

Care service inspection report

Carers Direct Ltd

Support Service Care at Home

71 Sinclair Street

Helensburgh

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Telephone: 01436 671 389

Inspected by: Elspeth Gibb

Type of inspection: Unannounced

Inspection completed on: 31 March 2014



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Service provided by:

Carers Direct Limited

Service provider number:

SP2004004444

Care service number:

CS2004076349

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Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

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

We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	6	Excellent
Quality of Staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership	6	Excellent

What the service does well

Carers Direct provides an excellent service to people in their own homes. The inspection showed that the service had successfully developed an excellent culture of care and staff spoken with demonstrated a professional and caring approach to the people using the service.

There was a very good response to the questionnaires we sent out and service users were very satisfied with the support they receive. People with intensive support needs, some of whom require 24 hour care, were being very well supported by small consistent teams of staff.

The service is very well managed and there are excellent quality assurance systems in place. There was strong evidence that the service is responsive to individual needs.

The service works very well with NHS colleagues and the social work department to make sure that the needs of service users are met appropriately.

What the service could do better

The new management structure has been very recently put in place and this will take time to establish. A system of named workers is also being put in place to improve the coordination of support arrangements for service users.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The service has continued to provide a very high level of care and had improved management and staffing arrangements.

Conclusion

Carers Direct is committed to continuous improvement and had demonstrated that they were meeting the Quality Themes and Statements we looked at on this inspection.

Who did this inspection

Elsbeth Gibb

1 About the service we inspected

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Prior to 1 April 11, this function was carried out by the Care Commission. Information in relation to all care services is available on our website at www.careinspectorate.com.

The Care Inspectorate will award grades for services based on findings of inspections. Grades for this service may change after this inspection if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we uphold or partially uphold a complaint that we investigate.

The history of grades which services have been awarded is available on our website. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website, by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

Requirements and recommendations

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

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 Public Services Reforms (Scotland) Act 2010 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 Inspectorate.

Carers Direct Limited is registered to provide a care at home 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.

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

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 6 - Excellent

Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 6 - Excellent

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

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 we did during the inspection

This report was written after an announced inspection that took place over four days: 27th February, 13th, 18th and 27th March 2014; visits to service users' homes took place in Helensburgh and Oban.

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

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 the manager

Visits to service users and their family members

Meetings with staff in Oban and Helensburgh

Questionnaires from service users, staff and relatives of service users

Personal Plans

Training records

Staff meeting minutes

Emails and written evidence about involvement of service users and families.

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

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Self Assessment was completed thoroughly prior to the inspection and included information about what the service thought they did well and identified areas for improvement. Staff and service users should continue to be encouraged to be involved in the process of self assessment to promote awareness of the Quality Themes and the grading process.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

"All the staff who come here are very good - although some are just excellent"

"Staff are very helpful to me - I need more help now and it is good to have kind people coming every day"

"I think staff do a great job"

"The carers sometimes don't have enough time to do the things they need to do in the time they have been allocated."

"I don't have enough time to eat my lunch. It is always a rush. It's not their fault but I don't like that"

"The communication is better - I now know who is coming in all week."

"I am grateful I can stay in my own home and have the support I get"

"The manager is very good - she always helps if things are not working out so well."

Taking carers' views into account

"I think the service is excellent. Much better than other experiences I have had of care"

"I really can't think of how things could improve. I am very happy with how things are"

"Some staff are just excellent and go the extra mile. It's the wee touches that make such a difference"

"I am very happy indeed with the service"

"I think the staff are very good and very professional in the way they go about their work"

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

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

We found that this service's performance was excellent in the areas covered by this Quality Statement. We concluded this after looking at personal plans and speaking with the manager, 9 members of the staff team and discussion with the people who use the service and their families.

We found that this service has well established systems in place to ensure that each person is integrally involved in the way the service runs.

Each person has a personal support plan and there are regular reviews of their support arrangements. The reviews generally are arranged jointly with the social work care manager but in the circumstance that an individual does not have social work involvement reviews are arranged by the management team. The manager visits each person regularly to consult with them about their experience of the service and to allow the opportunity for suggestions about improvement. There was evidence that the service involves people very well in any decisions relating to the service they receive.

Individuals are given a welcome pack with information about what they can expect from the service when they start using Carers Direct and people are regularly asked for feedback using questionnaires.

There was evidence of an open, positive and responsive culture throughout the service and the people who participated in the inspection were very happy with the support they receive.

The staff team at the office base communicate well with service users and families and demonstrated very positive communication skills during the inspection. People said that they found it easy to contact the office and that staff were efficient and helpful.

A communication book has been put in each person's home for the use of family members and staff.

The paperwork we looked at and several people we spoke with confirmed the above.

Areas for improvement

The use of communication books is a new development and the effectiveness of these should be evaluated over time.

The service should strive to maintain the excellent levels of participation and involvement seen at this inspection.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We ensure that service users' health and wellbeing needs are met.

Service strengths

We found that this service's performance was excellent in the areas covered by this Quality Statement. We concluded this after looking at individual support plans and speaking with the people using the service, the staff who support them and the manager. The manager had also obtained written feedback from the health professionals and social work staff who are involved with the service.

It was evident from discussion and observation of how the service operates that staff adopt person centred approaches to supporting people's health needs and that the quality of the service was high.

Each person's personal plan includes an assessment of their health needs and records any special requirements or preferences they have. When specific health needs are identified, the team who support the service user receive training to enable them to meet those needs.

As at previous inspections, all staff receive regular training on administration of medication, health and safety and have access to ongoing statutory training in moving and handling and food hygiene. Training has also been provided in foot care, dementia care and palliative care and feedback from questionnaires indicated that staff provided an excellent service when people have complex needs. With regard to medication training, the district nurse has also been involved in evaluating the competency of staff.

Relevant policies are in place to ensure that the health and wellbeing of service users is protected and there are very good links with health professionals.

Service users' care plans were easy to understand. This meant staff knew what help service users needed and could deliver this in the way the service user wanted.

There were communication logs in service users' homes and staff could keep up to date with any changes in the care plan and deliver care in a consistent manner.

There was evidence of very good partnership working with health professionals and social work colleagues.

Areas for improvement

The service should continue to develop the service in line with their aims and objectives and strive to maintain the excellent standards found at this inspection.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

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

Service strengths

The inspection showed that the service's performance was excellent in relation to this Quality Statement.

The service involves people who use the service and their families in the recruitment process for new staff.

People are encouraged to give their feedback about the staff who support them at their regular review meetings. A new named worker system has been put in place to improve communication with individuals.

The general systems in place to promote participation are noted at Quality Statement 1.1.

Areas for improvement

The service should strive to maintain the excellent level of participation observed at this inspection.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 3

We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service strengths

The inspection showed that the service's performance was very good in relation to this Quality Statement.

Staff spoken with were well motivated to provide a very good service and demonstrated a caring and confident approach to their work.

The majority of staff have SVQ qualifications and all are made aware of the SSSC Codes of Conduct and of the need to register with the SSSC. The staff we spoke with were competent, knowledgeable and demonstrated strong commitment to service users. Staff were working flexibly to meet service users' needs and knew their needs very well. This meant that the people we spoke to were very happy with the way their support was being organised.

Staff had undertaken a variety of training courses which were relevant to the people they supported and they felt confident that they could talk with the manager if they had any concerns. Specific training is arranged to meet the needs of individual service users as required.

The feedback about some individual members of staff from the people who use the service was excellent and generally people were very happy with the staff who support them.

The manager showed very strong commitment to service users and to the ongoing improvement of the service. She had developed very good relationships with staff who were very positive about her leadership and competence.

Areas for improvement

Staff told us that there were often problems with keeping to arranged times due to there being no time for travel built in to the funding of the support packages and also due to the geographical locations of service users. This also put pressure on staff whose working day extends to allow for this travel time and they are not paid for this time. Staff also expressed concerns about there being no reimbursement of expenses for travel as sometimes distances can be considerable.

These issues were discussed with the provider and the manager during the inspection. The manager is implementing a system to make it easier for staff to claim tax relief for the money they spend on travel for work. These issues are not easy to resolve but the service should continue to seek solutions and continue to work to support staff.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

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

The inspection showed that the service's performance was excellent in relation to this Quality Statement.

The manager has worked hard to create a very positive and inclusive ethos throughout the service. Staff said that they felt well supported by her and she has successfully promoted a service in which people feel free to express their needs and concerns.

There was strong evidence that the people who use the service, their relatives and staff are all encouraged to be involved in the management of the service.

The systems in place to promote participation are noted at Quality Statement 1.1.

Areas for improvement

General information about participation and involvement is noted at Quality Statement 1.1

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 4

We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide

Service strengths

The inspection showed that the service's performance was excellent in relation to this Quality Statement.

Regular monitoring visits are carried out by the Care Manager to each person using the service to discuss the level of support provided and whether it is meeting the service user's needs every six months or more frequently as required.

Regular review meetings take place with the care manager from the social work department to offer the opportunity for feedback and to plan future care arrangements. We found that the service had responded very well to the needs identified at reviews and that arrangements were changed in response to the expressed wishes of service users.

Service users and relatives told us that they were very happy about the way the service is managed and that they felt confident that issues raised with the manager would be addressed efficiently and sensitively.

Staff told us that she was a very supportive person and that she always responded positively to resolve any issues or concerns raised as quickly as possible.

Team Leaders have just been appointed to support the management arrangements and this has been welcomed by staff.

The inspection also noted that there were very good systems in place to ensure that communication between staff was effective. Small team meetings are scheduled regularly to allow staff to discuss important matters relating to each service user they support.

We found that the manager had effective systems in place to audit care arrangements and that the required policies and procedures were in place. There was a thorough and accountable approach to the management of the service in all aspects of its operation.

Areas for improvement

The management team should strive to maintain the excellent quality management systems seen at this inspection.

Grade awarded for this statement: 6 - Excellent

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

4 Other information

Complaints

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

Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the 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 Inspectorate re-grading a Quality Statement within the Quality of Management and Leadership Theme (or for childminders, Quality of Staffing Theme) as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme being re-graded as unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	6 - Excellent
Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 3	5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - 6 - Excellent	
Statement 1	6 - Excellent
Statement 4	6 - Excellent

6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
14 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and Leadership 6 - Excellent
20 May 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and Leadership Not Assessed

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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Translations and alternative formats

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ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

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