

# Key - Highland (Lochaber, Inverness and Nairn) Support Service

Key  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
24 July 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Key Housing Association Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003000173

**Service no:**  
CS2004079340

## About the service

Key Community Supports - Highland (Lochaber, Inverness and Nairn) is a care at home service that provides practical and personal support, advice and guidance, to help people live fully in their own homes. The service is primarily for people with a learning disability or a mental health concern. Additionally, the service offers a respite and short breaks service based in Nairn.

The service was committed to ensuring the provision of responsive support that helped people achieve positive outcomes, celebrate their successes, and help address the health or wellbeing challenges that people can experience.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 18 and 23 July 2023. 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 ten people using the service and received 12 completed questionnaires
- Spoke with 5 relatives
- Spoke with eleven staff and management and received 23 questionnaires completed by staff
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke and received feedback on the service from visiting professionals

## Key messages

- People supported said that the Key service helped them a lot.
- People liked their staff members as they were friendly and had a respectful attitude.
- People kept up with family members or others who were important to them.
- People were getting on with their lives.
- Staff were quick to pick up on any concerns people had.
- Management were available, supportive and very much in touch with what was happening for people and staff.
- The service had experienced staffing shortages but were striving to put this right.
- The service worked and communicated well with other agencies.
- This service was open to new ideas and developments.
- As part of this inspection, we assessed the service's self-evaluation of key areas. We found that the service had an effective and well completed self-evaluation that was reflective of our findings.

## 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

This service was very good at supporting people's wellbeing. It demonstrated major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people.

People were listened to and their wishes were acted upon. Their opinions mattered and were central to the support they received and how the service aimed to develop. As well as individually discussing their own support, many people were part of 'The Advisory Group' (TAG). This group would discuss service matters, developments and improvements that could be made to the overall service. People felt respected, appreciated and valued.

The service had very good, detailed information about any health or wellbeing matters that affected a person. Careful consideration went into what would be the most suitable way to support someone. When needed, many conversations with the person, family and others involved in their care and support took place to ensure a person got just the right support. People were supported to keep well and feel secure and relaxed.

The importance of promoting people's independence was understood. People's abilities, interests and what they enjoyed informed their days and their support. People were able to get on with their lives in a positive way whenever possible.

The service had systems in place for monitoring and checking that care and support arrangements were working satisfactorily for people. For instance, when people needed support with medication, then this would be suitably recorded by staff. Guidance on the person's medications was available and staff's practice would be checked. The service also organised regular review meetings for a person's support provision. The majority of reviews were up to date and when they weren't, the service was aware of this and taking action to address delays. The service agreed that getting up to date with people's reviews would be focused on.

Whilst not all reviews were up to date, we saw very good evidence that the service was responding promptly to any concerns that might arise for a person. Very good communication with other agencies such as the NHS routinely happened. The service recognised the importance of good working relationships with other agencies. People were assisted to keep safe and well.

People's changing needs and health were considered. People's care and support plans looked forward to what else might be required to meet their needs and wishes. Health and wellbeing changes for a person were anticipated. We saw good examples of this regarding people's mobility needs and when a health condition they had was deteriorating. People can be assured their future health, wellbeing and wishes were thought about and planned for by the service staff.

Management in the service were enthusiastic, organised and keen for high standards to be achieved. They were very interested in ensuring people were happy with their support. Strong, caring values were communicated. People can trust that management have their best interests at the centre of the service.

Whilst we thought the service had very good care and support plans for people, some plans could benefit from more specific detail or explanation. We discussed this with members of the management team. It was clear that staff knew what to do when, at times, the support required for a person was more complex. However, some more explanation and examples in a person's support documentation would also be helpful.

The service continued to have a focus on improvement and recognised there are always new developments or ideas that could improve people's experiences and outcomes. The service also recognised current challenges in health and social care and approached these in a positive way. Senior management discussed the challenges with important health and social care partners with the purpose of achieving flexible, responsive support and better outcomes for people.

## How good is our staff team?

## 5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. The staff team worked very well together and provided support in person centred ways. There were major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There were very few areas for improvement.

People receiving support and their family members reported positively on staff. As well as many saying they got on well with staff, they found staff members to be respectful, motivated and kind. Staff had a warm, friendly manner. Some comments were:

- 'She's doing a good job.' when talking about a manager.
- 'First class service...20 out of 10'
- 'Very Happy.'

The service understood the importance of getting the right staff. All required recruitment checks on staff were undertaken and a good induction to the role was in place. Staff completed a range of health and social care training and more specific training when necessary for ensuring someone's received suitable support. New staff got time to settle in to their support role and had opportunities to learn from other staff members. People can be confident that their staff have very good knowledge and skills for supporting them. People were able to be as safe and as well as can be.

People trusted their staff and had good relationships with them. Staff understood the importance of listening to and respecting people. People were at ease and comfortable with their staff members. This meant they could talk to them, including when feeling troubled, and it helped them get the most from their support.

Staff had positive values. They had a person centred and enabling approach and aimed to assist people in getting the most out of their day and week. What was most important to a person, their interests, hobbies and wishes were recognised by staff. This helped people to lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives.

Management supported staff well. Staff found management available, approachable and easy to speak to. Management were keen to know what was going on for people, how staff were and if there were any difficulties. Good conversations happened between staff and management and these led to positive solutions that benefitted people or helped in some way. Staff felt valued and appreciated. Helpful, listening management resulted in good outcomes for people.

As well as being able to get informal supervision from management, formal supervision arrangements were in place for staff. Appraisals systems for staff were of high quality and in depth, too. Staff were supported to be professional, know important procedures for when needed and to continue to develop their abilities and knowledge in care and support. Team meetings were another opportunity for staff and management to discuss matters and ensure the service was operating in a reliable, organised way for people.

The service had taken steps in the last year to ensure that the overall staff team, both management and support staff levels, worked well together. This enabled more effective and supportive arrangements for managers and staff. Challenges such as staffing shortages could be responded to more confidently. The service was well organised and this helped for making sure people's outcomes and wishes were met.

## 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 provide staff with clear information and good guidance about supporting people, their support plans should be:

- a) reviewed and updated to ensure information is accurate, up-to-date, and relevant to their current needs, preferences and wishes; and
- b) develop anticipatory care plans with individuals, particularly those with life limiting or degenerative conditions, to ensure support continues to reflect their known wishes and choices.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15); and 'My views will always be sought and my choices respected, including when I have reduced capacity to fully make my own decisions' (HSCS 2.11).

**This area for improvement was made on 22 December 2022.**

#### Action taken since then

This area for improvement was met. At this inspection, we found that the service had taken steps to improve their documentation and assessment for supporting people. People can be reassured that the service strives to anticipate potential needs and challenges they may experience. By doing this the service can take a prepared and considered approach when people's needs and wishes change.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

To support people to keep well and safe, the provider should ensure that all medication support arrangements are reviewed and, where necessary, improved. Attention should be given to the quality of information within medication administration records, guidance for 'as required' and topical medications, and the quality assurance activities, including medication incident investigations.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: '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 22 December 2022.**

### Action taken since then

This area for improvement was met. At this inspection, we examined the service's medication recording and information for people. We found these were completed to a very good standard. People's medication documents contained helpful guidance for staff and recording for when medication was administered was consistently completed. People can have confidence in this area of their support. People were helped to keep well.

## 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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