

■ scottish commission for
the regulation of care



Inspection Report

Carers Direct Ltd
Housing Support Service

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Helensburgh
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Inspected by: Elspeth Gibb
(Care Commission officer)

Type of inspection: Announced

Inspection completed on: 29 May 2009

Improving care in Scotland

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Service provided by: Carers Direct Limited	
Service provider number: SP2004004444	
Care service number: CS2003053958	
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Easy read summary of this inspection report

We grade all the Quality Statements for a service at each inspection. Each grade describes how well we think the service is doing based on what we inspected.

We can choose from six grades:



We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support		Good
Quality of Staffing		Good
Quality of Management and Leadership		Good

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection due to other regulatory activity; for example, if we have to take enforcement action to improve the service, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

What the service does well

The management staff are strongly committed to the continuous improvement of the service and respond well to staff, service users and their relatives.

We could evidence that people were receiving a good quality service and were satisfied with the service they received.

What the service could do better

The service could develop a more accountable system of staff support, supervision and training to ensure consistency of support for service users.

The procedures for care planning and reviewing of care could be improved.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The manager has responded to the areas of development within her control.

The provider has recently appointed a new member to the management team who will take forward the improvements identified in relation to staff development and training.

Conclusion

Carers Direct offers high quality support to service users and demonstrates an open and responsive approach to managing the service.

Who did this inspection

Lead Care Commission Officer

Elspeth Gibb

Other Care Commission Officers

Lay Assessor

Please read all of this report so that you can understand the full findings of this inspection.

About the Care Commission

We were set up in April 2002 to regulate and improve care services in Scotland.

Regulation involves:

- registering new services
- inspecting services
- investigating complaints
- taking enforcement action, when necessary, to improve care services.

We regulate around 15,000 services each year. Many are childminders, children's daycare services such as nurseries, and care home services. We regulate many other kinds of services, ranging from nurse agencies to independent healthcare such as hospices and private hospitals.

We regulate services for the very young right through to those for the very old. Our work can, therefore, affect the lives of most people in Scotland.

All our work is about improving the quality of care services.

We produce thousands of inspection reports every year; all are published on our website: www.carecommission.com. Reports include any complaints we investigate and improvements that we ask services to make.

The "Care services" area of our website also:

- allows you to search for information, such as reports, about the services we regulate
- has information for the people and organisations who provide care services
- has guidance on looking for and using care services in Scotland.

You can also get in touch with us if you would like more detailed information.

About the National Care Standards

The National Care Standards (NCS) set out the standards that people who use care services in Scotland should expect. The aim is to make sure that you receive the same high quality of service no matter where you live.

Different types of service have different National Care Standards. When we inspect a care service we take into account the National Care Standards that the service should provide.

The Scottish Government publishes copies of the National Care Standards online at:
www.scotland.gov.uk

You can get printed copies free from:

Blackwells Bookshop
53-62 South Bridge Edinburgh
EH1 1YS
Telephone: 0131 662 8283
Email: Edinburgh@blackwells.co.uk

What is inspection?

Our inspectors, known as Care Commission Officers (CCOs), check care services regularly to make sure that they are meeting the needs of the people in their care.

One of the ways we check on services is to carry out inspections. We may turn up without telling the service's staff in advance. This is so we can see how good the care is on a normal day. We inspect some types of services more often than others.

When we inspect a service, typically we:

- talk to people who use the service, their carers and families, staff and managers
- talk to individuals and groups
- have a good look around and check what quality of care is being provided
- look at the activities happening on the day
- examine things like records and files, if we need to
- find out if people get choices, such as food, choosing a key worker and controlling their own spending money.

We also use lay assessors during some inspections. These are volunteers who have used care services or have helped to care for someone who has used care services.

We write out an inspection report after gathering the information. The report describes how things are and whether anything needs to change.

Our work must reflect the following laws and guidelines:

- the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- regulations made under this Act
- the National Care Standards, which set out standards of care that people should be able to expect to receive from a care service.

This means that when we register or inspect a service we make sure it meets the requirements of the 2001 Act. We also take into account the National Care Standards that apply to it.

If we find a service is not meeting these standards, the 2001 Act gives us powers that require the service to improve.

Recommendations, requirements and complaints

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a requirement or recommendation.

- A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement.
- A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Act and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Commission.

Complaints: We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service (or about us). Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints. Depending on how complex it is, a complaint may be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

How we decided what to inspect

Why we have different levels of inspection

We target our inspections. This means we spend less time with services we are satisfied are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care. We call these low-intensity inspections. Services where there is more concern receive more intense inspections. We call these medium or high intensity inspections.

How we decide the level of inspection

When planning an inspection, our inspectors, or Care Commission Officers (CCOs) carefully assess how intensively each service needs to be inspected. They do this by considering issues such as:

- complaints
- changes to how the service provides care
- any notifications the service has given us, such as the absence of a manager
- what action the service has taken in response to requirements we have made.

The CCO will also consider how the service responded to situations and issues: for example how it deals with complaints, or notifies us about incidents such as the death of someone using the service.

Our inspections take account of:

- areas of care that we are particularly interested in (these are called Inspection Focus Areas)
- the National Care Standards that the service should be providing
- recommendations and requirements that we made in earlier inspections
- any complaints and other regulatory activity, such as enforcement actions we have taken to improve the service.

What is grading?

We grade each service under Quality Themes which for most services are:

Quality of Care and support: how the service meets the needs of each individual in its care

Quality of environment: the environment within the service (for example, is the service clean, is it set out well, is it easy to access by people who use wheelchairs?);

Quality of staffing: the quality of the care staff, including their qualifications and training

Quality of management and leadership: how the service is managed and how it develops to meet the needs of the people it cares for

Quality of information: this is how the service looks after information and manages record keeping safely.

Each of the Quality Themes has a number of Quality Statements in it, which we grade.

We grade each heading as follows:

6	5	4	3	2	1
excellent	very good	good	adequate	weak	unsatisfactory

We do not give one overall grade.

How grading works.

Services assess themselves using guidance that we given them. Our inspectors take this into account when they inspect and grade the service. We have the final say on grading.

The Quality Themes for this service type are explained in section 2 The Inspection.

About the service we inspected

Carers Direct Limited has been registered with the Care Commission since December 2004 to provide a care at home and housing support service. In their information booklet it states "Carers Direct provides a complete Caring Service for elderly and less able people living in their own homes and support to the carers of dependent relatives".

The service operates in two geographical areas of Helensburgh and Oban with the administrative office based in Helensburgh.

The service was registered with the Care Commission in 2004.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support	4 - Good
Quality of Staffing	4 - Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	4 - Good

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection due to other regulatory activity; for example, if we have to take enforcement action to improve the service, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

You can use the "Care services" area of our website (www.carecommission.com) to find the most up-to-date grades for this service.

How we inspected this service

What level of inspection did we make this service

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What activities did we undertake during the inspection

This report was written after an announced inspection that took place between 29th April 2009 and 2nd June 2009.

As requested by us, the care service sent us an Annual return. The service also sent us a Self assessment form.

We spoke with four service users and four relatives of service users by telephone during the inspection period.

In this inspection we gathered evidence from various sources, including relevant sections of policies, procedures, records and other documents, including:

Evidence from the service's Self assessment and Annual return
Discussion with the service provider, and two care managers
Questionnaires from service users, staff and relatives of service users
Personal Plans
Training records
Recruitment and Selection Procedures
Recruitment records and files

All of the above information was taken into account during the inspection process and reported on.

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

Each year we identify an area, or areas, we want to focus on during our inspections. We still inspect all the normal areas of a care service; these are extra checks we make for a specific reason.

For 2009/10 we will focus on:

- . Meaningful activity for all adult services
- . How care services assess the health of people with learning disabilities
- . Involving parents for children's services
- . Medication for looked after children for residential accommodation for children
- . How care services make sure they have safe recruitment procedures for staff for all services except childminders.

You can find out more about these from our website www.carecommission.com.

Fire safety issues

The Care Commission no longer reports on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory

function. Where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Care service providers can find more information about their legal responsibilities in this area at: www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

The annual return

We use annual returns (ARs) to:

- make sure we have up-to-date, accurate information about care services; and
- decide how we will inspect services.

By law every registered care service must send us an annual return and provide us with the information we have requested. The relevant law is the Regulation of Care Act (Scotland) 2001, Section 25(1). These forms must be returned to us between 6 January and 28 February 2009.

Annual Return Received

Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

The service provider identified what they thought they did well, some areas for development and any changes they planned. The service provider told us how the people who used the care service had taken part in the self assessment process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

Ten people who use the service returned questionnaires. Seven said that overall they were very satisfied with the service and three were satisfied with the service.

Four service users were spoken with during the inspection:

Comments included:

"Since they sorted out for me to have the same carers each day it has been great"

"The carers are very good. I can't fault them - they can't do enough for me and are always asking if there is anything else they can do"

"The folk in the office are very good- they always get back to you if there is a problem and do all they can to help"

"I complained about having too many carers coming in and it was all sorted out - things are very good now and I appreciate the caring approach of the staff".

Taking carers' views into account

Four relatives were spoken with. Their comments included:

"I am very grateful for all the care and kindness of the staff"

"There were some problems a while ago - there are always some staff who are better than others. But things were sorted out"

"The staff who support my Mum are really excellent. No concerns"

"I think they all do a great job. Very good indeed."

"Couldn't ask for better".

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service Strengths

The care service involved the people who use the service and their relatives and carers and asked for their views in several ways.

Observation and discussion with managers indicated that they are in regular contact with service users and their families and that they are flexible and responsive in their approach.

The service has been using questionnaires to evaluate the quality of care for several years. The results of questionnaires are collated and the manager advised that any issues raised are followed up.

Each person who is supported by Carers Direct has their care and support needs reviewed regularly at an individual meeting in the home between themselves, any family member whom the individual wishes to be present and the manager of the service. Depending on the level of support, these visits are carried out between every 8 weeks and 6 months.

Discussion with management staff indicated that service users are encouraged to participate in the decision making process regarding the ongoing level of care and are regularly invited to give feedback about the quality of the service.

Areas for Improvement

There are good informal systems in place and discussions with service users staff and relatives indicated a positive approach to participation.

Discussion took place on the day of the office based inspection about improvements which are being implemented by management.

These include a more consistent procedure for reviewing individual care plans and some reviewing of the existing questionnaire to make it easier to grade the quality themes for the self assessment. (See recommendations).

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

2

Recommendations

1

The service should develop the existing system of reviewing care needs.

1

The service should consider developing a clear written participation strategy which can be given to staff, service users and carers outlining the ways in which the service promotes their involvement in service development.

Statement 5

We respond to service users' care and support needs using person centered values.

Service Strengths

Discussion with managers, staff and service users and relatives indicated that the service does respond to individual need in a person centred way.

From discussion with service users there was strong evidence that the carers referred to in conversations were committed to providing an individual service and make every effort to meet service users' needs.

Personal preferences, key dates and social interests are noted and taken into consideration in the care plan.

Discussions during the inspection and questionnaires confirm that each person is treated as an individual and regular reviews of the service provided are undertaken as required.

The care manager visit each service user at least every six months to review the care provided and discuss any concerns the individual may have.

Areas for Improvement

Although there is good informal verbal evidence of person centred work, the assessment, planning and review systems in place could be developed further to promote a more person centred ethos and prompt a consistent individualised approach. (See recommendation).

Some staff spoken with said they felt there was not enough information about people when they start caring for them.

Grade awarded for this statement

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Recommendations

1

The systems used for assessment, care planning a review should be developed further to promote a consistent person centred approach throughout the service.

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service Strengths

See statement 1.1 for details of how the service consults with service users.

Areas for Improvement

The new systems of staff supervision which the service intends to implement will further promote the involvement of staff and offer a more regular forum for discussion about service users' feedback.

The service should consider involving service users or their representatives in future recruitment process for new staff.

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2

We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

Service Strengths

There was a robust selection and recruitment policy and procedure in place.

Staff were recruited through a process of two written references and an enhanced disclosure. Applicants are asked to complete a medical questionnaire.

There is a staff induction process in place which involves shadowing another member of staff and discussion on policies and procedures. New staff are given an induction pack with copies of the services policies.

Areas for Improvement

The process of induction could be improved. The procedures should be developed further to ensure that all staff are equipped to commence their jobs as carers and have been given adequate support to understand best practice guidance. (See recommendation).

Grade awarded for this statement

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Recommendations

1

The service should develop more robust systems for staff induction.

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service Strengths

See statement 1.1 for details of how the service consults with service users.

Areas for Improvement

The new systems of staff supervision which the service intends to implement will further promote the involvement of staff in the management of the service and offer more opportunity for feedback from service users about the way the service is managed.

Grade awarded for this statement

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2

We involve our workforce in determining the direction and future objectives of the service.

Service Strengths

Discussion with staff, service users and relatives indicate that there is a very responsive management team in place and all felt confident that issues raised were dealt with positively.

There is a system of staff appraisal in place and staff are able to approach management staff at any time for support when required.

Areas for Improvement

A more robust system of formal supervision, appraisal and staff training should be developed as discussed during the inspection. (See recommendation).

Grade awarded for this statement

3 - Adequate

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

1

Recommendations

1

The existing supervision, appraisal and training procedures should be developed further to provide a more robust approach to staff development.

Other Information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld or partially upheld since the last inspection.

You can find information about complaints that have been upheld or partially upheld on our website: www.carecommission.com

Enforcements

We have not taken any enforcement action against this care service since our last inspection.

Additional Information

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Commission re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).

Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 5	4 - Good
Quality of Staffing - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	4 - Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	3 - Adequate

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
11 September 2008	Announced	Care and support 4 Staffing 4 Management and Leadership 4

Terms we use in our report and what they mean

Action Plan - When we inspect a service, or investigate a complaint and the inspection report highlights an area for improvement; either through recommendations or requirements, the action plan sets out the actions the service will take in response.

Best practice statements/guidelines - This describes practices that have been shown to work best and to be achievable in specific areas of care. They are intended to guide practice and promote a consistent and cohesive approach to care.

Care Service - A service that provides care and is registered with us.

Complaints - We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service or about us. Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints which can have more than one outcome. Depending on how complex the complaint is, the outcomes can be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

Enforcement - To protect people who use care services, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 gives the Care Commission powers to enforce the law. This means we can vary or impose new conditions of registration, which may restrict how a service operates. We can also serve an improvement notice on a service provider to make them improve their service within a set timescale. If they do not make these improvements we could issue a cancellation notice and cancel their registration.

Disclosure Scotland- Disclosure Scotland provides an accurate and responsive disclosure service to enhance security, public safety and protect the vulnerable in society. There are three types or levels of disclosure (i.e. criminal record check) available from Disclosure Scotland; basic, standard and enhanced. An enhanced check is required for people whose work regularly involves caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults at risk; or to register for child minding, day care and to act as foster parents or carers.

Participation - This describes processes that allow individuals and groups to develop and agree programmes, policy and procedures.

Personal Plan - This is a plan of how support and care will be provided. The plan is agreed between the person using the service (or their representative, or both of them) and the service provider. It is sometimes called a care plan mostly by local authorities or health boards when they commission care for people.

How you can use this report

Our inspection reports give care services detailed information about what they are doing well and not so well. We want them to use our reports to improve the services they provide if they need to.

Care services should share our inspection reports with the people who use their service, their families and carers. They can do this in many ways, for example by discussing with them what they plan to do next or by making sure our report is easily available.

People who use care services, their relatives and carers

We encourage you to read this report and hope that you find the information helpful when making a decision on whether or not to use the care service we have inspected. If you, or a family member or friend, are already using a care service, it is important that you know we have inspected that service and what we found. You may find it helpful to read previous inspection reports about his service.

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The Care Commission

We use the information we gather from all our inspections to report to Scottish Ministers on how well Scotland's care services are performing. This information helps us to influence important changes they may make about how care services are provided.

Reader Information

This inspection report is published by the Care Commission. It is for use by the general public. You can get more copies of this report and others by downloading it from our website www.carecommission.com or by telephoning 0845 603 0890.

Translations and alternative formats

This publication is available in other formats and other languages on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànanan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ক্রম্যেটি এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

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येहकी 'ते' हिन पूवमरु तर रूप अडे वेवका डमराह हिन छीअमरु ट

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本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備案。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.

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Improving care in Scotland