

Freespace Ltd Housing Support Housing Support Service

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Telephone: 0131 346 9030

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 30 March 2017

Service provided by:
Freespace Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2003002587

Care service number:
CS2004076892

About the service

Freespace is a company with charitable status which provides assistance in all areas of daily living for adults with physical disabilities, acquired brain injuries and learning disabilities, who want to live independently in the community.

The service is registered to provide Housing Support Services and Care at Home. The service is overseen by a Board of Directors, some of whom also use the service.

The registered manager is answerable to the Chief Executive and the Board and reports to them.

This service has six staff bases offering twenty-four hour staff availability. The services are as follows:

1) Western Harbour 2) St Leonards 3) Morrison Crescent 4) Roseburn 5) Coxfield 6) Lindsay Road.

What people told us

We met with three service users who told us of their experiences of using the service. The majority of their feedback to us was positive, however some raised concerns with regards to the quality of their care and support which we have taken into account.

Self assessment

We did not request a self-assessment document from the service as this was a follow-up inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	2 - Weak
Quality of staffing	2 - Weak
Quality of management and leadership	2 - Weak

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Whilst we saw some evidence of the support service having the required qualities to meet the care and support needs of some people, this was not consistent across the sites we visited.

Through our examination of various documents made available to us, the notifications we have received and discussions with service users and staff, we are concerned with the associated potential risks to people and their general wellbeing.

We made a total of four requirements at our last inspection, all in relation to the health and wellbeing of service users. Although a degree of progress has been made, we are not confident that the requirements have been met to a satisfying level and our risk assessment of people's wellbeing remains high.

These concerns include:

- Low staffing levels having a direct impact on the support delivered to service users. This has resulted in people having reduced support time, having to wait long periods of time for support, or having no support at all (see requirement 1).
- Supporting service users with their moving and handling in a safe manner. Occasions when staff have not been following correct procedures when using equipment like hoists, with one support worker using the equipment rather than the required two (as assessed) (see requirement 2).
- A lack of information and guidance to support a service user who has an epileptic seizure. (see requirement 3).
- The recording of medication being administered to people and the safe administration of that medication (see requirement 4).
- The day-to-day support with people to manage their finances safely. (see requirement 5).
- Identifying and reporting potential adult support and protection issues. (Linked to requirement 1).
- Support staff reporting concerns through the whistle blowing procedure. Linked to requirement 1).

For some service users, it has been over a year or more since their care and support needs have been reviewed by the service. We are also conscious that the health of some people has been deteriorating over recent months. We are therefore making the requirement that the service provider undertakes formal reviews with all service users, involving health professionals where relevant to ensure the service is appropriate to meet their ongoing care and support needs. (Linked to requirement 3).

To conclude, although there are key strengths in terms of the outcomes some people are achieving with using the Freespace, the concerns highlighted above are outweighing them and are reflected in our grading for this statement.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 4

1. The service provider must ensure that at all times suitably qualified and competent persons are working in the care service, in such numbers as are appropriate for the health and welfare of users.

This in order to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulation 5 - Staffing.

Timescale: Four weeks on receipt of this inspection report.

2. The care service must review the personal plan. (i) when requested to do so by the service user or any representative, (ii) where there is a significant change in a service user's health, welfare or safety needs; and (iii) at least once in every six month period while the service user is in receipt of the service.

Everyone's care and support needs must be reviewed, with input from relevant health professionals.

This must include:

- Clear guidance for support staff
- Epilepsy management and support / response plans
- Meaningful risk assessments

This is to comply with the Scottish Statutory Instrument 2011 - No 210 Regulation 4(1)(a) - a requirement relating to the health and welfare of service users. SSI/210 Regulation 5 2(b)(iii) - a requirement to review personal plans.

Timescale: Six weeks from receipt of this report.

3. The service must ensure that robust systems are in place for the administering and recording of medication, in line with the service providers relevant policies and procedures.

This is to comply with the Scottish Statutory Instruments (SSI) 2011 No 210. The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCWIS) Requirement for care services, Regulations 2011. Regulation 4 - Welfare of users.

Timescale: Two weeks from receipt of this report.

4. The service provider must ensure that robust systems are in place (consistently) where support is provided to service users for their day-to-day finances / budgeting.

Guardianships / power of attorney should also be explored with people.

This is to comply with the Scottish Statutory Instruments (SSI) 2011 No 210. The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCWIS) Requirement for care services, Regulations 2011. Regulation 4 - Welfare of users.

Timescale: One week from receipt of this report.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 4

1. The service provider should ensure that there are appropriate records in place (individually) which capture, detail and record the delivery of care and support and how this meets service users care and support needs.

This information should then be used to undertake people's six monthly care and support reviews.

National Care Standards, Care at home.

2. The service provider should ensure that service user's outcomes are time bound, to reflect their needs and choices.

National Care Standards, Care at home, Standard 4 - Your personal plan.

3. The service provider should formalise the handover process to ensure effective communication is in place and shared between support staff, to meet the care and support needs of service users.

National Care Standards, Care at home, Standard 4 - Management and staffing.

4. The service should ensure confidentiality is maintained in terms of the storage and access of service user's care plans, reviews and other such documents.

National Care Standards, Care at home, Standard 4 - Management and staffing.

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Freespace has continued to involve service users where possible in the recruitment of support staff. We met with one supported person who interviewed his support worker and greatly appreciated the opportunity to be involved and be part of the decision-making process.

The service has been exploring alternative training providers for moving and handling and administering medication in order to deliver induction training / re-fresher training to staff. We witnessed the new provider of moving and handling aids, working with staff and arrangements being made for external occupational therapy assessments to be undertaken for people.

Staff support and supervision meetings were being undertaken on a regular basis at some of the sites we inspected, but this was not consistent throughout. There were also no formal procedures in place to review the work practice of staff or undertake observations of practice. The service should introduce a competency framework which would feed into the regular supervision and appraisal processes (see recommendation 5).

Concerns were identified by the registered manager over historic safer recruitment practices which have recently been addressed. We undertook an audit of safer recruitment and did not identify any further concerns at this inspection.

However, whilst undertaking the safer recruitment audit, we identified a lack of management signing off support worker probation periods, as detailed in their relevant recruitment policies and procedures (see requirement 1).

We made a requirement at our last inspection to highlight the need that all support staff must be safely recruited and appropriately inducted through training to the service.

Freespace provides induction training to new staff approximately every 12 weeks, and depending on support workers start date, a long period can pass prior to commencing the training programme. In addition, several staff recruited over the past years are new to the social care sector and therefore lack any previous knowledge or experience.

Through the notifications received and our examination of relevant documentation, concerns are still present in that some staff are delivering care and support without any induction or relevant training. This lack of equipping staff with the relevant skills is a further example of the potential implications this has on the general wellbeing of service users.

We are therefore repeating our requirement; the service must ensure its workforce have the required knowledge, skills and experience and be fully competent in meeting the ongoing care and support needs of those they support (see requirement 5).

The service should continue to be mindful of the timescales given by the Scottish Social Services Council for all support staff to be appropriately skilled and qualified for their job roles. We will follow this up at our next inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. The service provider must ensure that all staff are fully aware on how to implement the relevant policies, procedures and related practices (including through staff induction and on-going training) to meet the care and support needs of service users and their welfare.

This includes risk management, moving and handling, adult support and protection and the whistle blowing procedure.

This in order to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4 - Welfare of users.

Timescale: Three weeks on receipt of this inspection report.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The service provider should ensure that the support staff are effectively managed and have their performance observed and monitored on an ongoing basis in-line with their relevant policies and procedures.

National Care Standards, Care at home, Standard 4 - Management and staffing.

Grade: 2 - weak

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Since our last inspection, the service provider has appointed a Director of quality, whose remit has been to raise the overall standard of the service, with the assistance and support of service managers, assistant service managers, support staff and feedback from service users.

A number of key policies and procedures have either been implemented or reviewed, which included a quality management system and standard operational procedure.

Although a degree of progress has been made in relation to quality assurance practices being delivered, which included a recent audit of one of the sites, concerns are still present which evidences to us that further improvement is required.

The improvement and development in relation to quality assurance needs to include:

- The audit of supported people's care and support needs being met.
- Regular audits of people's finances and medication being administered.
- Regular reviews and assessments in relation to the competency of the workforce.

(see requirement 6)

As we have briefly detailed in the quality theme of care and support, we are aware of a number of incidents surrounding the general wellbeing of service users through some poor practices. This has also lead us to further question the effectiveness of the leadership and management of service delivery. The service must ensure that effective management oversight of the service is in place (see requirement 7).

We identified over previous inspections the need for service managers to be appropriately skilled and qualified to meet the SSSC requirements and the timescales involved. Further improvement is required to ensure the managers are fully competent to manage and deliver the care to vulnerable adults (linked to requirement 1).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 2

1. The service provider must ensure appropriate quality assurance systems are in place.

The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4(1)(a). Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users by ensuring that they have appropriate quality assurance systems in place.

Timescale: 28 days on receipt of this inspection report.

2. The service provider must ensure management's oversight of the service delivery is effective. To focus on staff feeling supported in providing good outcomes to people at an appropriate level.

This is to comply with The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4(1)(a) Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users.

Timescale: 28 days on receipt of this inspection report.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 2 - weak

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

The service provider must ensure that all staff are fully aware on how to implement the relevant policies, procedures and related practices (including through staff induction and ongoing training) to meet the care and support needs of service users and their welfare.

This in order to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulation 4 - Welfare of users.

Timescale: Six weeks on receipt of this inspection report.

This requirement was made on 19 September 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service has made progress in terms of asking staff to read and sign policies and procedures to confirm they understand them. But a work in progress.

Also further issues identified with staff working but not completed their induction yet.

Not met

Requirement 2

The service provider must ensure that at all times suitably qualified and competent persons are working in the care service, in such numbers as are appropriate for the health and welfare of users and that those employed in the provision receive appropriate training.

This in order to comply with SSI 2011/210 Regulation 5 - Staffing.

Timescale: Eight weeks on receipt of this inspection report.

This requirement was made on 19 September 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

Concerns remain with regards to the staffing levels and training of staff.

Not met

Requirement 3

The service provider must ensure appropriate quality assurance systems are in place. The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4(1)(a). Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users by ensuring that they have appropriate quality assurance systems in place.

Timescale: 28 days on receipt of this inspection report.

This requirement was made on 19 September 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

Due to the concerns we have highlighted in this report, it demonstrates to us that further improvement is required in terms of quality assurance processes.

Not met

Requirement 4

The service provider must ensure senior management's oversight of the service delivery is effective. To focus on staff feeling supported in providing good outcomes to people at an appropriate level.

This is to comply with The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 SSI 2002/114 Regulation 4(1)(a) Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users.

Timescale: 28 days on receipt of this inspection report

This requirement was made on 19 September 2016.

Action taken on previous requirement

Concerns remain with regards to the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the service.

Not met

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

Date	Type	Gradings	
8 Sep 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
5 Aug 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
28 Oct 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
23 May 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	2 - Weak
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak
5 Jun 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
19 Jul 2012	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
16 Dec 2010	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed
15 Feb 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 4 - Good Not assessed
22 Oct 2008	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good 4 - Good

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