

# Borders Services Housing Support Service

Autism Initiatives  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
10 May 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Autism Initiatives (UK)

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004006462

**Service no:**  
CS2011286019

## About the service

Borders Services is registered to provide a service to adults with learning disabilities, including autistic spectrum disorders and acquired brain injury in their own homes. The service also supports people without learning disabilities, for which they are requesting a change to their current registration.

Staff support is available to people over a 24 hour period. The service provider is Autism Initiatives.

The service is coordinated from an office in Galashiels. At the time of the inspection, Borders Services was providing a service to five people living in their own homes and an outreach service provided to people within their local communities.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 7 May at 11:00 and 8 May at 15:00. 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 people using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documentation
- reviewed feedback from people's families and visiting professionals

**Key messages**

- People knew their staff well and they were supported by consistent, small teams.
- People had active lives and were supported to maintain important relationships with friends and family.
- Strong links with external professionals were established to ensure people had the right support to meet health and wellbeing outcomes.
- Medication processes were managed well and medicines were administered safely.
- Staff communicated well with each other and demonstrated effective teamwork.
- Staffing levels were regularly reviewed, and they were flexible around people's changing needs .

**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 staff team?	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

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Staff were skilled in their roles, demonstrating a good understanding of people's autism and how it shaped their day-to-day experiences. People had meaningful contact with friends and family, they were encouraged to remain active and had interesting things to do. People benefitted from highly individualised support which helped them gain independence and increased control over their lives. This had a significant and positive impact on people's mental health and wellbeing.

Managers had established good links with primary health professionals including people's GPs, pharmacists and opticians. Individual personal plans described how staff should support people with their general health needs. When people were unwell, staff took immediate action to ensure they had access to the appropriate health professional. People could be confident of having the right support to help maintain their physical health and wellbeing.

Senior staff took an active role in facilitating effective partnership working with a range of specialist, external professionals. Regular, multi-agency meetings took place to ensure key information was shared between relevant parties, including people's relatives. Individuals' personal plans were regularly updated, which helped staff provide consistent and personalised support. We concluded that good communication and collaborative working made a significant and positive contribution towards keeping people safe and well.

Medication was managed well and significant improvements had been made since the last inspection. For further information, please see the section: 'What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection.'

Whilst we found people were supported safely, not all medication issues had been notified to the Care Inspectorate as required. We spoke with the provider about the necessity to complete relevant notifications including where there are anomalies in medication. We are confident that managers will address this as a matter of urgency.

## How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People shared very positive working relationships with staff. This was underpinned by staff's ability to respond effectively to people's unique behaviours and complex communication needs. People benefitted from a relaxed and calm atmosphere at home, which helped them communicate effectively and meet positive wellbeing outcomes.

Staffing levels were regularly assessed by the manager and senior staff. Staffing arrangements were flexible around people's individual needs and took into account changes in people's lives. For example, risk assessments were completed with people as they gained skills and confidence, to ensure they received the right level of staff support that reflected the changes in their circumstances.

Each individual had an allocated team of well-trained support staff. Communication and teamwork between staff was strong, adding to the stability and consistency of support. Staff selection was based on their compatibility with people, following a period of shadowing and close working with more experienced colleagues. Consequently people could get to know their staff well, helping them achieve better outcomes.

## 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

To ensure people experience care that meets their health needs, the provider should ensure that people receive their medication as prescribed with robust recording of medication administered and this is audited by management.

This should take into account (but not limited to) the following:

- All staff who administer medications are trained in line with Care Inspectorate guidance, 'Review of medicine management procedures: Guidance for care at home services (2017)', and are able to distinguish the different levels of support service users require.
- All service users being supported with medication must have a detailed risk assessment to identify the appropriate level of support required; i.e. prompt, assist, administer.
- Ensure that processes are in place to regularly assess Staff practice and competency in medication management and records maintained.
- Accurate records must be kept for all medications being administered, where there are handwritten entries or changes made to medication records these should be signed, dated and indicate the source of the change.
- Ensure that Medication Administration Records clearly indicate the medication, dose, and times of administration in line with the prescriber's instructions.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state, 'If I need help with medication, I am able to have as much control as possible' (HSCS 2.23).

**This area for improvement was made on 19 January 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

Since the last inspection, steps had been taken by the provider to ensure all staff were trained in the administration of medication. Observations of practice were carried out by senior staff to ensure staff competence.

Up to date personal plans and individual risk assessments were in place and were reviewed regularly. This documentation gave staff clear guidance about how to keep people safe and how they liked to take their medicines. Specific instructions about the consistency of medication were included, for example where people needed their medicine in liquid form.

All medication was stored safely with accurate records were maintained for ordering, checking and administering people's medicines.

We were satisfied that significant improvements had been undertaken to ensure people received their medication safely and in line with current guidance.

**This area for improvement is 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
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	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

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