

SAMH - Edinburgh Support Service Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
28 May 2024

Service provided by:
Scottish Action For Mental Health

Service provider number:
SP2003000180

Service no:
CS2004081888

About the service

SAMH - Edinburgh Support Service is one of a number of services provided in Scotland by the national organisation Scottish Action for Mental Health. The service operates from an office base in Leith, Edinburgh and is registered to provide housing support and care at home to people with mental health problems. The service had a full time manager and a team of six staff and one bank staff employee. The service was currently operating from Mondays to Friday between 9am - 5pm. Support hours ranged from two hours a week to larger packages of support. At the time of inspection 31 people were being supported in their homes and out in the community.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on between 15 - 23 May 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
- intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with eight people using the service and two of their family members
- spoke with seven staff and management
- observed staff practice when supporting people in the community
- reviewed documents including the recent service survey information
- looked at feedback from involved health and social care professionals
- spoke with an involved health and social care professional

Key messages

- People's health and wellbeing benefited from the support they experienced
- People were involved in their support planning with their support plans and risk assessments being regularly reviewed
- People's staffing arrangements were flexible and well managed
- People experienced improved continuity in their staffing arrangements
- The management team and staff communicated well with involved health and social care professionals
- Staff were being well supported in their learning and development with training planned to further develop their knowledge and skills
- The provider was considering opportunities for support workers to progress within the organisation and provide additional support to the manager

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 evaluated this key question as very good. There were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement. Those that did exist had minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes.

People experienced compassionate, respectful and dignified care and were observed to be relaxed and at ease with their support staff. People told us that they were very happy with their support staff, that they were caring and sensitive and helped them in working towards goals they wanted to achieve. We heard of a range of positive outcomes for people including being supported to return to employment; attending leisure facilities; attending cookery skills classes and being supported to be more physically active through accessing local community resources, greenspaces and shops. People told us that they were very involved in their support planning and had choice and control in how they used their support. We heard positive comments about the difference support had made to people's lives including:

'I am exercising now and trying to get fresh air every day. That is down to SAMH - they have been right there with me. (Name of support worker) is an absolute star. Understands me and listens when I need to talk things through. Has helped me to understand the importance of giving myself space and time to myself doing things I enjoy. I requested them as keyworker and everything is going reall well.'

'I feel really involved in my support plan and it has been good setting goals. It helps me to keep on track. Both of my support workers are really great and help me to review my goals and plan my support.'

'It was difficult a few years ago as there were so many changes of staff but things are much better now and I am happy with my support worker. They are reliable and will always contact me if any issues. Helps me to get out for a walk and go to the shops as I find that difficult on my own.'

'They are absolutely wonderful people and my support worker is just amazing.'

'It has been life changing - I was agoraphobic and they have supported me at my own pace and steadily the agoraphobia melted away and can't tell you - it is like having a new life. All the staff are absolutely brilliant'.

People were involved in their support planning and plans set out people's needs, wishes, choices and goals. Support plans, care records and risk assessments were regularly reviewed and audited to check that people's needs were being met and identify if any changes were needed to improve their support. The service actively sought people's feedback about the quality of their care and support and used this information to adjust their support arrangements and plan for future service developments. Any concerns raised were logged and fully responded to. People were well supported in using technology and staff promoted people's independence in managing their medication. A person experiencing support told us that the support in using different technologies was really helping them in their daily life. This meant that people experienced responsive care and were involved in directing their own support.

The service had carried out a recent survey to gain feedback from service users, relatives and involved professionals and used the information to identify strengths and plan for service improvements.

We saw a range of comments including:

'Very positive (outcomes for service user) as I had met with SAMH on more than one occasion with a service user and their support worker. Very happy with the support they were providing the individual with.'

'(Name of service user) displayed great faith and confidence in the service he is provided with ,and does feel you all "have his back"..... 'was equally candid about the positive impact your service and his relationship with (name of keyworker) has had on his life.'

People were well supported in using technology and staff promoted people's independence in managing their medication. A person experiencing support told us that the support in using different technologies was really helping them in their daily life. This meant that staff had an enabling approach to help people achieve their potential.

Staff had clear guidance to follow at times when people's mental or physical health was deteriorating including reporting any issues of concern promptly so people got the right supports at the right time. This included organising welfare checks when people were not actively engaging in planned support. Staff supported people to appointments and also provided support to people receiving hospital treatment and when returning to their homes. This meant that people could have confidence that their care provider had effective systems in place to promote their safety and wellbeing.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. There were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement. Those that did exist had minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes.

The organisation followed safe recruitment processes when employing staff. This was to ensure that people's safety and protection was promoted. Some people expressed that they would like the opportunity to be involved in staff recruitment again and we passed this on to the management team.

The service was familiar with the new safe staffing legislation and had carried out a self evaluation to ensure compliance and plan for any further improvements. The service had a Wellbeing Champion who was dedicated to promoting the team's health and wellbeing. Staff also had access to counselling services to support them in their work as well as debriefings following adverse events. At the time of inspection it was Mental Health Awareness Week and staff were engaging with and encouraging people to participate in their local communities. This meant that people could be assured that their organisation promoted their staff's health and wellbeing and had systems in place to support them well.

People we consulted told us that they had advance notice of their staffing arrangements and this helped them to plan how they used their support hours. We heard that staff were flexible around their support needs and changing circumstances and that there had been improvements to the continuity and consistency in people's staffing arrangements. People told us that when there were changes to their staffing new staff were introduced to them and shadowed experienced support workers before supporting them. There was one occasion reported where this hadn't happened though we heard that this was unusual. This meant that people experienced stability in their support even when there were changes in the service or organisation.

People told us:

'It was difficult a few years ago as there were so many changes of staff but things are much better now and I am happy with my support worker. They are punctual and will always contact me if any issues. Helps me to get out for a walk and go to the shops as I find that difficult on my own.'

'Have regular reviews of my support and I'd say for the last two to three years staffing has been really good and consistent - was a time pre pandemic when it was really not great but certainly feel that SAMH has been providing me with staff I know and trust and introduces me well to anyone new coming in to support me.'

'They always let me know the week before who is supporting me and they are really flexible around any appointments I have. I just let the manager know well in advance and they make sure that I have staff there to support me. They also plan ahead if my keyworker is going to be on holiday so I know who is coming.'

The service was actively recruiting at the time of inspection and planned to increase the pool of bank staff to promote further continuity in people's care. The service had not used agency staff for a considerable period and the manager had supported people when there were unexpected staff shortages. We heard that the manager had been there for people during crisis and while they were waiting for emergency services to arrive. The service were looking to introduce a new post as the current flatline structure didn't allow opportunity for staff promotion. This will also support the manager in their role. The service had carried out a recent staff survey and were using this and information from staff exit interviews to make improvements. Staff told us that they were well supported by the management team and that there was effective team work with systems in place for regular sharing of information. This meant that people could have confidence that the organisation was committed to continuous improvement and people could be assured that staff had good working relationships.

Staff were being well supported in their learning and development and the service had an overview of staff training and development needs. Team meetings allowed opportunities for the staff team to meet, discuss their practice and for newer staff to learn from more experienced colleagues. The organisation had appointed a Mental Health Lead who was responsible for promoting the organisation's workforce development. Some staff had expressed that they would have benefited from certain training courses at an earlier stage as some training had been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. As a contingency strategy the management team had spent time with staff talking them through how to support people effectively at times of crisis. The staff induction programme had been developed and improved by the management team to support newer staff in their learning and development. There was a time scaled staff learning and development plan to further staff's skills and knowledge of mental health. This meant that people could have confidence that the people supporting them were being supported in their continuous learning and development and had regular opportunities to reflect on their practice.

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

People should know when support is planned and who is delivering support. The service should ensure any changes to this should be discussed with people as soon as possible. Any changes should be kept to a minimum to ensure consistent care and support and avoid disruptions to people's health and well-being.

This is to make sure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards, My Support, My Life (HSCS) which states 'I know who provides my care and support on a day to day basis and what they are expected to do. If possible, I can have a say on who provides my care and support' (3.11) and 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well' (HSCS 3.19).

This area for improvement was made on 18 March 2024.

Action taken since then

The provider had made improvements to people's staffing arrangements as reflected in this report. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order for people to experience support inline with relevant legislation, the service should develop its understanding of current legislation which impacts on people's daily lives. This includes but is not limited to:

- 1) Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- 2) Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- 3) Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995

This area for improvement was made on 18 March 2024.

Action taken since then

The provider had made improvements to the staff training programme to increase staff's knowledge of legislation relevant to their work. We advised that input from the Criminal Justice Services would be beneficial for staff in furthering their knowledge of Forensic Mental Health. This area for improvement has been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

The service should review and update its 'service user finance' policy. This is to make sure management and support of people's finances is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards, My Support, My Life (HSCS) which states 'If I need help managing my money and personal affairs, I am able to have as much control as possible and my interests are safeguarded' (HSCS 2.5) and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

This area for improvement was made on 18 March 2024.

Action taken since then

The provider had updated a range of policies including it's Service User Finance Policy. This area for improvement has been met.

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 staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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