

HRM Homecare Services Ltd - South West Branch (1) Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 25 January 2018

Service provided by:
HRM Homecare Services Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004006645

Care service number:
CS2009232697

About the service

HRM Homecare Services Ltd - South West Branch (1) is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide housing support and care at home to people in their own homes. The provider is HRM Homecare Services Ltd.

The service has been operating since 9 July 2010 and registered with the Care Inspectorate since the Care Inspectorate was formed in 2011.

At the time of this inspection, support was being provided to 460 people, most of whom were older people.

The registered manager co-ordinates the overall running of the service. Service managers and assistant service managers with support from co-ordinators locally manage the staff teams who directly support people. Staff teams are geographically based across South Lanarkshire, Falkirk and North Lanarkshire. Since the last inspection there had been significant service growth, with most of this taking place in North Lanarkshire.

The service's statement of aims and objectives include: "Our primary purpose is to provide a service which enables service users to live as independently as possible in the comfort of their own homes."

What people told us

We gathered feedback from people who were using the service and their families/or representative. Some comment was made about the expected times of support visits from staff and communication about late visits, which we have referred to in the main body of this report. One relative raised specific concerns which we passed to the manager to take forward. Overall feedback was positive and comments included:

"We are very happy with the staff, they are very professional and go the extra mile".

"Girls coming in are fabulous, focused on my wife and her dignity. They couldn't be more helpful, nothing is a problem".

"The office phones to ask me what I think about the staff who are my carers".

"Staff have been very good and they have accommodated times when I have asked if they could be changed to let me go out. They have also asked if I need more support to care for my husband, which I appreciated".

Self assessment

Although the service was not asked to submit a self-assessment, we were impressed that the process of self-assessment had continued since the last inspection. This shows a commitment to working in a quality focused way.

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

The service provided a range of very good opportunities for service users and carers to have a say on the quality of service. Based on the findings from these opportunities and our own contacts with people, we found that people were generally happy with the quality of care that they received.

In response to recommendations we made at the last inspection, the provider's newsletter was now used to inform service users and carers of feedback from satisfaction questionnaires and any actions that the service may need to take as a result of any issues raised by people.

Two dedicated staff members were employed with the specific role to carry out reviews of support with service users and carers. People told us that review meetings were helpful and that any suggestions or changes about their support was listened to.

Most of the feedback we received showed that people knew in advance of staff who would be supporting them, and that support visits were reliable and would be done within a 'window of time'. However, some people had an expectation of a specific time for a visit which meant that some visits could then be regarded by people as being late. In response to this the written agreement had been reviewed and would be reissued to people in order to clarify information about support times. People would also be reminded by letter that they could have a schedule informing them in advance of staff who would be supporting them for the week ahead.

The manager informed us that the provider was due to introduce a system by the end of April 2018 that would mean all support visits across the service would be electronically monitored to include any missed or late visits. This is a very positive development that will enhance the current practice which relies on manual monitoring of staff visits to people.

We found some very good information in personal plans, and noted that medication details were in the process of being developed further to provide more explanation about what medicines were for and reference to key side effects. This would mean that staff would be better informed by having immediate access to medication information at the time of supporting people, and in the event of any medical emergency.

The induction programme for new staff was comprehensive and included shadow shifts with more experienced staff as part of preparing them for their work. People who used the service spoke positively about the practice of shadow shifts. We were pleased to hear that service users or carers could be involved in the recruitment of staff, and we suggested reminding people of this as part of on-going communications such as reviews.

Feedback from people was generally positive about the quality staff. Service users and carers described staff as "caring", "flexible" and "on the whole standard of staff is good and consistent, which is important to us".

Staff that we met with presented as being focused on what was best for people that they supported. In keeping with good practice, a range of training and different types of supervision was made available to staff. The manager was working on improving the quality of supervision records to show how supervision, training and team meetings impact on staff practice and in turn positive outcomes for service users.

We raised the need to clarify approaches to supports that may involve finances; and in response to this the manager sent a letter to all service users and staff about this matter.

It was good to see that when a complaint had been made to the service, that people were asked to comment if they were satisfied with the improvement action taken by the service.

What the service could do better

Whilst the two staff members who held responsibility for carrying out reviews across the service told us that they received good support, we noted that formal supervision to monitor their performance was not as regular for these staff. The manager agreed to action this.

It was agreed that the provider's medication policy would be reviewed to include a definition on what a medication error was. In doing this it will provide better information on how medicine support to people is managed and notified to relevant parties.

A small number of staff and relatives raised the need to improve communication from office staff in situations when staff may be running late for a visit so that people knew that the visit would be delayed from the expected time. (See Recommendation 1).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. Feedback opportunities for care staff and people who use the service should include a focus to comment directly on the quality of communication from office staff relating to visits that may have run late. This specific area should be monitored and evaluated closely to demonstrate the standard of communication across the service. When any issue about a late visit is raised, records should show communication by office staff related to the issue and that affected people are satisfied with the action taken by the service.

National Care Standards, Housing Support Services, Standard 3: Management and Staffing Arrangements and Standard 4: Housing Support Planning.

National Care Standards, Care at Home, Standard 3: Your Personal Plan and Standard 4: Management and Staffing Arrangements.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
17 Feb 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
13 Jan 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
6 Nov 2014	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
26 Sep 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
7 Dec 2012	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
10 Aug 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
21 Jan 2011	Announced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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