

Aberdeenshire Support Service Housing Support Service

20 Shore Street
Macduff
AB44 1UB

Telephone: 01261 830120

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

6 July 2018

Service provided by:

Mears Care (Scotland) Limited

Service provider number:

SP2009010680

Service no:

CS2011300942

About the service

Aberdeenshire Support Service is part of the national organisation Mears Care (Scotland) Ltd. This service has been registered to provide a combined Care at Home (CAH) and Housing Support Services (HSS) to adults since 2011. The service supports people with a range of needs including learning difficulties, mental health problems, physical disabilities, and Autism spectrum condition.

The service operates several projects where service users live in flatted complexes, or in close proximity. Four teams of staff deliver care and support on a 24-hour basis. The service also provides services to individuals living in the wider community as part of these teams. Depending on their needs, this too can be up to 24 hours care and support. The service's office base was in Macduff.

One of the service's stated aims is that:

"All people must be seen as people first and, be provided with the opportunity and, where necessary appropriate levels of support to exercise autonomy, choice, citizenship, privileges and freedoms".

At the time of the inspection the service was being provided to 48 people.

What people told us

In total, we had contact with 11 people and/or their representative. Not all of these people were able to communicate their views to us, but some were.

In summary, people remained very happy with the support their staff provided (even when they were not very happy that they had to receive support). We were able to observe staff and the people they supported in four different settings. Support staff responded kindly to people, they shared jokes and were relaxed in each other's company. Staff encouraged people to join in, but responded appropriately if people opted not to.

Self assessment

We did not ask the service to submit a self assessment for this inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

What the service does well

The people who used this service were accepted and valued by their staff. The service had an enabling approach, which encouraged people to get the most out of their lives. People's lives had been improved by the service and the confidence they had gained from their staff's support. For example;

-Two people had successfully lost weight, becoming fitter and more active as a result.

- Several people's anxieties had reduced, allowing them to access a wider variety of activities and pastimes. It is important that people can maintain and develop their interests and activities. This is so they can lead their lives as they want to, gaining satisfaction and fulfilment, which in turn promotes good health. People's anxieties had reduced because their staff team followed their detailed support plans. These plans described how people wanted their needs to be met. They were well written and descriptive.
- One person had stopped a nervous habit and this had benefitted their oral health and their emotional wellbeing.
- Staff had provided another person with support that other professionals described as having surpassed their expectations.
- People were involved in their local communities using facilities, such as supermarkets, that previously they could not, due to their fears and anxieties.

People's human rights were protected and promoted. Staff recognised people's rights to make their own choices. At times this involved helping people use a formal advocacy service. On occasions, people's independence, control or choice was limited. The service was very good at ensuring any such measure was legal and justifiable, kept to a minimum and handled sensitively.

People could be confident in the staff who supported and cared for them. The service recruited and inducted their staff safely to protect the people they supported. This included a "pre-employment assessment course" as part of the selection process. This meant preferred candidates had to demonstrate a willingness and ability to learn. It also meant that candidates new to the profession had a better idea of what their role would include. The staff we observed were very competent and demonstrated what they had learned by putting it into practice.

What the service could do better

Many staff reported they felt very well supported by approachable, professional management. However, the staff who supported people who lived in the wider community were less inclined to be as effusive about their support as their colleagues. Our findings suggest this is because community based staff work in isolation and are remotely managed. That is, there is no on-site office base where they can have face to face, regular contact with their colleagues and their line manager. This group of staff have also been further disadvantaged by having their hand over time between shifts eliminated. This is due to the way the service is funded. The challenge for the service is to find alternative ways to improve these staff's satisfaction with their support.

People should benefit from the different organisations involved in their life working together and sharing information promptly where appropriate. The manager had identified that the communication with some colleagues in the community team could be improved and had a meeting organised for this purpose.

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
13 Jun 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 4 - Good
5 Jul 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
3 Jun 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
10 Jun 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
17 Jun 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
1 Aug 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
16 Mar 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	4 - Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

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