

Inspection Report

Name of Service: Positive Futures Mid Ulster Supported Living Service

Provider: Positive Futures

Date of Inspection: 1 July 2025

Information on legislation and standards underpinning inspections can be found on our website <https://www.rqia.org.uk/>

1.0 Service information

Organisation/Registered Provider:	Positive Futures
Responsible Individual:	Ms Agnes Philomena Lunny
Registered Manager:	Mrs Orla McElhone (Acting)
Service Profile This is a domiciliary care agency which provides a range of supported living services, housing support and personal care services to service users. The service users' care is commissioned by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) and the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT).	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 1 July 2025, between 9.40 am and 4.20 pm. The inspection was conducted by a care inspector.

The last care inspection of the agency was undertaken on 20 September 2024 by a care inspector. No areas for improvement were identified. This inspection was undertaken to evidence how the agency is performing in relation to the regulations and standards; and to determine if the service is delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the service is well led.

The inspection established that the agency was well led, care delivery was safe and that effective and compassionate care was delivered to service users. One area for improvement was identified in relation to staff appraisals.

It was evident that staff promoted the dignity, independence and well-being of service users.

Good practice was identified in relation to service user involvement. There were good governance and management arrangements in place. Feedback from service users reflected their positive experience of the care and support provided. Refer to Section 3.2 for more details.

Full details, including the area for improvement, can be found in the main body of this report and in the quality improvement plan (QIP) in Section 4.

We would like to thank the manager, service users and staff team for their support and co-operation during the inspection.

3.0 The inspection

3.1 How we Inspect

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

To prepare for this inspection we reviewed information held by RQIA about this agency. This included the registration information, and any other written or verbal information received from service users, relatives, staff or the commissioning Trust.

Throughout the inspection process inspectors will seek the views of those living or working in the agency; and review/examine a sample of records to evidence how the agency is performing in relation to the regulations and standards.

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 staff survey.

3.2 What people told us about the service and their quality of life

We spoke to a range of service users and staff to seek their views of living within and working within the agency.

Service users indicated that they enjoyed their experience of living in Positive Futures Mid Ulster Supported Living Service and they also spoke highly of the staff and manager. Service users appeared relaxed in their interactions with staff.

Service users told us that they were able to choose how they spend their day. Service users' comments included: "I go out to the shops and I get to choose where I go." and "I am happy here".

Staff told us that they were satisfied that the care and support was safe, effective, compassionate and well led. Staff spoke very positively in regard to management support in the agency. One told us that they have no concerns about the care of the service users, that the manager is supportive and approachable.

Returned service users' questionnaires indicated that the respondents were very satisfied with the care and support provided.

The information provided indicated that those who engaged with us had no concerns in relation to the agency.

3.3 Inspection findings

3.3.1 Staffing Arrangements (recruitment and selection, induction and training)

Safe staffing begins at the point of recruitment and continues through to staff induction, regular staff training and ensuring that the number and skill of staff on duty each day meets the needs of service users. 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); there was a system in place for professional registrations, to be monitored by the manager and a record of checks retained. Staff spoken with confirmed that they were aware of their responsibilities to keep their registrations up to date.

There was evidence that all newly appointed staff had completed a structured orientation and induction, having regard to NISCC's Induction Standards for new workers in social care, to ensure they were competent to carry out the duties of their job in line with the agency's policies and procedures. There was a robust, structured induction programme which also included a period of shadowing of a more experienced staff member.

This agency has maintained a record for each member of staff of all training, including induction and professional development activities undertaken; records are retained electronically.

Staff consulted spoke positively about the training they receive and confirmed that they received sufficient training to enable them to fulfil the duties and responsibilities of their role and that training was of a good standard. Review of a sample of staff training records concluded staff had received mandatory and other training relevant to their roles and responsibilities since the previous care inspection such as infection prevention and control, first aid and medicines management. It was positive to note that the agency provided training in regard to catheter care and autism awareness.

There was evidence of effective systems in place to manage staffing. Staff said there was good teamwork and that they felt well supported in their role by the manager. Staff said that there were sufficient staff to meet the needs of the service users. It was evident that staff had a good understanding of the needs, likes and dislikes of individual service users.

Regular staff meetings were held and minutes maintained of the meetings for staff unable to attend, to read for information sharing.

3.3.2 Care Delivery

There was a daily handover at the beginning of each shift, which included information about any changes to the service users' care, that the staff needed to assist them in their roles.

There was a system in place to ensure that the activities offered to service users were varied and tailored towards their individual needs and preferences. Service users are supported to

access activities of their own choice; this included going to the cinema, shopping, visiting restaurants and theatres.

Service users told us they enjoyed the independence that living in Positive Futures Mid Ulster Supported Living Service affords them and how they are encouraged to make their own decisions.

Staff interactions with service users were observed to be polite, warm and supportive and the atmosphere was relaxed, pleasant and friendly. Staff were knowledgeable of individual service users' needs, their daily routine, wishes and preferences.

Service user meetings were held on a regular basis which enabled the staff to keep service users updated on any issues arising that may affect them. Some matters discussed included health and safety and shared living arrangements. The meetings also enabled the service users to discuss any activities they would like to become involved in.

3.3.2 Management of Care Records

Care records were person centred and underpinned by a human rights approach, well maintained, regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they continued to meet the service users' needs. Staff recorded regular evaluations about the care and support provided. Service users, where possible, were involved in planning their own care and the details of care plans were shared with service users' relatives, if this was appropriate.

Care plans reflected a good understanding of service user's needs, including relevant assessments of service user's communication support and sensory needs. A staff member told us "The care records are updated regularly and they are very detailed."

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

Records pertaining to consent were available.

3.3.3 Quality of Management Systems

We discussed the acting management arrangements which have been ongoing from 7 April 2025; RQIA will keep this matter under review. Those consulted with commented positively about the manager and described her as supportive, empathetic and approachable. It was positive to note that the manager spoke very highly of the staff and this was reciprocated.

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 noted to include stakeholder feedback.

Incidents were managed appropriately and it was positive to note that any identified learning was shared with staff.

Agencies are required to have a person known as the Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC), who has responsibility for implementing the regional protocol and the agency’s adult safeguarding policy. There was an individual within the organisation’s senior management team who was identified as the appointed ASC for the agency.

The agency’s annual adult safeguarding position report was reviewed and found to be satisfactory.

There was a system in place to ensure that complaints were managed in accordance with the agency’s policy and procedure. A review of the complaints record and discussion with the manager, evidenced that no complaints had been recorded since the previous inspection. Discussion with staff confirmed that they knew how to receive and respond to complaints sensitively and were aware of their responsibility to report all complaints to the manager or the person in charge.

Staff demonstrated an awareness of their role, responsibilities and knowledge of lines of accountability and knew when and who to discuss concerns with. All staff consulted with described an open door policy with the manager and that they were confident that any concerns or suggestions made would be listened to and addressed. One staff member commented: “Great sense of teamwork.”

Discussions with the manager and staff confirmed that systems were in place to monitor staff performance and ensure that staff received support and guidance. As noted in section 3.3.1, staff spoken with during the inspection confirmed the availability of continuous update training. In addition, staff confirmed the availability of supervision processes and staff meetings which they described in positive terms and found beneficial.

A review of staff appraisal records and discussion with the manager evidenced that appraisals had not been completed on an annual basis as outlined in the agency’s policy and procedure. An area for improvement has been identified.

There was evidence that the management team responded to any concerns, raised with them or by their processes, and took measures to improve practice and the quality of services provided by the agency.

4.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

An area for improvement has been identified where action is required to ensure compliance with Standards.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	0	1

Areas for improvement and details of the Quality Improvement Plan were discussed with Mrs Orla McElhone, Manager, as part of the inspection process. The timescales for completion commence from the date of inspection.

Quality Improvement Plan	
Action required to ensure compliance with The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007	
<p>Area for improvement 1</p> <p>Ref: Standard 13.5</p> <p>Stated: First time</p> <p>To be completed by: Immediate and ongoing from the date of inspection</p>	<p>The Registered Person shall ensure that staff have recorded appraisal with their line manager to review their performance against their job description and agree personal development plans in accordance with the procedures.</p> <p>Ref: 3.3.3</p>
	<p>Response by Registered Person detailing the actions taken: Following the Inspection on 01.07.25, Positive Futures has ensured that staff appraisal process has been implemented with their Line Manager to review their performance and agree any personal development.</p>

Please ensure this document is completed in full and returned via the Web Portal



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