

Cornerstone North Aberdeenshire Housing Support Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
26 September 2024

Service provided by:
Cornerstone Community Care

Service provider number:
SP2003000013

Service no:
CS2004072999

About the service

Cornerstone North Aberdeenshire provides a housing support and care at home service to adults living in North Aberdeenshire, including the towns of Peterhead, Strichen, and Banff.

The service provides care and support to adults with a range of needs, including learning and physical disabilities. At the time of the inspection, 26 people were being supported by the service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 19 September 2024 and 26 September 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 six people using the service
- spoke with six of their family
- spoke with 12 staff and management
- spoke with visiting professionals
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Staff were able to recognise changes in people's needs.
- Staffing arrangements were not always informed by people's needs and preferences.
- Staff worked well together to support positive outcomes for people.
- Communication with relatives/guardians could be improved.
- As part of this inspection, we assessed the service's self evaluation of key areas. We found that the service had begun to use self evaluation. However, further work is required 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?	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas of the service require to improve.

People appeared happy and relaxed in their home environment. People told us that they were often supported to participate in areas of interests, such as concerts, theatre, and on holidays.

The service supported people to access a range of healthcare professionals. For example, GPs, dentists, and chiropodists. Where people were supported with chronic conditions, such as diabetes and epilepsy, people had detailed support plans, including professional guidance which informed support delivered. Through the use of technology, one person who lives with diabetes was supported to take their own blood sugar readings. This enabled the person to have an element of control over their health and wellbeing.

Staff recognised when people were experiencing changes to their longer term health and wellbeing. However, people's support wasn't always responsive to this. For example, one person supported was experiencing symptoms of menopause which, at times, was causing distress and a change in their mood. The service should support the person in a format that is right for them to be well informed about any treatment options or interventions which could enhance their experience (see requirement 1).

Some people experienced periods of stress and distress. Associated support plans did not provide staff with detailed guidance. This meant that people did not always experience positive, appropriate, and consistent support (see requirement 1).

Medication management varied across the service. Where people were prescribed 'as required' medication, for instance pain relief, support plans did not contain detailed guidance. In addition, recordings were not fully completed which meant the effectiveness of the medication could not be monitored. This could lead to missed opportunities to provide the support required to maximise people's health and wellbeing. The service should ensure improvements are made around the management of 'as required' medication.

We were concerned that where people's independence, choice, and control were restricted, the appropriate legal and support arrangements were not in place. For example, the arrangement of monitors to support individuals overnight had not been implemented in line with legal and ethical considerations in order to promote people's rights and dignity. The service shared our concerns and had been proactive in making arrangements to review this practice. We were confident with the progress the service was making and will review this at future inspections.

Requirements

1. By 21 November 2024, the provider must ensure people are well supported with changes in their health and wellbeing needs, including stress and distress.

To do this, the provider must, at a minimum:

a) Ensure support plans detail health conditions and any support the individual requires around this, including any professional guidance.

- b) Ensure staff have the correct knowledge and skills to support people's specific conditions.
- c) Ensure up-to-date plans and notes are available to all people at all times.

This is to comply with Regulation 5(1)(iii) (Personal plans) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the 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).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate. While the strengths had a positive impact, key areas of the service require to improve.

Staffing arrangements varied across the service. Some people benefitted from small staff teams who knew the person very well. This supported the person to experience consistent support which met their needs and supported their outcomes. In other areas of the service, the deployment of staff didn't always reflect people's preferences and provide good continuity of care. Families said that "they are always short-staffed" and "my loved one has to make do". This meant that staff did not always have time to support meaningful interactions with people. At times, staff had to work under pressure which meant people experienced support which appeared rushed. The leadership team are working hard to support more effective staffing arrangements in these areas.

We observed staff working well together with opportunities provided where staff were able to have discussions about how best to support people's outcomes. This practice had enabled one person experiencing support to become confident to have their haircuts at the local barber.

The service was enhanced by the positive involvement of those who were employed in roles which did not involve direct care and support work. Their understanding of their role in contributing to the quality of the service and, therefore, people's experiences was evident.

Staff told us they felt well supported by the leadership team. Some people benefitted from regular one-to-one sessions with their manager and observations of their practice. This gave staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice and identify any personal development needs and aspirations. The service recognised that there is some inconsistencies in this practice across the service and has plans in place to take this forward.

Training records indicated that staff had completed a wide range of training and the systems in place meant the service was able to ensure people's training was kept up-to-date. We identified some areas where staff would benefit from further training to support people's specific health and wellbeing needs, some of which had already been identified and planned by the service (see requirement 1 within the section 'How well do we support people's wellbeing?').

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?	3 - Adequate
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	3 - Adequate
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	3 - Adequate

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