

Scottish Autism Lothian Outreach Team (care at home) Support Service

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Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 15 December 2017

Service provided by:
Scottish Autism

Service provider number:
SP2003000275

Care service number:
CS2004073440

About the service

The Lothian Outreach service is provided by Scottish Autism. The service is registered to provide a care at home service to adults on the Autism Spectrum. We inspected this service at the same time as the Lothian Outreach service (Housing Support) because the two services operate together, using the same staff.

The service is provided from an office base in East Lothian. Scottish Autism Lothian Outreach forms part of the Lothian and Borders service. The service provided support for 26 people at the time of inspection.

Support ranges from helping people to maintain their own tenancy to support with university placements and social activities. One of the service's aims is to address the impact of the individual's Autistic Spectrum Disorder on their daily life and encourage the development of coping strategies.

What people told us

Before we began the inspection we sent out ten questionnaires to people who were using the service and their families. We received two questionnaires back which had been completed by family members. Both people who completed the questionnaires strongly agreed that they were happy with the quality of care and support.

One person commented, "My daughter's support and care from Scottish Autism staff is excellent". During the inspection we spoke with one person who used the service who told us that the service works well for them "when I know what I'm doing each week and who is coming. I get to choose what I want to do. I am happy with it, I don't think there is anything they could do differently".

We spoke with two family members by telephone. One told us: "[family member] enjoys it and looks forward to the next time. He has come on leaps and bounds and it has made a big difference to him". The other family member was positive about the service but expressed some frustrations about the number of different staff who provided support to their family member, and that the support had been cancelled on several recent occasions: "It's a great service but the issue is reliability". We shared these views of the service with the provider during feedback.

Self assessment

We have not asked providers to complete a self-assessment this year. We looked at the previous year's self assessment. We were satisfied with the way the provider had completed this.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

What the service does well

Staff were compassionate in their interactions with people using the service, and staff showed natural warmth and empathy when speaking about, and with, people who used the service. The commitment from staff towards

the people they supported was very apparent, and we could see that staff were strongly motivated to use their knowledge and skills to do a good job.

Personal plans were completed to a very high standard with detailed information which showed the expertise which the provider had about autism and how it affects people. The personal plans gave a clear picture of each person and how they should be supported. The level of detail about, for example, communication, was comprehensive. Specific plans to support people with aspects of their behaviour were very clear and helped staff understand how to respond if the person they were supporting became anxious or distressed.

Personal plans were reviewed regularly and were written up in a person-centred format. Reviews included comments from the care workers, and these added warmth while highlighting the strong bond between staff and the people they supported.

Daily notes were well recorded, with very detailed and clear information which was shared with staff coming on duty for each shift; staff reflected in the notes what had gone well and identified possible changes or ideas. We could see that communication in this way was effective.

Staff we spoke to were clear about their role and showed a strong understanding of the needs of the person they were supporting. Staff praised the training they had received and described very good multi-disciplinary working arrangements with other professionals.

Staff were well supported through supervision arrangements, and said that the management team were very approachable and supportive. Leadership skills were evident at all levels within the staff team.

There were very good management arrangements for the service, with strong systems for regular oversight and monitoring. These included spot checks, audits, sampling of records and quality assurance calls to people who used the service. The manager completed monthly reports for their external manager and service quality was measured through key performance indicators. The provider used a recognised model for improvement to identify its strengths and areas for development.

Overall we found this to be a very good, person-centred service with skilled and committed staff, which was very well-managed.

What the service could do better

We found some examples in personal plans where the terminology used in relation to, for example, mental health legislation in Scotland, showed an uncertain grasp of the laws affecting some people who used the service. Because the provider wants to develop the service to people who are covered by mental health and incapacity law, it is important that the manager and relevant staff build their knowledge of the law in this area.

Although we considered the quality assurance systems used by the provider to be effective, they lacked feedback from people who used the service. Quality assurance can be improved by talking with the people who use the service and their families about what is most important to them about the service, and using this to measure outcomes.

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.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
15 Dec 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
23 Jan 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
20 Jan 2016	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
15 Jan 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
7 Feb 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing 6 - Excellent Management and leadership 5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings	
22 Nov 2012	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	6 - Excellent Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
2 Feb 2012	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
14 Jun 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
30 Jun 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good
22 Jul 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate

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