

Thera (Scotland) Housing Support Service

Melrose House
69A George Street
Edinburgh
EH2 2JG

Telephone: (0300) 303 1286

Type of inspection:

Announced (short notice)

Completed on:

23 November 2018

Service provided by:

Thera (Scotland)

Service provider number:

SP2007008824

Service no:

CS2009193383

About the service

Thera (Scotland) has been registered since 2009.

The service is registered to provide a housing support, care at home and support service to adults with learning and physical disabilities in their own home and in the community. Support can range from a few hours per week up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

At the time of inspection, Thera (Scotland) was supporting 28 people in Midlothian and eight people in Falkirk.

The service is managed by the operations manager with a team of four community support leaders; three team coordinators; five senior support workers; 52 support workers and six relief support workers. There were nine new support workers successful at interview during our inspection.

Thera (Scotland) state 'We believe that people with a learning disability should have control of their own support and be able to live their lives as they choose.'

Thera's vision is 'that people with a learning disability can be leaders in society.'

What people told us

We met seven people who use the service during our visit and we received four completed care standard questionnaire from a sample sent out. Some of these were completed by relatives. Everybody told us they agreed or strongly agreed that overall they were happy with the quality of care and support the service provides.

We spoke to three relatives of people who receive support.

A sample of comments from questionnaires and throughout the inspection include:-

'X has a more independent life since moving into own home five years ago and has a complete and up to date support plan'

'Staff support X at the supermarket to choose items and X will hand the staff keys when wanting to go out in the car'

'Nothing is too much for the staff, as long as X is happy. They are always on the lookout for activities that might be enjoyed'

'A's support plan is detailed about likes and dislikes and choices of activities'

'Staff ask for A's opinion, follow wishes and are friendly'

'My support plan tells staff about me and what I like and dislike and I feel very safe'

'I sometimes don't get on with all the staff. The people I get on with treat me well and take me on outings where I want to go'

'I don't like when there are a lot of different staff, I would like my staff to stay the same'

'I attend my review meetings and I get to speak and give my view. I can speak up if I am not happy about anything'

'I am happy with the care and support I receive'
 'I go out to pick things for my home, staff support me to choose'
 'I don't like changes in staff, I feel more comfortable when I have a stable team'
 'I can put my views across at a house meeting'

'B receives 25 hours support and it's pretty consistent, we've never been let down at all'
 'Staff are flexible and B chooses things to do'

'Thera will come to the house for reviews which are regular and I've been invited along to help out at interviews, really good to be involved'

'Thera are great, they bend over backwards to motivate and find things for C to do'
 'Staff treat C as an adult and are very responsive, encouraging independence and living skills, they don't do it for C'
 'Support is good, a few times it was missed but can't complain, staff text me so I know C is getting their medication'

We saw feedback received by Thera (Scotland) from a social worker which stated:
 'I am delighted at how D has settled in to their new home. A massive thanks to the team for supporting D with the move and beyond.'

Self assessment

There was no requirement for the service to provide a self assessment for the inspection year 2018/19.

Issues relating to quality assurance, feedback from people using the service and their relatives along with the quality of the service's improvement plan are all considered throughout the inspection.

From 1 April 2018, the new 'Health and Social Care Standards' have replaced the National Care Standards. These seek to promote and improve outcomes for people who experience care. Services should now be providing support in accordance with the guidelines outlined therein.

These are:

- 1: I experience high quality care and support that is right for me.
- 2: I am fully involved in all decisions about my care and support.
- 3: I have confidence in the people who support and care for me.
- 4: I have confidence in the organisation providing my care and support.
- 5: I experience a high quality environment if the organisation provides the premises.

<https://scotgov.publishingthefuture.info/publication/health-and-social-care-standards-my-support-my-life>

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

We spoke to eight staff and received 12 completed care standard questionnaires from staff. Overall they told us they enjoyed working for Thera (Scotland) and felt supported in their role.

A sample of those comments included:

'Thera are keen to support people to be active in their own local communities.'

'I can see the positive difference in the people we support.'

We found the staff team had good relationships with the people they supported and their families. The staff were knowledgeable and responsive of supported people's needs, challenges and risks in order to manage their lives.

'Staff understand C's needs and always message me the day before support with a plan, I have no concerns'

People being supported told us they felt happy in their home. One person told us of working hard with staff support to maintain their tenancy and was really excited to be choosing colours to paint their house.

'X has settled in well, behavioural problems have disappeared. X is very chilled, is happy and obviously feels safe.'

'I'm really proud to have my own home'

We saw detailed guidelines and support strategies in place for people. For one person, these strategies supported the person to understand the impact and consequences of risky and unsafe behaviours and decisions. These had been developed with involvement from the person, their staff team, social workers, psychologists and other relevant people in the persons circle of support. We saw there was good follow up communication between health professionals and staff. This meant people were receiving and experiencing responsive care and support which was right for them and they felt involved in any decisions being made.

We saw the staff were split into different teams across the service. This allowed for consistent support being provided to people from staff who knew them well. One person told us they asked for a staff member to be changed from the team as they had different interests. This was accommodated by the service and meant the person was listened to.

All staff received training on communication and one of the staff teams had been actively learning about different communication styles and were using various ways to communicate with supported people from talking mats, communication boards, Makaton sign language to intensive interaction. Staff told us they found this training very helpful and it enabled them to be better communicators with people. Staff were encouraged to share their training with others at team meetings. Two staff were now trained Makaton champions.

People told us they had been supported to go on holiday. One person told us of going on a cruise and another of going abroad by plane. We heard another person had been for a holiday to Blackpool.

We saw some people were actively involved in their local community at weekly lunch clubs and bowling clubs. Other people told us of going to monthly discos, tea dances, boat trips and day trips to the beach

Thera Trust set up Gig Buddies in 2013 and this recently expanded to Thera (Scotland). Gig Buddies is a befriending project which aims to link music fans who have a learning disability with volunteers who share a

common interest. Over this year, Gig Buddies held seven socials to go and see some of the stand out shows at the Edinburgh Festival including interviewing a comedian who used a communication aid in his routine.

'I thought the festival was 10/10, I would never have done that before'

We saw staff being supported to reflect and develop through various staff meetings; working group meetings; consultative meetings; leadership meetings and supervisions. One senior staff member was about to commence a monthly 'learning together' group where staff can meet together to complete Thera inhouse training modules.

Some staff and supported people came together for the day to identify goals and how they would achieve them. This piece of joint working identified meaningful involvement of people being supported in the continuous improvement of the service.

We discussed with the provider about using this process in other areas of the service to focus staff and identify new opportunities for people.

What the service could do better

Over the years, the service has developed some very good detailed support plans and risk assessments however, we found these plans to be confusing as they contained so much information. Important information about a person was getting lost within the volume of paperwork.

Support plans and risk assessments varied across the service in their layout. We could see reviews were taking place for some people but it was not easy to identify if these had happened for others.

There was a risk of important detail being lost with information being out of date if reviews were not cross referenced across the volume of paperwork to ensure all was up to date.

We discussed with the provider to review and streamline paperwork so that staff have available important information they need to know which is correct and up to date.
(recommendation 1)

An electronic support plan - iplanit - had been developed but had not yet been trialled. Having iplanit in place should give supported people and staff easy access to information digitally and allow updates and reviews to be more manageable. We discussed with the provider about the time required to input information and transferring paperwork into this digital format being lengthy and we questioned whether there was enough protected time for senior staff to do this.

We saw various completed training logs and staff told us of other training they had attended. Staff were required to complete Thera's own modules covering various topics for example 'working in a person centred way'.

The provider was currently updating their training analysis and this made it difficult to identify where there were gaps in staff training. Training gaps could lead to staff not having the knowledge to provide the quality of support expected. We discussed this with the director, manager and senior staff and they reassured us that training was up to date. We will review the new system at the next inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The provider should review the volume of information held in support plans and ensure that following regular reviews, all plans are kept up to date.

This ensures staff providing support have relevant guidance to provide high quality care and support to people and is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard:

4.11 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice'.

4.27 'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources'.

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
25 Sep 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
29 Sep 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 5 - Very good Not assessed
22 Oct 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings								
22 Jul 2014	Unannounced	<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
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Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	4 - Good									
3 May 2013	Announced (short notice)	<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
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21 Jun 2012	Announced (short notice)	<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
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23 Jan 2012	Unannounced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	3 - Adequate	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	Not assessed	Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
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Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	Not assessed									
Management and leadership	3 - Adequate									
16 Aug 2010	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>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	4 - Good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
Care and support	4 - Good									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	3 - Adequate									

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