

Real Life Options Elgin Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
27 February 2025

Service provided by:
Real Life Options

Service provider number:
SP2003001558

Service no:
CS2015342048

About the service

Real Life Options Elgin is a combined housing support and care at home service. The service provides care and support to people with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities and mental health conditions living in their own homes.

The service provides care and support to people who live in Elgin, with a local office also located in Elgin. At the time of inspection ten people were receiving care and support.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 24 and 26 February 2025. 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 eight people using the service and six of their family
- spoke with nine staff and management
- reviewed findings from 30 surveys returned to us prior to inspection
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People experienced care that was kind and compassionate, from staff who were knowledgeable about their needs.
- People were supported to access healthcare to maintain good general health.
- The service displayed significant strengths in supporting people with sensory impairments such as, poor vision.
- The service planned for, and provided, sufficient staff to meet people's needs.
- People experienced flexible care and support tailored to their needs.

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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People experienced care and support that was kind and compassionate, from staff who knew them well. People and staff had fun together and people clearly enjoyed spending time with their support workers. Records about people's health and wellbeing were written respectfully. People were respected and supported well by staff.

People were supported to maintain active and healthy lifestyles. People told us they were supported to go to the gym, swimming and regularly enjoyed walks. Being active and exercising had a positive impact on people's wellbeing.

People were supported to access healthcare to maintain good general health. Records indicated that people visited the dentist, GP, chiropodist and nurse regularly. People were supported with preventative health care such as, vaccinations, breast screening and age-related bowel screening. This meant people were supported to access healthcare opportunities that were in line with the general population. Staff knew people well, which allowed them to respond quickly when one person's health declined. Staff arranged treatment quickly, resulting in the person making a quick recovery. People could be confident that their health needs were well supported.

People were supported to make meal choices that suited their needs and preferences. People were involved in shopping and where able, food preparation. One person told us, "I help with the tatties and chop the onions". People had ample opportunity to dine out, if that was their preference. People were supported to access fresh fruit and vegetables. Some people required additional support with safe swallowing. Staff confidently told us about people's altered textured diet recommendations from the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT). SALT guidance was available in people's care plans. People's menus were in line with this guidance and their meals had been prepared so that they could enjoy this safely. People were supported to eat well and benefitted from care and support that met their dietary needs.

People received the medication they needed at the right time. However, 'as required' medication care plans could have been more person centred. One person's medication assessment did not accurately reflect the care and support they received. Whilst these issues did not impact on people's experiences, we highlighted this to leaders during the inspection. Improvements to these care plans were made immediately.

The service displayed significant strengths in supporting people with sensory impairments such as, poor vision. People had been supported to improve their home environment, to make it more accessible. For example, door frames were painted in contrasting colours allowing the person to see them more easily and to find their way with more ease. This allowed the person to remain independent in their own home.

Family and/or welfare guardians told us the service had very good communication and that they were contacted regularly. Families praised the service for planning care reviews in advance to ensure they could attend. People benefitted from positive relationships between their staff and their loved ones.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Staff were knowledgeable about people's needs and had built positive relationships with people. Staff did not appear rushed and people were supported at a pace that was right for them. The service had a core staff team, supported by a 'bank' of regular relief staff. Whilst the service was understaffed, they did not use agency staff at the time of inspection. The provider was actively recruiting new staff. People were supported by staff who knew them well.

Care and support was planned in partnership with individuals, their welfare guardians and funding authorities. People and their families reported that there was enough staff to meet their needs. The service aimed to provide staff with the right skills and qualities to meet people's preferences. Some individuals preferred only female staff and this preference was respected. People could be assured that the service had planned for and provided sufficient staff to meet their needs.

Staff felt supported by leaders. Staff told us they can contact a member of the leadership team at any time. Team meetings took place regularly and where possible, all staff could attend. For those unable to attend, meeting minutes were made available. Staff had access to various tools to support effective communication. This included tools to direct care such as, task sheets, diaries and electronic communication systems. People benefitted from a well-supported staff team, who communicated well.

Staff worked well together and responded to changes in people's needs and wishes. Staffing could be rearranged quickly to ensure people could attend health appointments. One person told us that they had to cancel their support but appreciated being able to choose a different time that suited them better. People experienced flexible care and support tailored to their needs.

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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