

Care service inspection report

Full inspection

Support for Ordinary Living Housing Support Service

58-60 Albert Street
Motherwell



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

Service provided by: Support For Ordinary Living

Service provider number: SP2004005745

Care service number: CS2004069150

Inspection Visit Type: Unannounced

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Contact Us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

 [@careinspect](https://twitter.com/careinspect)

Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	6	Excellent
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5	Very Good

What the service does well

Support for Ordinary Living (SOL) planned and thought about its service provision very carefully. It was clear that person centred approaches were very important to the service and that the support they provided to individuals reflected this.

People were supported by small staff teams and got to know their support workers very well. The service kept up to date with the latest thinking in person centred approaches and made sure that people who they worked for were central in choosing and deciding on how they were supported.

The SOL Connect service was very innovative in utilising assistive IT technology to give people the support they wanted.

What the service could do better

The service was doing very well in all the areas of its operations. It should continue its focus on developing staff members knowledge, abilities and values. We see the introduction of the 'person centred approaches

facilitator' and the 'workforce development coordinator' posts as being very important for this.

What the service has done since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the service had changed its management structure. These new arrangements involved up to 20 staff members and were in response to a recognition by the director of the service that the previous structure was not working sufficiently well in supporting staff teams and the people they worked for. We thought the new management structure looked very good and we were informed that staff members liked it.

SOL has continued to develop new person centred ways to assist people to be active in their local community and pursue their interests.

Conclusion

This service strove to achieve very high standards. It provided excellent support to individuals and showed a commitment to continue to improve. The management and staff team had a very good understanding of person centred approaches.

People supported by the service commented positively on it and were also able to say how they were listened to when they thought something needed to be better or changed. Where individuals were not able to say in words what their views were we saw that the service used person centred approaches very effectively to make sure that their wishes, interests and needs were fully taken on board.

1 About the service we inspected

Support for Ordinary Living (SOL) provides housing support and care at home services to adults with learning disabilities in their own homes across the Lanarkshire area. Each service has a dedicated staff team providing a range of supports from a few hours to 24 hour support. Since the last inspection the service has separated its housing support service from its care at home service and each now requires a separate inspection. This inspection report is for the housing support service.

The provider's Participation Strategy states that "SOL is committed to ensuring that customers have the opportunity to be full and valued members of their communities, and recognises the important role that customers play in shaping the organisation. SOL is also committed to ensuring that people who rely on paid support have power and control over the services they receive and are able to exercise self-determination".

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of care and support - Grade 6 - Excellent

Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.careinspectorate.com or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection. The inspection was carried out over 6 days between 24 July and 3 August 2015. We gave feedback to the manager and two members of the service's management team on 21 August 2015.

In this inspection we gathered information and evidence from various sources, including the following:

We spoke with a number of people during our visit. This included:

- visiting ten people who SOL worked for
- informal chats with some other people who SOL worked for
- six carers/family members in one to one discussion
- five people from the management team
- six support staff members in one to one discussion
- one SOL board member.

We looked at:

- certificate of registration
- introduction to service information
- people's files
- assessment, my outcome based support plan and review documents
- participation and involvement information
- audit files and reports
- minutes and documents from management and quality monitoring meetings

- medication records folders
- finance information
- policy information
- web site and IT information
- SOL Connect information
- evaluation questionnaires
- health and safety information
- accident and incident records
- risk assessment information
- staff information
- team support plans
- recruitment and induction information
- training and supervision information.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may

consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firescotland.gov.uk

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The service submitted a self assessment on 10.04.15. In it, the service provided a lot of detail on its current strengths and showed what steps it had taken to improve its support. We also saw the service's future plans for improvement and we thought these were very good.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

We got feedback through questionnaires and visited a number of people who the service supported. Overall, people reported very positively on the support provided. Staff members were often praised. Some of the different things people said about staff members were that they were:

- "...kind".
- "...friendly".
- "...good fun to be with".

Taking carers' views into account

We spoke to some carers/family members during our inspection. We were told that communication with the service was excellent. Family members felt there were always kept up to date with any important information and found it easy to speak to staff members or management if they had a matter they wished to discuss. Some comments from family members were:

- "(person) is out very day. She loves it".
- "The girls (staff)...they're fantastic".

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 6 - Excellent

Statement 1

“We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.”

Service Strengths

At this inspection, we found the service to be excellent at ensuring the people they support and carers/family members participate in assessing and improving the care and support provided.

We looked at the service's information on their assessment and review meetings for people they supported. It was clear to us that people were fully involved in this. People contributed ideas on what was okay for them and what wasn't. They were listened to and encouraged to always express their thoughts.

We attended a meeting where someone was planning an activity they really wanted to do, something they had done when they were younger but hadn't now done in years. The person's staff team realised this activity would have to be planned for. Information was sought and a meeting was held by the person and the staff team. Each step of what needed to be done was talked through. The person was at the centre of any decision making and had control. Attending meetings like this we found that people were involved in decision making in whatever way suited them best. We thought that how SOL fully took account of people's wishes and interests was excellent. We could also see how this was the case, too, for people who did not speak or express their thoughts

and opinions with words. The service used person centred approaches to make sure people's views and wishes informed decisions and planning.

It was very evident that the service spent a lot of time considering how they could involve people and make sure they participated in assessing and improving their own care and support. We saw different examples of how they did this; one was that they used an approach called the 'big plan'. This was to particularly identify someone's wishes and ambitions and then put together detailed plans as to how they'd be supported to achieve them. It emphasised that someone should get support to do those things that they find enjoyable or see as an achievement. This was really good as it made clear how important purpose and goals are to people. The service paid attention to the latest thinking and innovative practice in social care.

One way people who the service supported participated in assessing and improving the service's provision was through being one of the service's 'quality checkers'. One task we saw they took on was contributing to and helping develop the service's participation policy. Another was that quality checkers did some ongoing monitoring of the quality of support and care provided; for example, by having meetings and discussions with people who the service supported or through devising and sending out questionnaires. The quality checkers were part of the service quality group. The quality group met on a regular basis to discuss service quality issues and their meetings were also attended by some of the management and staff team. We saw that the quality checkers brought back information from their checks to the quality group; for instance, the feedback that there was not enough preparation for people attending their review meetings. We could see how the quality checkers input really made a difference to the service provision.

The service had a personal support plan document titled 'my outcome based support plan' and we thought it asked all the right questions. It emphasised the views and wishes of the person who was supported by the service. It asked what did they see as important, what mattered to them and how will they stay in control. We saw that the management and all the staff members we spoke to were committed to this person centred approach. We thought the service's guidance and policy in regard to this approach was very clear and consistent. When we spoke to people who the service worked for they all said the support

was based on their wishes. One person we visited was keen to do activities in the local community and with a church group. We saw that this happened. On other occasions we saw people wishing to maintain important relationships with friends or family members were also fully supported by the service.

The service had excellent ways for assisting people to make choices about which staff members supported them. Teams of staff were formed around a person. The team of staff that a person had were usually small, say four staff members, and this meant the person got to know them well. Individuals told us they were happy with their staff members. Teams were called a person's 'self directed team'. This meant that as a team with the person they supported, they organised how the support would be delivered. A person could advise they wanted or needed a particular one of the team on for a specific day as it suited the activities for that day. Then they and the team would organise this. An example would be if they needed to support them with swimming.

The service had a person employed to be its person centred approaches facilitator. This person complemented and added to the person centred approach to support used by the service. They developed new and better ways for the service to be person centred. We saw this person was progressing the service's co-production with people using the service; seeing how support activities can be done truly jointly. This service already worked in very inclusive ways, such as robust and meaningful involvement of people in the staff recruitment or when we sat in on a training session it was delivered by a person who also got support from the service at other times.

The service was really advanced in its use of modern technology in supporting people's social care needs. A number of people who SOL supported used the service's 'SOL Connect' service. This was excellent as it assisted people through using technology to maintain as much independence as they could. This was by really listening to people's wishes. One person told us how they wished to have as few support staff as possible needing to visit their home and this technology allowed this to happen. We read some people's information about how they were supported by SOL Connect and spoke to the project manager for the SOL Connect support. It was very evident that the way the technology was introduced to people, the options and choices involved and the ways it was

adapted over time, that people who used the SOL Connect were very central to its development and improvement.

Areas for improvement

The service has shown itself to be very focussed on achieving high standards in relation to participation. It should continue to identify ways to maintain and improve its practice in this area. We thought the introduction of the person centred approaches facilitator and plans this person was making to ensure person centred participation in the service was very positive and would help the service to continue progressing.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 5

“We respond to service users' care and support needs using person centered values.”

Service Strengths

At this inspection, we found that the service was excellent at responding to the people's care and support needs using person centred values.

We saw lots of information and support being given that showed the service was highly committed to person centred support. The staff members were very able to talk about person centred approaches and to give many examples of how they were supporting people in this way. The service had a variety of forms, approaches and person centred planning tools to make sure they could support people in ways that really suited them and that they liked. We saw how SOL had embedded the Helen Sanderson's four plus two questions fully into their approach for supporting people and developing the service's activity. SOL, in the last few months with their restructure, introduced the role of a Person Centred Approaches Facilitator. We discussed with this person steps they have taken to make the service provision even more person centred. One was a focus on ensuring recruitment was always done in line with a person centred approach. Another was developing the service's ability to co-produce with the

people they work for, the service's support and other activities. We noted how SOL thought through and planned very well developments like these. SOL stated in its aims and mission how it was person centred in all its activities and we could see a strong commitment to this in the service.

To ensure that staff members had an excellent understanding of person centred approaches the Higher Education Certificate in Person Centred Approaches has been a main qualification for staff to gain. It gave staff an in depth understanding of person centred support. When we spoke to staff members we found them very able to identify how they supported an individual in person centred ways and were confident in discussing person centred ideas. They were able to explain it with practical, everyday examples.

The service supported people with a range of different learning disability needs. We looked at how they supported one particular individual who had non verbal communication and was uncomfortable with change. We could see from the information and discussions we had that the staff members who supported that person were very aware and sensitive to that person's support needs. This was clear from how carefully and slowly they introduced a change for that person. They knew it had to be done carefully, with a lot of thought, so that the person was comfortable with and able to accept the change. We saw many other instances of person centred support being done. The service's staff members were excellent at gaining information about an individual's health needs and then with the person working out how their support can be most appropriately given. They would consider what the person's wishes were and how their wishes could be fully incorporated into the support plan. They always looked at how a person's independence and abilities were best supported and developed.

We looked at the service policies, guidance and other information they had such as newsletters and staff updates. Again and again we saw person centred values being promoted. The newsletter for the service 'the SOL singer' was full of stories about what people using SOL were up to, particularly big events and successes they had. These stories were always written from the person's point of view and often had great pictures to illustrate the story being told. Individuals, when saying what they'd been up to, would say things like 'with my team'. An expression like this showed that the person was at the centre of the

activity. We could see how this newsletter as well as being interesting to read would reinforce staff members' person centred values. In the staff newsletter 'UPD8' there were a lot of pieces that showed the service's person centred approach. In one article we read how the service was introducing a 'continuous learning framework' and this was to make sure all staff members continued to develop all the 'right skills and experience to support people to achieve the things in their life that are important to them'. We thought the management in the service understood person centred approaches very well and put a lot of thought and consideration into how they can be achieved in the service.

We saw that the service made sure staff were well trained. Where someone had a particular health condition we saw appropriate information being made available to staff members to ensure they could assist someone to the best of their ability. We observed a lot of instances of staff members really knowing a person they supported well and making sure how they provided support was what suited the person. Staff members we spoke to were very able to talk about the ways they supported a person. They discussed with us their reason for doing things in a certain way or a particular activity with someone. It was clear that they really understood what best suited a person and what the person liked or enjoyed. We saw that when liaison with other health or social care agencies was required to support someone well this was always done. The service had a plan for introducing the government's new 'Keys to Life' strategy and we saw how the staff members had been kept informed.

The service was excellent at keeping up to date with best practice and innovative ways to support individuals. Their use of technology to assist people to maintain their independence and pursue their wishes was excellent. They collaborated with a technology company and combining that company's knowledge with their expertise and insight in social care provision, they developed an area of support service called 'SOL Connect'. We saw many people using SOL Connect. There were a variety of ways it was used. A great advantage was people could maintain a lot of independence but get support remotely for specific reasons as when required.

The service recognised the full range of someone's needs and wishes. As well as giving support for someone to manage at home and to keep good health, we saw how the service also assisted a person to lead an enjoyable and fulfilling

life in other ways. They used approaches such as community circles, community mapping and the 'big plan' to ensure people were getting all they could from their lives. Such approaches were ways of gaining real insight into someone's wishes and into opportunities for how they could be met. We saw how these were approaches that were very much about the person: their rights, choices and wishes.

Areas for improvement

The service is performing to a very high standard. It should ensure the steps it is taking to maintain this over the coming year are achieved. The new role of 'workforce development coordinator' will be important for ensuring staff members abilities and knowledge of person centred approaches continues to develop.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service."

Service Strengths

At this inspection, we found the service to be excellent at ensuring people supported by the service and their carers/family members participated in assessing and improving the staffing in the service.

Comments made in Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1, are of relevance here, too.

We looked very closely at recruitment in the service. We saw that a lot of effort went into recruiting the right staff and matching them to the person to be supported. People who used the service and carers/family members were involved in the recruitment process. We spent time sitting in on one of the recruitment activities and we saw how the information gained during this would inform who a prospective staff member could be matched to.

People who SOL worked for and their family members would provide information on a staff member's probationary period (six months) and their annual appraisal assessment. We saw examples of how the information provided would influence decisions that were made. Family members told us that they felt communication was very good with the service and that were confident that if they had a staffing concern it would be taken seriously.

Practice leaders oversaw the support provided and would visit individuals supported by the service on a regular basis. In this meeting they would discuss and assess how good the support was. This included looking at how well staff members were providing support. If a person indicated they were unhappy with

a support worker in their team then we saw the practice leader would address this matter. This was excellent as individuals or their family members needed to have the reassurance that concerns would be taken seriously and appropriate changes would be made. We spoke to a family member who told us that they had previously had a concern and was very happy that they were listened to and changes made.

Review meetings were a major way to feedback on staff members or how a person's self directed team as a whole were performing. We saw that as decisions about how the self direct team worked were more in a person who was supported hands, then that person could more easily influence the team's activities.

The evaluations and feedback the quality checkers did covered some areas of staff practice. We saw how this information would be reported to the quality group and plans and decisions would follow from this.

All the activities above demonstrated SOL's commitment to getting the views and input of people who they supported and family members on the staff practice in the service.

Areas for improvement

We thought the quarterly meeting the person who SOL works for and the practice leader have, was an important meeting as a person can give direct feedback on staff members and their self directed team. We discussed with the management team that they could monitor how effective this meeting was in getting feedback from the person.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 4

"We ensure that everyone working in the service has an ethos of respect towards service users and each other."

Service Strengths

At this inspection, we found the service to be very good at ensuring that everyone in the service had an ethos of respect toward people who they worked for and each other.

We read a lot of information produced by SOL. This included policies, their website, newsletters, outcome focussed support plans and guidance for staff members. The language used in these documents was respectful and clearly expressed positive values and attitudes to the people the service worked for.

The service's induction for new staff members was titled 'What matters most' and in the information for this we saw that there was a strong emphasis on values and person centred approaches to supporting individuals. We noted that 'respect' was expected in the service and that there was a 'charter of respect' (including staff members to one another). We saw how the service had explained to staff members issues around power and control and the service's aim to make sure this stayed with the person as much as possible. When we visited people in their own homes, it was clear it was their homes, for example, where they were able to, they answered their own door.

Individuals and their support workers told us about how choices were made about the support provided. It was very evident that people's choices were respected. We saw people being supported to go places and do things that they enjoyed. People told us about holidays they had planned and gone on and in what ways staff members supported them to do this. Staff members were very able to give us examples of how they had respected the person they worked for.

We thought that the service management were very good at ensuring all staff had sufficient training to do their role well. This was important as it meant that people's needs, for example health needs, were recognised and respected. By making sure people had the right support showed how their right to high quality support was respected.

Recruitment at SOL was done very carefully. Again we saw that a lot of thought and consideration went into recruiting suitable staff members. There were a number of steps to recruitment and we saw that some parts of it were

focussing on qualities of the applicant that would indicate how well they understood respecting an individual's rights and promoting their independence. We saw that staff members as well as being very caring, understood their enabling and facilitating role.

We found the service to have very good processes and guidance in place and the management were very clear in their expectations of staff members. This led staff members to be very sure of the purpose of the support they gave to a person. We looked at the service's approach to activities a person wanted to do but may involve risk. We observed that a clear process to assess and plan for the risk was followed. The service's attitude was an enabling, positive one towards risk. It recognised that leading an enjoyable life could involve doing some activities that involved risk but with the right support these risks could be accounted for and managed well. We saw examples of where this approach was taken for people who SOL supported. Their right to do an activity that involved risk was appropriately respected and supported.

Areas for improvement

Whilst we found the guidance, procedures and training for staff members in SOL to be very good, we did find some areas of practice that could be improved.

We discussed with the management team some inconsistency in practice and recording when people were supported with their medication. The type of inconsistencies we came across were different medication administration recording forms, sometimes no guidance specific to the person for 'as directed' medication and occasional errors in recording by staff members. The management team were clear on what steps they would take to address these matters.

In people's homes, the self directed teams kept the 'my team support folder'. This contained very helpful guidance for them, but there was some information that was inappropriate to be kept in a person's home such as human resources (HR) information and other information that should be kept confidential. During our visit this was picked up on and it was agreed by the service it would be addressed immediately.

We had a general discussion about finance procedures. When talking to a couple of staff members we were not clear on how large spends, on behalf of a person who SOL support with financial decisions, were authorised. The manager explained to us how this was done but agreed to review the formal steps staff members have to follow.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

“We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.”

Service Strengths

At this inspection, we found the service to be excellent at ensuring participation of people who the service work for and of their carers/family members.

Comments made in Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1, are of relevance here, too.

The service developed self directed teams around the individual who they worked for. These teams were able to make a lot of decisions about the support provided. We saw that a person being supported was able to contribute to and make decisions about what their self directed team did. We thought the self directed team arrangements enabled people to have more control. We sat in on one meeting where the person who the team supported was very much part of the decision making and planning process; saying what suited and what would work in their eyes for a future activity they wanted to do. This was excellent as they were taking the lead and expressing enthusiasm for new things they wanted to do.

Within the service, the role of the quality checkers appeared to be very well established. People who the service worked for were carrying out quality assurance checks on the service. We saw how their evaluations and feedback were part of the planning process for the management of the service. The information was used by SOL's quality group. This was a group made up of people who used the service, support workers and management. Their role was

to take forward and ensure that quality was maintained and developed in the service. This was another example of how people using the service participated in the management and leadership. We saw that SOL's participation strategy itself was informed by information and views from the quality checkers.

At the time we were visiting, the service had recently restructured its management set up. The restructure was a result of a number of considerations, one being feedback from people the service supported and from their carers/family members. It was really good to see that service management took on board people's views and changed the management set up. It showed how people were listened to on aspects of the service like this as well the ones around their day to day activities and wishes.

People supported by the service and family members had contributed to the decisions about the guiding principles of SOL such as the mission statement and aims. We also saw they had input into policies and strategy matters, for example, the quality checkers role in developing the participation strategy. This showed that people supported by the service and their family members had input at all levels of the organisation including its leadership.

Areas for improvement

The service was achieving very high standards and should ensure it continues its excellent practice.

Grade

6 - Excellent

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

Statement 3

"To encourage good quality care, we promote leadership values throughout the workforce."

Service Strengths

In this inspection, we saw that the service was very good promoting leadership values throughout the workforce.

We talked to a lot of staff members during our visit. We talked to staff members on a one to one basis and, at other times, more informally when we were visiting people supported by the service. Many staff members we spoke to were very motivated and able to fully explain their role and how they aimed to help individuals to lead the lives they chose. Support workers spoke very positively about the people they supported and were able to tell us in what ways they respected people's choices. We also heard how they could take a lead in suggesting new ideas for the person's support and saw examples of where a support worker spoke up to support someone's needs or wishes. These examples showed us that leadership was encouraged in the workforce.

We looked closely at how the self directed teams arrangements worked. We found that they gave more responsibility to support workers for making plans and decisions around a person's support to make the person the leader of their own support. As well as giving leadership to the person who the service supported, we saw how it made the teams more self reliant and let workers show their leadership skills. Self directed teams made decisions around the practical planning of someone's support, for example, staff rotas. We found this worked very well; rotas were planned well in advance and we saw how for certain activities the team made sure the most appropriate support worker was on. The self directed team made decisions that were based around a person's needs, wishes and choices. In other instances, we saw that the self directed team would make proposals for support to their practice leader. This happened, for example, when new equipment or new activities that needed risk assessed were suggested. Overall, we thought a self directed team made workers feel able to make decisions. It also meant that decision making was 'closer' to the person who was receiving the support. For instance, it made it more likely they'd influence and contribute to staff rota decisions. Support workers told us they liked the self directed team set up, they said it worker better for the person and for them.

At SOL, we looked at the staff council, an implementation group and a quality group that support workers attended. We looked at minutes from these groups and saw that there was very good input from all staff, that staff members were listened to and that important decisions were made. Opportunities to attend meetings like these in SOL gave all staff a chance to have their voice heard and

contribute to and take responsibility for quality of care and support provided by SOL.

Training was valued at SOL. There was a very robust induction in place for new staff and a clear programme for on going training. This meant staff members were helped to have the skills and knowledge to be confident and able workers. It was understood that very good training supported staff members in taking forward their leadership skills. A lot of SOL staff have undertaken a social care qualification whilst working there and this shows the service's commitment to develop staff members' abilities. Staff members could also develop their abilities by becoming one of SOL's trainers. We saw that many staff members alongside their main role had taken on a training role in the service for an aspect of support they were interested in. We saw in the staff newsletter an invite to staff to express an interest in becoming a trainer. We thought having in-house trainers was really good. It was a leadership opportunity, trainers were people with current day to day experience of doing the support role and could be seen as positive role models for other staff members. We also looked at the 'continuous learning framework' introduced by the service. We thought it was a very good plan for enabling the workforce at SOL to be motivated and have the leadership skills for providing excellent support to individuals. It also promoted a learning culture in the service.

Communication in the service worked very well. The staff update newsletter UPD8 was written in a way that invited and encouraged staff input. We saw in it that staff members were appreciated in the organisation and we saw strong, respectful social care values being promoted. There were also staff update meetings. From the information we looked at we could see that the workforce were valued and their potential recognised. Leadership values again were encouraged. When we spoke to staff members about how the service was managed and lead, they reported that they were asked for feedback and they influenced it. An example of this was the recent management re-structure. Staff members had expressed dissatisfaction with the previous arrangements as they weren't working on the ground for them nor for the people who they worked for. It was very good to see how their views were listened and responded to. It was an example of how they were able to take responsibility and take a lead in informing the management of what was working and what wasn't.

Also when we observed a person being supported by a group of staff to risk assess an activity they wished to do, we could see that everyone was expected to contribute. This was another example of where leadership from all staff members was encouraged.

Areas for improvement

We thought that the service could explore self directed teams taking some responsibility for auditing, an example could be monitoring medication records.

Whilst we saw that the service had a very strong, positive staff team overall, we did have a general discussion with the management team as to how they respond to instances of a staff member's poor support practice. We saw that in most cases of concern about a staff member's practice, the management followed up on an individual basis. We thought there may be benefit from monitoring the types of incidents occurring and considering whether a more preventative approach was also required. We suggested this as we saw that many of the instances of poor staff practice involved different staff and seemed to be around issues of not fully appreciating professional boundaries.

We saw there were some difficulties in achieving regular supervision for all staff members. The new ideas about different ways making sure staff benefit from supervision opportunities such as group supervision should continue to be developed. We sat in on part of a group supervision meeting and thought it was very positive.

Grade

5 - Very Good

Number of requirements - 0

Number of recommendations - 0

4 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

5 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

Previous recommendations

1. Staff should be given the opportunity to regularly discuss their own individual learning and development needs.

National Care Standards for housing support. Standard 3: management and staffing arrangements.

This recommendation was made on 29 August 2014

The service submitted an action plan to us on 30 October 2014, in response to this recommendation. They detailed how they would aim to meet this recommendation. When visiting for inspections we saw that they had taken some steps such as the introduction of the 'continuous learning framework' to assist staff members with their learning and developments needs. We also saw the service had explored new formats for supervision, for instance, group supervision. We refer to supervision opportunities in Quality Theme 4 - Statement 3, and advised the service to continue to develop their supervision opportunities for staff members.

6 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

7 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

8 Additional Information

N/A

9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
29 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
7 Sep 2013	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very Good
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
13 Jul 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	3 - Adequate
14 Oct 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	3 - Adequate
9 Feb 2011	Announced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate

		Management and Leadership	Not Assessed
1 Dec 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good Not Assessed
20 Nov 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 4 - Good

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Contact Us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

www.careinspectorate.com

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