Sense Scotland Highland and Lochaber
Housing Support Service

An Drochaid
Claggan Road
Fort William
PH33 6PH

Telephone: 01397 705921

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
7 June 2019

Service provided by:
Sense Scotland

Service provider number:
SP2003000181

Service no:
CS2013315347
**About the service**

The service is operated by Sense Scotland, a registered charity that offers support services to people with complex communication needs. The organisation is based in Glasgow and provides support services all over Scotland. Sense Scotland Lochaber was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 13 September 2013 to provide combined housing support and care at home to adults in their own homes. The main office is located in Fort William. At the time of the inspection the service was supporting 6 people with complex needs in the Fort William area.

The service aimed to create a supportive environment where people can live meaningful lives, express themselves and communicate in a way that enables them to make choices and have their wishes respected; to engage in activities that are important to them and achieve their own ambitions.

**What people told us**

We met with four people using the service. Not all of the people who used this service could tell us directly what their views were. In order to form an opinion about their level of satisfaction, we gathered views using care standards questionnaires from people using the service and from their relatives/guardians. We also spoke with individual guardians by telephone and a face to face meeting. In addition we spoke with an external professional who was involved with the service.

**Self assessment**

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

**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**

We evaluated the provider as very good in care and support and leadership and management. This meant the provider evidenced major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people receiving the service.

People who used the service experienced very good quality care and support. Staff teams worked well together and evidenced great commitment to the people they supported. Staff were very knowledgeable about the best way to support people. This meant care and support was delivered in a way that was right for the person and this was reflected in people’s support plans. Some comments from the people we spoke with included:

> “The staff who work with my relative are invaluable, they are fantastic”.

> “We are really grateful to the staff who look after my relative”.

“The staff know my relative really well and want the best for him”.

“The staff are very knowledgeable about how best to support my relative, this means my relative is more relaxed and happy”.

Trusting relationship had been built between staff, the people they supported and their families. Families told us the provider was very good at communicating with them and asking their advice where appropriate. This is especially important when the person cannot speak for themselves and depend on their families to advocate for them. This way of working reassured families that their knowledge and understanding of their loved ones was recognised and respected and the person receiving the service was the main focus of people’s attention. Some comments from the people we spoke with included:

“There is really good communication between the service and myself, this means we all work together to make sure my relative gets the best care”.

“The staff are really good at keeping us up to date with our relative’s progress, they always ask us for our opinions”.

Staff had an enabling attitude, thus encouraged and supported people to reach their potential. Examples of this were individuals feeling less anxious and more confident when going out and about. We observed staff fully involving people in their day to day routines. People told us this way of working made them feel included and that they had choice and control over their lives. Some comments from the people we spoke with included:

“Staff are respectful and supportive”.

“The staff have helped my relative to be more confident and independent”.

“My relative is more independent; without the support from staff he would not be the man he is today”.

There were a number of very good examples of where the provider had been proactive in seeking advice and followed guidance from external health services. This meant people’s health needs were met, promoted and responded to appropriately.

The manager and the senior worked alongside staff members on a regular basis. This meant staff were being supported, coached and observed to ensure they were providing care and support to a high standard within a value based framework. We have highlighted throughout the report how this approach had a positive impact on people using the service.

There were good recruitment procedures for staff which maintained the safety and well-being of people using the service. The service also ensured that the staff were appropriately registered with professional bodies. Due to the small size of the service, it was evident that staff could discuss any concerns they had with the manager. They found the manager to be approachable and supportive.

The provider strived to be open and transparent. Relatives felt confident that they could raise any concerns they had with staff and the manager of the service and these would be resolved. There were robust quality assurance systems in place that enabled the provider to identify what the service was doing well and what they could improve on. When we looked at these it was clear the service was well led and managed.

“If I have any concerns about the service my relative receives, I am confident the manager will “sort” them out.”
The manager and staff team presented as committed to continually improving the service to ensure that individuals had as good a quality of life as possible.

**What the service could do better**

The provider’s improvement plan identified that staff should be more formally supervised and that staff annual appraisals should be completed. We will consider this 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.

**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.
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