspector confirmed this. A detailed matrix of completed supervision and appraisal was available in the office.

The service manager informed the inspector that staff complete a 'Record of Discussion' prior to their performance review. The inspector was advised by the service manager that Triangle have recently introduced a new skills risk assessment proforma designed for staff to help them in their roles.

Records of training and staff feedback indicated that staff attend a range of training necessary to meet the needs of service users. There was evidence that staff have attended training additional to that stated in the Minimum Standards e.g. RESPECT, Epilepsy training provided by Trust professionals. The inspector reviewed the staff training matrix which indicated compliance with regulations and standards.

Relative's comments:

- 'Very content with XXX living in Adelaide Street.'

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 regional guidance 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership' July 2015. The inspector received feedback from staff, and examined documentation which indicated that safeguarding training provided by the agency includes the regional guidance. The training manager for Triangle Housing Association delivers safeguarding training and has been appointed as safeguarding champion. On the day of inspection staff were able to name the agency's safeguarding champion. A safeguarding alert flow chart was available in the agency as well as 'See Something Say Something' information.

Records reviewed by the inspector indicated that the agency had completed a number of safeguarding referrals since the last inspection 30 August 2016. The referrals were made appropriately and management plans were made in conjunction with the HSC Trust as evidenced by the inspector.

The inspector noted that staff were confident regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding issues and clear about lines of accountability. The agency maintains a system of access at all times to a registered manager or senior manager who has knowledge of the needs of service users. The service manager provided feedback that staff are able to access advice and guidance from a manager at all times.

The inspector received feedback from staff which indicated that they were aware of their obligations in relation to raising concerns about poor practice, and they were confident of an appropriate management response.

The inspector examined the safety of the agency's arrangements to identify and manage risk to service users. Documentary evidence and discussion with the service manager indicated that referral information and risk assessments are completed by the HSC Trust. Care plans and 'Be Safe' plans reviewed by an inspector reflected risk assessments supplied by the HSC Trust.

Agency staff 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 noted that a restrictive practices was in place and restrictive practices implemented were of the least restrictive nature considered necessary in conjunction with the HSC Trust and were reviewed regularly and evaluated.

The inspector found that care and support plans are formally reviewed by agency staff with service users on a six monthly basis or sooner if required.

On the day of the inspection the inspector reviewed reporting and management of incidents within the agency. It was noted that a number of incidents had taken place since the last inspection. The inspector examined these records and found that the agency had dealt with them in accordance with its procedure and policy.

The inspector noted that the agency had received a number of complaints since the last inspection 30 August 2016. The agency had dealt with them in accordance with its procedure and policy.

Of questionnaires returned by service users, three indicated they were 'very satisfied' that care was safe, four indicated that they were 'satisfied' that care was safe and one indicated they were 'unsatisfied' that care was safe. The inspector clarified the response with the service user. The service user has agreed that the concern relating to the 'unsatisfied' response can be discussed with the service manager for local resolution. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to staff recruitment, professional registration records for staff, training, supervision and appraisal, adult safeguarding, restrictive practices.

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 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 (2014) and Service User Guide (2015).

The inspector reviewed three service users' care and support plans. The inspector was informed by the service manager and staff that person centred care plans are developed with service users and/or their representatives in conjunction with relevant assessments provided by the HSC Trust multi-disciplinary team. Examination of a range of care and support plans indicated that information from HSC Trust assessments is incorporated accurately.

A detailed matrix of yearly reviews with the HSC Trust was available for the inspector to examine.

Feedback received by the inspector from staff and service users indicated that service users have a genuine influence on the content of their care plans. The inspector had an opportunity to speak to one family member who confirmed their involvement in care and support plans. On the day of the inspection a planned review with the service user, representative and Trust took place. The service user's representative was very positive about the outcome of the review and how their opinions and views were valued.

The inspector was informed that care and support plans are reviewed on a six monthly basis or sooner if required. The inspector was informed that service users are involved prior to these reviews and saw 'Preparation for review' forms which recorded the views of service users. The service manager advised the inspector that monthly reviews were carried out by each key worker in conjunction with individual service users. The inspector noted that a service had prepared their own monthly review documentation prior to their review with their key worker.

Relative's comments:

- 'Review today was quite in-depth.'
- 'XXXX has no concerns with the care being provided; XXXX feels that the staff team do their best for his XXXX.'

A number of service users informed the inspector that they had protected time every day for a one to one with staff and this was led by the service users themselves.

Service users' comments:

- 'Allowed to make decisions whether XXXX she wants staff present or not.'
- 'I make decisions and choices about my one to one time.'
- 'Good help from staff.'

Staff comments:

- 'I felt welcomed when I came to work here.'
- 'The staff team pull together.'

Community key worker comments:

- (Agency) 'Staff help to reduce risk.'
- (Agency) 'Good location in the community.'

The agency has developed and maintained a thorough quality monitoring system to oversee, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of care delivered to service users. Monthly quality monitoring is undertaken by managers who have a good working knowledge of the service.

The quality monitoring system provides a thorough standard of monitoring in accordance with RQIA guidance. Quality monitoring reports included consultation with a range of service users, staff, relatives as appropriate and HSC Trust professionals, and progress on improvement matters. The inspector noted that HSC Trust professionals provided comments regarding how well the agency team communicate regarding service users' needs.

The inspector noted feedback from a HSC Trust Professional on the monthly monitoring form:

'Staff seem to strive to meet the needs of service users as best they can within an environment which can change depending on the mix of service users and their changing needs'.

The agency maintains communication systems to ensure that staff receive information relevant to the care and support of service users'. The service manager and staff described effective verbal and written communication systems within the staff team and with the service manager, including the use of a diary, and daily written and verbal handovers.

Review of team meeting records indicated that team meetings took place on a regular basis; the staff who spoke to the inspector verified that staff could contribute items to the agenda for these meetings. The staff who spoke with the inspector indicated the staff team is supportive to each other and that staff communication is good.

Review of tenant meeting minutes by the inspector showed the views of service users are taken into account in planning and making decisions. The inspector noted that service users were updated on how to make a complaint, human rights information, and how to stay safe, and encouraged to make suggestions in relation to social activities.

Examination of documentation and discussion with staff indicated that the agency promotes good working relationships with the HSC Trust and refers to or consults with a range of appropriate professionals when relevant.

The inspector noted and examined the following surveys/audits carried out by Triangle Housing Association, Triangle Safeguarding Report 2016/2017, Participation and Engagement Plan 2017/2018, Scorecards for staff, Audit of Incidents relating to service users and staff, all with very positive results. The Annual Plan 2017/2018 was available in the office.

The service manager informed the inspector that a team member is the designated Health and Safety Champion for Triangle. Following attendance at Health and Safety meetings, staff are updated at team meetings by this member of staff. The inspector evidenced this in the minutes of team meetings.

The inspector evidenced a staff newsletter that is circulated to staff quarterly. The service manager advised that Friday updates are shared with staff via the Friday update file and the communication book.

It was evident that the agency maintains a range of methods to communicate with and record the comments of service users, including through routinely speaking with service users on a daily basis and being available for discussion. In the course of the inspection it was noted that service users freely approached staff as they wished and appeared to enjoy good relationships with staff.

Advocacy services were recorded in the Statement of Purpose and on the wall of the agency office for service users to contact if necessary.

The service manager informed the inspector that both a tablet and desktop were available for staff to use to access policies and on-line training.

Of questionnaires returned by service users, two indicated they were 'very satisfied' that care was effective, three indicated that they were 'satisfied' that care was effective and three indicated they were 'undecided' as to care being effective (two service users did not give contact details). The inspector made efforts to clarify the 'undecided' response with the service user but the service declined to speak to the inspector. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to care records, audits and reviews, communication between service users and agency staff and other key stakeholders.

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.

The inspection sought to assess the agency's ability to treat service users with dignity and respect, and to fully involve service users/their representatives in decisions affecting their care and support. On the day of inspection 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 their interactions with service users during the inspection showed that they understood and respected the differing needs and wishes of service users. The inspector observed that the language and behaviour of the team leader sensitively promoted the independence and choice of service users throughout their interactions with service users.

The inspector was invited to visit service users in the communal areas of their homes. The inspector particularly noted displays of photographs which reflected service users enjoying social activities.

Feedback/observation from the service users indicated that staff have developed knowledge of individual service users through careful observation and interaction over time. The inspector noted that the agency had made particular efforts to facilitate service users to achieve goals and participate in activities of their choice.

It was evident that staff, HSC Trust professionals and the agency promote 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 plans were very person centred specific to the individual.

The inspector noted that service users are encouraged to develop their independence inside and outside of their own homes.

Discussion with service users and observations during the day of inspection indicated that service users are fully involved in day to day decisions and routines. The inspector observed staff using language and behaving in a manner which encouraged service users to make their own choices, whilst balancing their health and wellbeing needs. It was evident to the inspector that service users had individual plans and goals, which the agency staff were enabling them to progress. The inspector found that the agency has participated in liaison with a range of professionals and agencies to enable service users to make decisions, whilst providing appropriate safe guards. It was noted that the agency has a process of supporting service users to make choices about dietary intake i.e. weekly dietary planning and they were supported with individual choice.

During the inspection the inspector noted examples of how service user choice was being upheld by agency staff. Service users who wished to meet the inspector were provided with privacy as appropriate. The inspector noted that service users have choice regarding their daily routines and personal belongings.

The inspector noted that the agency actively promotes service user involvement across the wider agency through the Triangle Housing Association Tenants' Advisory Group. The inspector was informed by the service manager that service users are also invited to contribute to the Triangle Housing Association Tenants' Advisory Group, and to attend the Tenants' Conference, which is service user led.

The service manager informed the inspector that the service had won the 'Participatory Budget Day' competition within Triangle. The agency plans to organise a Fun Day during the Easter period next year. The event will take place in a local community venue and the agency intends to extend invites to service users from other local Triangle agencies.

Service users and staff informed the inspector that they were arranging events to mark Triangle's 40th birthday. On the day of the inspection a number of service users were attending a 40 beats disco supported by staff.

The inspector noted a poster in the agency asking staff to participate in a 'Makaton Challenge' to mark Triangle's 40th birthday. A service user informed the inspector that they would teach staff how to use Makaton to a song and then present it at the Tenant Conference in February 2018.

The agency maintains a range of quality monitoring systems to evaluate the quality of services provided, including monthly quality monitoring reports which specifically ascertain and include the views of service users and their representatives.

Relative's comments:

- 'More consistency within the staff team.'

Community key workers comments:

- 'Genuine affection towards XXXX.'

Of questionnaires returned by service users, four indicated they were 'very satisfied' that care was compassionate, three indicated that they were 'satisfied' that care was compassionate and one indicated that they were 'undecided' as to care being compassionate (the service user did not give contact details). No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to the provision of compassionate care and the involvement of service users and their representatives.

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.

The inspector examined management and governance systems in place to meet the needs of service users. It was noted that robust systems of established management and governance have been implemented at the agency. The day to day operation of the agency is overseen by the service manager. The management structure of the agency is clearly defined and was understood by staff.

Staff provided positive feedback to the inspector regarding effective working relationships within the staff team and managers.

The inspector viewed 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 incidents notifiable to RQIA, and service improvement strategies implemented by the senior management team. A number of safeguarding referrals had been made since the last inspection, 30 August 2016. The inspector reviewed the records and found that the agency had dealt with these referrals in accordance with procedure and policy.

On the day of the inspection it was noted that a number of incidents had taken place since the last inspection, 30 August 2016. The inspector examined the records and found that the agency had dealt with the incidents in accordance with its procedure and policy.

The agency operates a robust training system and has an appointed safeguarding champion who is available for consultation with staff on training and safeguarding issues.

Feedback from staff indicated that they are confident that managers would listen and respond to their concerns.

The agency maintains a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are reviewed at least every three years. Policies and procedures are maintained on both paper and electronic systems accessible to all staff.

The agency maintains and implements a policy relating to complaints and compliments; these are recorded and managed in accordance with the agency's policy and procedure. On the day of the inspection it was noted that a number of complaints had been received since the last inspection, 30 August 2016 and they had been dealt with in accordance with its procedure and policy.

There are effective systems of formal supervision and appraisal (performance review) within the agency. Staff that provided feedback to the inspector were aware of their responsibilities and understood their roles. Written and verbal guidance for staff of their daily roles and responsibilities were available.

Staff could describe how they would respond to concerns about performance of a colleague and knew how to access the whistleblowing policy.

The registered person has worked effectively with RQIA and maintained their roles and responsibilities in accordance with legislation.

On the day of inspection the RQIA certificate of registration was displayed appropriately and was reflective of the service provided.

Feedback provided to the inspector indicated that there are effective collaborative working relationships with key stakeholders and families, which are valued by staff.

The agency had completed their annual plan 2017/2018 and was available for examination by the inspector.

Service users' comments:

- 'Manager is very good, anything wrong I would speak to XXXX.'

Relative's comments:

- 'I would raise concerns with XXXX and XXXX.'
- 'XXXX does her best to maintain consistency in the service.'

Staff comments:

- 'The service manager has taught me so much.'
- 'Triangle has helped me to develop.'

Of questionnaires returned by service users, five indicated they were 'very satisfied' that the service was well led, two indicated that they were 'satisfied' the service was well led and one indicated they were undecided about the service being well led.

The inspector clarified this response with the service user. The service user has agreed that the concern relating to the 'undecided' response can be discussed with the service manager for local resolution. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to governance arrangements, management of complaints and incidents, quality improvement and maintaining good working relationships.

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.



The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor
Riverside Tower
5 Lanyon Place
BELFAST
BT1 3BT

Tel 028 9051 7500
Email info@rqia.org.uk
Web www.rqia.org.uk
🐦 @RQIANews