

Able Care @ Home Support Service

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Telephone: 01224 634864

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

8 August 2018

Service provided by:

Absolute Recruitment (UK) Ltd

Service provider number:

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Service no:

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About the service

Able Care @ Home is quite a new service, having registered with the Care Inspectorate in September 2017.

They have an office base in Aberdeen and provide support to older people and to adults with a physical disability or sensory impairment, in their own homes. At the time of inspection they supported a small number of people in Aberdeen City (11) and had a correspondingly small numbers of carers. They aim to increase their customer base through advertising and working with Aberdeen City Council care management teams.

The Able Care @ Home's goal is to "help our clients achieve the best quality of life possible provide the best, compassionate, daily care your loved ones deserve - and help sustain their cherished independence for as long as possible".

What people told us

We asked Able Care @ Home to distribute seven Care Standards Questionnaires; we received six completed ones back. The responses were positive with one person saying "All the staff are very kind and pleasant. A very good service".

We spoke with two service users and two relatives all of whom were very pleased with the service they receive. Comments included:

"No complaints, carers are polite and respectful."

"They know how to use the equipment."

"(Named person) visits and reviews, makes sure everything is OK."

Self assessment

We did not request that providers (except childminders) complete a self assessment for the 2018/19 inspection year. Instead, we took the opportunity to discuss and assess the services progress using their improvement or development plan as part of their internal quality assurance.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of staffing	3 - Adequate
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The quality of care and support that we found on inspection was of an adequate standard. We were unable to consider it higher than adequate because we were only able to look at a small amount of practice because the service was not working with a large number of people.

We saw, and people told us that the support workers are respectful, they arrive on time and they are able to do the required support and use any equipment which is required.

It is important that someone's personal plan is right for them, because it sets out how their needs will be met, as well as their wishes and choices. We looked at support plans and risk assessments which we found to be comprehensive. We saw that people were fully involved in developing and reviewing their personal plans on a regular basis. This helped people to be in control of the support that they were receiving. This may prove more difficult to maintain when there are a greater number of people using the service.

We noted areas in the support plans and risk assessments which were inconsistent and not updated; this could lead to incorrect or unsafe support being given. We discussed this with the management team and they must ensure that these are checked and updated and future changes are made consistently across all paperwork. **(See requirement 1.)**

We also read The Able Care Experience Survey which was a questionnaire that offered people a formal opportunity to be involved in how the service might develop. We talked with the management team about how this could be more focused on outcomes for people rather than on tasks. We also talked about how a different type of question, one inviting thoughts rather than a 'Yes' or a 'No' might provide more information. While the present survey gathered information it was not apparent how this would be used. Therefore we discussed how Able Care would ensure points were followed up and changes recorded, so that people could be made aware of what had happened as a consequence of this information being gathered. One idea that was discussed is a development plan for the service where people could track the progress made. This is an area which we expect will be further developed before the next inspection.

People using a support service must have their choices respected. Discussions with people receiving support and with staff confirmed that people's choice is respected in ways such as having support at a time which suits them, not having a carer in their home that they had found unsatisfactory, and the carer altering the level of support dependant on how fit a person was feeling on that day. So far there have not been challenges regarding people exercising their choice; the flexibility and adaptability of the company may be further tested as the number of clients increases.

All people should be offered the chance to maintain and develop interests and we saw one aspect of this with one person who was teaching the support worker a language and the support worker was teaching them another language. This mutual respect and relationship would be helping both people to get the most out of life during their visits. As more people use the service the staff should continue to look for ways to develop interests and maintain individuality for people.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. In order to ensure safety for staff and service users, Able Care @ Home must review all risk assessments and support plans and ensure they contain only up-to-date information and the same information is carried accurately between documents, by 18 September 2018.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states that "my care and support is provided in a planned and safe way" (HSCS 4.14). It is also necessary to comply with Regulation 5 of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

There was a small number of support workers employed on regular shifts with Able Care @ Home at the time of inspection (five). We spoke with two of them and received questionnaires back from another two. They were positive about their job, with one saying "I enjoy this work very much" and another mentioning the "good team work and support".

Anyone who is using a support service should be confident that staff are well trained, competent and skilled. We looked at the training programme at Able Care @ Home and saw a good core plan that covered all of the compulsory areas. A new member of staff had an induction week which introduced them to all the essential knowledge and skills. There was always a shadow shift and an introduction to a person that they would be working with. Thereafter there was a system for supervising and spot checking practice, and there was a three-month probation period. We were only able to look at a small number of completed supervisions because not all staff have been with the company for many months. As an area for improvement we talked about using open questions to encourage reflection from staff and also about the need to maintain the system as the workloads get busier.

There was a training matrix in place to ensure management was aware of who had completed basic training and when their refresher courses were due. This should lead to the staff maintaining their core skills and knowledge and consequently a high standard of practice. We discussed additional training to suit the needs of new service users as the company expands, such as dementia or end-of-life care. We also recommended use of organisations such as the Scottish Social Services Council for online training such as 'Steps Into Leadership', and the Care Inspectorate Hub for good practice guides.

The members of staff we spoke to all said that there was plenty of time to support and care, and also to speak with people. The people using the support told us that it was consistent and there were not too many people coming into their home. The support workers visiting were polite and built good relationships which were respectful of them being in the person's home.

People who use services should be confident that the people who support them have been appropriately and safely recruited. We looked at staff files and saw that there is an appropriate system in place for recruitment. There were some areas for improvement required in the use of the system, for example; ensuring that original documents are photocopied and signed/dated on the back to say originals have been seen, ensuring two people

always interview and both interviewers take notes and sign and date all the documentation. This was discussed with the managers who agreed that they will tighten up on all areas of adhering to the process of recruitment.

We saw adequate practice in the area of staffing. Because there were a small number of staff and small number of people using the service, there had not been a time when staff or managers were under pressure or having to deal with several things under a time constraint. Over the coming year, before the next inspection, this is likely to happen and the service and staff will have an opportunity to show skills to a higher level by managing these greater demands.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

There were three people in the management and leadership team of Able Care @ Home. This was a large number in relation to the number of service users and staff. We saw good practice in some areas such as:

- all people being respected and valued
- staff have a lot of support and access to managers
- people had regular contact from managers both on the phone and in person
- a complaints system had been developed ready for use
- a weekly carer and management meeting is to be instigated following a suggestion from a carer.

We spoke with two care coordinators from Aberdeen City Council and they said that the service for people was good once it was up and running. They commented that communication was initially difficult and they now use emails and then get a response. A speedy response to enquiries is an essential part of a good care company so this is an area that we discussed with the managers where improvement could be made.

Given the relatively small number of people using the service and small number of staff working with them, the management team had an opportunity to develop robust systems and ensure best practice in all areas. This had not happened and it is important to do so because it would ensure smooth running of the company as it expands. We discussed the need to develop and use consistently good management practice. **(See requirements 1)**

People can expect services which support them to have a culture of continuous improvement. We saw an annual survey for users of the service and heard how an idea from a carer was being adopted. We discussed how an improvement plan would be a good means of capturing all suggestions and innovations from people using the service, relatives, carers, best practice guidance and new legislation. The managers agreed that they will develop and maintain an improvement plan. **(See recommendation 1.)**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. In order to ensure that their service has accurate and robust systems to safeguard the welfare of everyone involved, the provider must:

- review all policies and processes and ensure the correct company name is in place and there is no conflicting information
- ensure all recruitment follows the best practice guidance for safer recruitment (available on the Care Inspectorate Hub)
- further develop the complaints log and annual report, to be compatible with Duty of Candour requirements

by 18 September 2018.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which states "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed" (HSCS 4.23) and in order to comply with Regulation 4 (1) A provider must- (a) make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users, of the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should develop and consistently update an improvement plan for the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state "I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes" (HSCS 4.19).

Grade: 3 - adequate

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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