

Edinburgh Women's Aid Housing Support Service

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
24 July 2024

Service provided by:
Edinburgh Women's Aid Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004005792

Service no:
CS2004080956

About the service

Edinburgh Women's Aid is a housing support service providing support and refuge accommodation to women and their children who have experienced domestic abuse. Edinburgh Women's Aid is a registered charity which is managed by a voluntary Board of Directors. The service provides support to women and children who are living in either refuge accommodation or in the wider community. The refuge accommodation has a capacity to accommodate up to 29 women.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 July 2024 between 11:00 and 15:00 and 23 July 2024 between 11:00 and 15:00 and 24 July between 09:30 and 14:30. 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 five women who use the service;
- spoke with six staff and managers; and
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

Women received consistently high levels of support from a highly motivated staff team.

Risk was robustly assessed and safety highly prioritised

Good physical and mental health was well promoted and staff worked closely alongside health professionals to signpost and support women to access appropriate services.

Women's views were taken very seriously and used to make improvements and develop the service.

The service was proactive in highlighting the issue of domestic abuse and had involved women in efforts to influence government and international perspective and policy.

The staff were well trained, compassionate and caring. They were highly respectful of the woman they worked with and each other.

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?	6 - Excellent
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?

6 - Excellent

An evaluation of excellent was awarded to quality indicator 1.3, as significant strengths were identified that supported positive health and wellbeing outcomes for the women who use the service.

Women using the service received consistently high levels of support from the staff team who were very sensitive and knowledgeable about the impact of domestic abuse on their physical and emotional wellbeing. Sound recognition of the effects of domestic abuse, particularly in the first period of crisis, ensured that women were comforted and reassured and had time to recuperate without feeling overwhelmed.

Physical and mental health and wellbeing was highly promoted, with women actively supported to access relevant health care providers both for themselves and for their children. Staff working alongside mental health services helped to increase understanding of the impact on mental health from domestic abuse. Reciprocal training with agencies such as Deaf Action recognised the need to provide access to support for all women experiencing domestic abuse.

The medication policy was clear and comprehensive and women were helped to manage their medication if that was appropriate for them. Staff were trained in administration of emergency medication and there was detailed guidance on the use, administration and storage of emergency medication. Appropriate documents such as consent to administration and an opiate overdose risk assessment support the medication procedure to ensure safety.

Individual support plans were led by the women and particular to them, and their children's needs. Clear plans identified risk and safety planning, including financial welfare, mental health and accessing other services. In addition legal advice focused on rights and support to pursue criminal charges and an employability service helped women return to work or training.

Individual and family support, group sessions and a wide range of therapeutic and creative activities promoted a sense of connection with others. Reducing isolation, building confidence, recognising strengths and enabling a process of recovery. A dedicated team of children and young people's workers focussed on supporting children and young people through trauma and offered therapeutic strategies to recover.

Staff were fully aware of responsibilities for safeguarding and prevention of harm. They kept in regular touch with women to check they were safe and showed genuine interest and concern for their welfare.

The service strived to continually improve and had recognised over the past few years, and particularly during the pandemic, that communal refuges were not appropriate for the majority of women. The service had listened to women views and was moving swiftly towards single family occupancy whilst not reducing number of women/families supported.

Edinburgh Women's Aid have enjoyed significant achievements including finalist in Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCOV) awards. They had used their extensive experience and expertise organising conferences, highlighting policy improvements and speaking at an international conference on domestic violence with regard to the Scottish response to domestic abuse. They have hosted visits from Canada, Australia and Finland to look at changes in the law in relation to coercive control and helping these countries consider how they can support women. They have taken feedback from service users and staff to create a presentation to an international conference on domestic violence. In addition Women from

Edinburgh Women's Aid participated in the Scottish government review of the domestic abuse Scotland act and fed back to ministers.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

An evaluation of very good was awarded to quality indicator 3.3, as major strengths were identified in relation to staffing arrangements.

A staffing levels assessment based on events and levels of risk ensured that enough staff were available at key times to provide the necessary support.

Women have access to staff support at all times in the 24 hour refuge. Women in refuge in the community are individually supported by an identified keyworker within locality teams providing consistency and stability.

Robust emergency arrangements ensured that all women felt safe and had access to support out of hours. Refuge accommodation was provided either in a 24 hour refuge or in the community. The 24 hour refuge provided round the clock support from on-site staff. In addition, emergency support could be accessed from an on call service and through contact details for police and social work services.

Supporting systems such as team meetings and one to one supervision contribute to the effective communication and positive relationships within the team. As a result staff are fully confident and motivated in their role.

A thorough induction programme and a range of accessible, good quality training ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to carry out their responsibilities.

Safe recruitment is thorough and well organised.

The service acknowledges the importance of staff well being. There is recognition of vicarious trauma and areas of increased crisis for staff. There is a staff wellbeing support service and staff within the service fully support each other and in turn this better prepares staff to support women.

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?	6 - Excellent
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

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

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.