

# Handy Services Support Service

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**Type of inspection:**  
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**  
21 March 2024

**Service provided by:**  
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Partnership trading as Handy Services

**Service provider number:**  
SP2006008198

**Service no:**  
CS2006117062

## About the service

Handy Services is a privately owned and managed care at home service based in Pittenweem Fife covering East Neuk, Cupar, and St. Andrews. The service delivers just over 1200 hours of support per week.

Handy Services describe their objectives as:

- To provide a quality care service to a diverse range of individuals who require assistance within their home environment.
- To deliver a service that meets the needs of the individual and to promote and encourage their independence, where possible.
- To promote and respect individual's rights, choice, and dignity with all aspects of their care.
- To establish, develop, and maintain open and honest communication between the individual, their family, and other professionals involved in the care package.
- To liaise with other agencies involved in the care package to ensure best outcomes for the individual are met.

## About the inspection

This was a short notice inspection which took place on 14 March 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector 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 six people using the service and five of their family members
- spoke with six staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

## Key messages

- Relationships between staff and people using the service were warm and trusting.
- People felt that the service benefitted their health and wellbeing.
- The service worked hard to support people with a consistent staff team.
- Management and leadership were supportive and reliable.
- Aspects of recruitment could be more robust.

## 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?	4 - 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

We evaluated this key question as 'very good', where performance demonstrates major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people.

People described the staff from Handy Services as 'fantastic' and 'excellent'. People reported being very happy with staff's attitude and approach. One person said they thought the company was 'superior'. It is important that people experience care which is delivered with dignity and respect. Feedback was very positive and it was evident that the warm relationships between clients and staff were important to both parties. We could be confident that care and support was being delivered in a compassionate way.

Not everyone receiving the service felt fully confident to give negative feedback. The service currently use informal face to face contact to gather people's views. It was suggested to the service that they should explore a range of methods in order to allow people to express their views both directly and anonymously. This would encourage full communication and give people greater choice.

It is important that people are supported to get the most out of life and continue to achieve their aspirations. Most people had a fixed team of carers to support them. This enabled people to develop strong, trusting relationships with those who looked after them. People confirmed that this had a positive effect on their mental health and confidence. It was clear that regular support from the service was enabling people to continue living at home and supported not only the person receiving care but also their family members.

Some service users felt that there had been a sense of rush over recent months. The service was very aware of recent staffing pressures and were taking active action to address recruitment.

People's health should benefit from their care and support. We were confident that staff were alert to people's changing health needs. Staff had good links with client's wider health care team and were able to both give information and receive instruction from them. People confirmed that they felt confident that the team were working well together with their best interest at heart.

In order to ensure safer medication management, it would be best practice for staff to note the time that medication has been taken. This would ensure that should any incidents occur, or if there is a need for medical services to be involved, there would be a clear account available. This issue was discussed with the manager during the inspection and will be begun with immediate effect.

## How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as 'good', where there are important strengths which outweigh areas for improvement. Some improvements are required in order to ensure that people consistently have outcomes which are as positive as possible.

Quality assurance should be well led and leaders should be responsive to feedback. We found that the management team worked well together and were supportive of their staff team. Managers regularly undertook shifts working directly with clients, which enabled them to clearly see the issues facing care staff. They also took the opportunity during these shifts to gather informal feedback from both clients and staff.

There was limited formal quality assurance being undertaken by the service. This made it difficult to assess change and improvement over time or measure performance. Further development of quality assurance would enable the service to plan their future improvement and changes in a more structured way. Although the informal systems and processes were working effectively, they were reliant on individual staff and this made them fragile.

Some aspects of practice required more attention. Care plans were not fully up to date. There was an inconsistent level of detail across different care plans. This meant that there had been slippage with quality assurance which needed to be addressed. A previous area for improvement had not been met. **(See 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection'.)**

Recruitment practice was not always in line with safer staffing guidelines. References were not always from the most recent employer and processes could have been more robust. All checks should be complete before a staff member begins work and this was not always the case. An area for improvement is made. **(See area for improvement 1.)**

### Areas for improvement

1.  
To protect people from potential harm, the provider should demonstrate that they have followed good practice guidance for safe recruitment at all times.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited' (HSCS 4.24).

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

In order to ensure that people's personal plan is right for them, the service should ensure that:

- Six month reviews are held by the service in good time
- Ensure that care plans and risk assessments are updated and reviewed regularly and/ or when significant events occur.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am fully involved in reviewing my personal plan which is always available to me' (HSCS 2.17).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 June 2020.**

### Action taken since then

There had been some slippage with care plan reviews and updates over recent months. The service attributed this to issues with staffing which had impacted on the management team's time. There had not been sufficient progress towards this area for improvement.

**This area for improvement is not met.**

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	4 - Good

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