

# North Lanarkshire Women's Aid Housing Support Service

Glasgow

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 30 March 2017

**Service provided by:**  
North Lanarkshire Women's Aid Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004006118

**Care service number:**  
CS2004062576

## About the service

North Lanarkshire Women's Aid provides support to women and children who have experienced domestic abuse. The housing support service has eight flats which can accommodate up to 16 women. The service operates from a central office in Cumbernauld and provides support to women and children in the surrounding Cumbernauld area. Support includes both refuge accommodation as well as outreach support. The aims, as stated by the service are: 'To offer advice, support and temporary accommodation to women and children who are suffering from domestic abuse whether it is mental physical or sexual. To continue to raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse'.

## What people told us

We visited the service on the 13 February 2017 and on 10 March 2017. During our inspection visits we spoke with three women in a focus group.

Service users made the following comments:

- 'I was gobsmacked as I didn't know this help was out there'.
- 'My flat is lovely'.
- 'I had thought refuge meant lying in a bunk bed in a dormitory'.
- 'I can't believe the difference in how I feel. Every day gets a little bit better'.
- 'The accommodation is excellent'.
- 'My flat is cosy and warm and they fill the cupboard with food'.
- 'I share a flat ... I would prefer to be on my own'.
- 'My son loves it'.
- 'Flats are immaculate'.
- 'A staff member does the maintenance checks and cleans the close'.
- 'I've had 2 support reviews. My support worker is brilliant. I feel well supported. I feel grateful to Women's Aid'.
- 'I'm going to go to the arts and crafts group'.
- 'I see my support worker regularly'.
- 'Staff are very accommodating'.
- 'My support worker picks me up'.
- 'Staff absolutely understand what I've been through'.

- 'Staff provide support with every day things'.
- 'Staff give you guidance'.
- 'Staff come with you to appointments if you want them to'.
- 'Staff go above and beyond.'
- 'The service is perfect'.
- 'They put your mind at ease'.
- 'I didn't know I could feel good again'.
- 'The service should promote awareness of what a refuge is like'.
- 'Staff are polite, helpful and welcoming'.
- 'Staff are so thoughtful - they consider meeting times that suit, they take me for my shopping'.
- 'My support worker came to the housing department with me'.
- 'I couldn't ask for better staff'.
- 'I am very happy with my accommodation. It is well equipped and well maintained'.
- 'Keep it going as it is'.
- 'I've been so over the moon with the service. I wasn't aware this help was out there'.

The Care Inspectorate received six completed Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs). The following service user comments were included in these questionnaires:

- 'Have had excellent support from Women's Aid. Could not be better but can only speak from services in my area'.
- 'Amazing services wouldn't be where I am today without the help and support I've received'.
- 'I am so happy with the service'.
- 'I don't know what I would have done without the care and support of the women providing this service for me'.

## Self assessment

We received a self assessment document from the service provider. We were satisfied that the provider had included detailed information under each of the statement headings. The service had identified areas for development.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	6 - Excellent
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

## What the service does well

The service provides flexible support and safe accommodation to women and children who have experienced domestic abuse. North Lanarkshire Women's Aid is staffed by a small, stable team of mainly long standing staff members. Team working was strong and we found evidence of effective information sharing across the team. Support is provided both 1:1 and in groups. The service compiles detailed records on individual service users. This includes risk assessments, care plans, care plan reviews and monthly monitoring reports. We found that support plans were reviewed regularly. This ensures that services users receive support which is informed by changes in their support needs. The service makes use of an electronic data base to compile detailed diary notes of all contact with individual service users. This ensures that all staff are able to access up to date information on all service users to inform support provided. We read service user evaluations which had been completed by service users. We found that service user feedback had been positive regarding both the staff at North Lanarkshire Women's Aid and the support they provided.

The service has recently relocated to a new community resource centre. This has provided greater opportunities for the service to make use of local resources. This has included making use of the Local Authority's learning and development service. A number of service users have been supported to access this service to pursue training and development. The service works with other agencies to ensure services to support service users are streamlined. This includes being a partner in the violence against women partnership, as well as participating in MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference). The staff team had worked hard to promote their service within the wider community. We spoke with a number of professionals from external agencies who worked in partnership with North Lanarkshire Women's Aid. These individuals were positive about the service and made the following comments:

- 'They go the extra mile and they are very focussed on the women. They are very professional and provide the correct level of information. They bend over backwards. In a recent case we saw that the support changed this lady's life. The support is intense'.
- 'I see them at MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference) regularly and they are valuable partners in that forum. Staff are prepared, professional, informed. We would struggle by ourselves. It's good we have that referral pathway to help us cope with the high volume of domestic abuse referrals'.
- 'If we are dealing with a domestic abuse matter we can phone and get advice. I'm no expert, I can use them as a sounding board. I go to them for guidance. They can engage women who may not engage with us'.

- 'They take some of the work off our hands. They compliment the work we do. Staff support tenancy sustainment. They help us do our job'.

Staff within North Lanarkshire Women's Aid told us that they enjoyed their role and gained satisfaction from observing service users make progress towards their roles. Staff received regular supervision and told us that they felt supported in their role. Supervision was used as an opportunity to review casework, reflect on practice and to monitor professional development. Staff told us they were encouraged to pursue relevant professional development opportunities. At the time of inspection staff we spoke with told us they were feeling optimistic about future service developments.

## What the service could do better

The service had plans to further develop the range of support provided to service users. This included plans to deliver a programme which helps women to gain insight into the nature of domestic abuse. The service was pursuing funding to install the electronic case management system, Oasis.

The service has agreed to review their recording of risk assessments/risk management plans to ensure that staff will have up to date information on how to manage any identified risks.

The service has agreed to explore carrying naloxone (an opiate blocker which when administered in the event of overdose can be life saving).

The service is attempting to diversify their funding to support longer term planning in relation to service development. At the time of inspection the service was pursuing funding for a fundraiser, a children's worker and a befriender.

Developments with these areas of improvement will be followed up at the next inspection.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## 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).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings								
30 Mar 2015	Announced (short notice)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	6 - Excellent	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	6 - Excellent	Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
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Environment	Not assessed									
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4 Oct 2013	Announced (short notice)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>6 - Excellent</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	6 - Excellent	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
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28 Sep 2010	Announced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	Not assessed
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15 Jan 2009	Announced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	4 - Good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	4 - Good
Care and support	4 - Good									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	4 - Good									

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