

Homecare Scotland Care Services Ltd Support Service

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Unannounced

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Service provided by:
Homecare Scotland Care Services Ltd

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2018363199

About the service

Homecare Scotland Care Services provides care at home. The service is primarily for adults, and also some children, and all service users live in their own homes. The service provides domiciliary care, complex care packages, and live in packages. There are office bases in Forres, Aberdeen and Glasgow dealing with the coordination of services in Moray, Aberdeen City and Glasgow areas respectively.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 31 October to the 22 November 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with 15 people using the service and 17 of their family
- Spoke with 9 staff and management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People we spoke to were very happy with their service
- One person told us the the company "Do what they say on the tin"
- One mother told us she appreciates the full involvement of her daughter in all aspects and decisions about her care
- Carers were good at their jobs, and treated people as individuals
- Everyone benefitted from the managers, recruitment team and training teams working in close partnership.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

People's wellbeing was supported at a very good level. There were major strengths in how the service supported positive outcomes for people. Opportunities were taken to strive for excellence within a culture of continuous improvement.

The people and families we spoke to, and who returned questionnaires, were positive. One service user mentioned there were too many staff coming in and out of their house. We told the manager who assured us they were striving to minimise the number of staff. Other people told us that the carers have never let them down and they have a small group of the same carers. At least one of the care plans very specifically discussed the importance of ensuring an experienced carer was always on duty. It was clear that the service valued small teams of carers for people and this provided reassurance for the service users. All the service users said the carers were polite and respectful, and some talked about the huge, positive difference in their lives since they have contracted with Homecare .

People had food and drink as they wished because carers offered choice and prepared what was asked for. People, and the carers, said if people weren't hungry then a sandwich or a snack along with a drink was left in an accessible place, so people could eat when they wished.

Medication was an area where people benefitted from choice and control. This was demonstrated by one person who told us they used to take their own medication, but as their abilities deteriorated, they asked the carers to do it, and this was working well. There was a robust medication management system which ensured all aspects of safe medication management was in place, no matter who was administering it.

People were fully involved in making decisions about their physical and emotional wellbeing. In the complex packages people were involved in recruitment of their carers. One person told us that they worked as a team with the carers, taking joint responsibility for ensuring equipment was maintained and deciding jointly what could be managed each day. Some of the carers employed their specific talents for the benefit of people, for example by creating a gym plan which greatly benefitted the service users posture, and their everyday enjoyment. People told us they were supported to talk about their needs and their care, and the service was altered to suit them.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

Leadership in this service was very good with very few areas for improvement.

There was an impressive drive for continuous improvement and for everyone to understand what was happening in the service and how it needed to improve. All the staff we spoke to, and the questionnaires we received, confirmed this culture of improvement and positivity.

The weekly compliance check in relation to staffing and recruitment was communicated out to all the managers and these were a great way for everyone to be involved despite the geographical distance. Another helpful innovation was the weekly 'Monday Meeting' which was very open and encouraging. The managers told us it led to everyone feeling part of the same team, no matter where they were located.

There were many audits being used to track the efficacy of the service, for example; medication, infection prevention and control, observation of staff competency, staff supervision. This helped minor errors to be noticed quickly and staff to be guided in better practice.

The manager maintained a service improvement plan and a service development plan that were clear, with dates for completion and updates if these were not met. It was easy to see how these documents contributed to improvements. These documents could be aligned to the Care Inspectorate core assurances and the Health and Social Care Standards, which point towards best practice. We discussed this with the manager who will consider alteration.

Complaints and incidents were tracked through a comprehensive system which meant people could be reassured that all were being investigated and dealt with. People said when they contacted a manager, they were listened to and action was taken. On one occasion we saw a record of a clear apology to the service user, which showed the genuine nature of the leadership team. There was an error in the Duty of Candour report which did not have an impact on care for people, but the manager assured us they would look at that and make sure it was accurate in future reports. .

The client quality assurance spreadsheet was not equally well completed for all the geographical areas which made it difficult to track exactly when reviews were happening. We reminded the manager about the need to ensure regular reviews, at a minimum of six monthly periods, and more if required.

The service was continually looking for different and innovative ways to support its staff and help them to develop, for example a policy of the month in graphic poster form, and the possibility of credit card size reminders for carers pockets on aspects such as hand hygiene. This helped carers to remain up to date with their practice and meant high standards of care were delivered.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

The arrangements for staffing and the way staff work together was very good. There were major strengths in the recruitment process, in training and development and the way that staff supported good outcomes for people. There were no areas that required significant adjustment.

The recruitment system was comprehensive and tracked throughout an applicant's journey. This, combined with a good induction process, made sure that people were able to begin shifts as soon as possible, in a safe manner. All staff were encouraged to be involved in identifying areas for improvement through; staff surveys, recording on the electronic care planning system, and regular team meetings. This ensured that staff needs, both professional and personal, were identified quickly and action was taken for development.

The service prided itself on each person having, as far as possible, their own small staff team. This began with a coordinated recruitment effort and continued with support from the leadership team. People generally told us that this approach was working and they were happy with their carers.

There was a specific training team who were responsive to needs as they arose, and were innovative in the way they ensured development. Staff had a high completion rate for their training and innovations such as; monthly policy posters, face to face training, monthly development and drop in sessions, development talks with members of the multi professional team added to their knowledge base. This meant people knew their carers were knowledgeable and skilled.

Staff were asked to work a reasonable amount of hours, and did not feel pressure to work any extra. There were regular teams for each service user. One person told us that they had felt uncomfortable with their staff, and as soon as they let managers know, things were altered.

People were sent a rota for their carers each week so they knew who would be coming in to their home, and these were rarely altered. Some people had set hours, and some people could change their required hours each week to suit their wishes. This showed how the staffing genuinely reflected people's needs and wishes. People talked about warm and trusting relationships with the carers and also with managers.

As well as an emphasis on the quality of their carers, the service ensured staff who were not involved in providing direct care and support understood their contribution to the overall quality of the service. Everyone knew they played an important role in building the staff team and this was leading to very good outcomes for people.

How well is our care and support planned?

5 - Very Good

Assessment and personal planning reflected people's outcomes and wishes to a very good standard with major strengths and few areas for improvement.

Consistent use of an electronic system ensured that the care plans and records were updated timeously and the carers could access up to date guidelines to support people to a high standard. Carers used this and said they found it informative and helpful. Families could also access records about their relatives (with permission, and if appropriate) and a daughter told us that she used this and appreciated it.

The personal plans were dynamic and aspirational. They were written in a way that informed about all aspects of a person's wishes and needs. The review system, the accessible way for people and relatives to make comments, and the responsive nature of the leadership team increased people's ability to make their choices known. There were risk assessments in place for areas that required consideration, and these were not overly restrictive and enabled people to do as much as they could for themselves. Families told us they felt everyone worked in partnership and they were involved in their relatives lives and care.

All of the carers wrote notes after each visit and these were valuable for other carers, managers and families to keep aware of all aspects of a persons support. A small percentage of these notes focused on the task that had been completed, rather than the overall welfare of the person. We discussed this with the manager who understood and said they would address this immediately.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good
2.4 Staff are led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	5 - Very Good

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