

Castle Care (Scotland) Ltd Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 August 2024

Service provided by:
Castle Care (Scotland) Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2013012212

Service no:
CS2013322100

About the service

Castle Care (Scotland) Ltd is a care at home and housing support service registered to provide services to adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health needs and to older people living in their own homes.

This service operates in the Highlands, mainly Inverness, Nairn and Fort William areas.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced which took place between 15 and 20 August 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 22 people using the service and 15 of family members
- spoke with 12 staff and management
- observed practice
- reviewed documents
- read the questionnaires completed by people, family members, staff and visiting professionals.

Key messages

- Most people and family members were happy with the support provided.
- Staff were praised for their friendly manner and professional approach.
- The staffing levels have improved over the year.
- The office team were seen as supportive and quick to respond to matters needing attention.
- Where there were challenges the management team were aware of them.
- The management team had an improvement plan in place.
- As part of this inspection, we assessed the service's self-evaluation of key areas. We found that the service had made positive progress in completing their self-evaluation. The service should continue to develop this approach to support improvement.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this as good. The service had a number of important strengths in supporting people's health and wellbeing. There were some areas for improvements and addressing these will help ensure consistently positive experiences and outcomes for people.

There were a lot of favourable reports on staff, their kindness and on the assistance they provided. People often got support that was just right for them and their wishes and preferences were known and followed.

An important part of the care and support for people was that their independence was respected and promoted. When they were able to do something within their home or for own care, they felt encouraged to keep doing it. The service promoted people's abilities and independence in this way. People were supported to be independent and as able as possible.

People's care plans usually held a good level of information about their health and wellbeing needs. This helped to guide staff and be knowledgeable about a person's health conditions or wellbeing needs. Essential information was almost always detailed in the care plans. If there were any risks for a person, the service's assessment process would help ensure this was asked about. Suitable information would be recorded so staff had any information they needed to provide appropriate care and support. People received good support and were able to keep as well and safe as possible.

Overall, people and their families reported positively on communication with the service's co-ordinators and management team. They said they got a speedy and helpful response. They had confidence that matters of concern would be addressed and any actions needed would be taken. Other health and social care agencies, such as the NHS, also reported that the office and management team were reliable. They trusted them to share important information and said the service worked well with other agencies. The service recognised the importance of positive joint working arrangements. People can be reassured services aims to work in their best interests.

Not all people's care plan had as full and as helpful information as they could have had. There were examples where more information, detail and explanation would be supportive of good outcomes for people. This, for instance, could be in relation to medication matters or personal care. Staff being provided with all the right guidance and information assists them to know important detail to help a person's care and support be as good as it can be. **See Area for Improvement 1.**

People's care and support arrangement should be reviewed on a regular basis and at least 6 monthly. This is to make sure that care and support information is up to date, any new developments are known and key people's views on the care and support provided is fully taken into account. Due to various pressures, for example staffing levels, some people's review meetings had fallen behind schedule. The service should address this. **See Area for Improvement 1.**

The service were not always reporting accidents, incidents for people or other notifiable events to the Care Inspectorate. They were reminded of the purpose of this and why it is important. Good reporting processes and appropriately informing partner agencies of events can assist people to stay well and safe.

Communicating with people receiving care in a timely way is important. A matter that can disrupt people's day was staff running late. People were understanding of the reasons why this might happen and how the

service is often under pressure due to timescales they have to work to. However, some people mentioned to us that would like to be informed whenever possible if a staff member is particularly late. This will be helpful to them and the service should look into this and address communication arrangement for these situations.

Areas for improvement

1. To support people's health and wellbeing, the service provider should ensure that care and support documentation has:

- a) sufficient detail and explanation to guide staff to assist people in as beneficial way as possible and
- b) that care and support information is regularly checked and people, or their representatives, have the opportunity to discuss and review their care and support plans on at least a six monthly basis.

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

'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated 'How is our staff team as good'. Strengths for the staff team and how they were supported outweighed the areas for improvements. At the same time, improvements are important to help staff to fully meet people's care and support needs and wishes.

Staff were recruited through safe procedures. People can be confident that the service strove to have staff that are suitable for the role, with the right values and attitude. This helped to keep people safe and well.

There were many positive comments about staff. People told us:

- staff were 'tremendous'
- staff were 'fantastic'
- '...excellent and time keeping is really good'
- 'We know everyone one of them'.

This was very good to hear and showed when the care and support was going well for people, they were very happy with the service.

However, there were times when the support for some people was not going as well. Whilst staff's manner and approach was almost always seen as okay, people saw that staff were pushed. Timing of visits could be variable and, at times, late, as well as staff having to do a lot within a short time frame. People understood why staff may get delayed and behind schedule but this was inconvenient and unsettling for some.

Most staff had a respectful and friendly manner. They had good knowledge of people's care and support needs. Many staff said to us they enjoyed their role, very much liked working with people and had built up

good relationships and rapport with people they regularly supported. People were relaxed with their staff and trusted their knowledge and abilities.

Overall, staff felt supported by senior staff and management. They said this had improved over the last year. Communication within the service between the staff team and management worked well. Day to day planning was effective and last minute changes were addressed appropriately. Staffing levels had also got better. Good organisation helped make sure that people got their care and support to the level they needed and helped in making sure it was delivered within a suitable time period.

There were some areas that management have to give more attention to. Staff having opportunities to discuss their work and the care and support they provide is an important part of good practice. It is also an opportunity for management to ensure staff were following the service's guidance. Staff supervision meetings were not happening as often as aimed for and during our visits we saw some examples of poorer practice by staff. The service provider should ensure staff are suitably supported and provided with opportunities to reflect on and develop their practice. This will help to make sure that people receive a high standard of support. **See area for improvement 1 below.**

It is essential that staff follow best practice for infection prevention and control. Occasionally, we saw that this was not the case and advised management to address. We also discussed that induction for staff should be reviewed. A few staff did not appear to be fully aware of the everyday expectation of a respectful, relaxed manner when providing care and support. This will help staff be consistent with the health and social care values they should promote. This will support people's health and wellbeing.

Whilst staff were registered with Scottish Social Services Council, the service must review its information as sometimes they were not registered under both the Housing Support Service and Care at Home service parts of the register. During our visit it was agreed that would be addressed.

The service provider has not consulted with staff to gain their views and comments for some time. Gaining staff's ideas and thoughts will help the service develop as staff are an important resource in understanding what works and what could be changed. This should be followed up on to help to ensure the service is achieving the best outcomes for people.

Areas for improvement

1. To support people's health and wellbeing, the provider should make sure staff are suitably supported and have opportunities to develop and improve their knowledge and practice. This could cover a range of activities supportive of staff's practice and should include, but not limited to, supervision meetings.

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

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.' (HSCS 3.14) and

The Scottish Social Services Council Code of Practice which state that:

'As a social service employer, you must have the culture and systems in place to support social service workers to meet their Code of 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 who have assessed needs and are reliant on care at home support should have this provided as per their plan. The service needs to ensure they have effective systems in place to audit that carers are adhering to people's agreed visit schedules.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard:
'I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed.' (HSCS 4.23)

This area for improvement was made on 26 October 2023.

Action taken since then

Whilst there were still further actions the service provider should take, the service had improved in this area. We saw good evidence that checking and auditing care and support visits and staff's practice were regularly taking place. There were observation of staff practice arrangements in place and other means for senior staff to monitor and advise staff on best practice. Senior management oversight arrangements for the Inverness, Nairn and Lochaber areas had been effective during this year.

This area for improvement was met.

Previous area for improvement 2

People experiencing care, who require support to manage specific medical conditions, should have a risk assessment and risk management plan in place. This can then fully guide staff on what action to take if the person's condition deteriorates. In addition, staff should receive training to have an understanding of specific medical conditions, so they have the necessary knowledge and skills to support people.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard:
'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)

This area for improvement was made on 26 October 2023.

Action taken since then

The service had taken some steps in relation to the concerns raised in this area for improvement. However, we did hear from people concerning some matters they were not happy about. When we examined some people's care and support plans, we saw that more detail and helpful explanation would be beneficial in making sure people were getting a suitable standard of care and support. This would be especially relevant for when people have complex health conditions or a deteriorating condition.

This area for improvement was not met.

Previous area for improvement 3

People who experience care and require support with medication should have this provided as per best practice. As part of any initial assessment, the service should ascertain how medication supplies will be provided for people to ensure they do not run out and record this in a person's plan. Managers should undertake audits to ensure staff are following best practice when supporting people with administration of medication to monitor compliance.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard:

'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 26 October 2023.

Action taken since then

The service provider had taken some actions to ensure suitable standards of medication information and arrangements were recorded to guide staff's practice. There were suitable arrangements and understanding for the obtaining and the regular supply for a person's medication. However, medication support information can still be improved, such as more explanatory detail to guide staff and the use of body maps for topical medications. These additional steps and processes to quality check them will lead to better outcomes and care for people.

This area for improvement was not met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	4 - Good

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