

The Good Care Group Scotland Limited Support Service

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Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

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Service provided by:

The Good Care Group Scotland Limited

Service provider number:

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Service no:

CS2018364008

About the service

The service has been registered since 31 July 2018, as The Good Care Group Scotland Limited. Prior to this the service was known as The Good Care Group Scotland Ltd until a change of legal entity was made.

In April 2019 Sodexo Holdings Limited, part of the Sodexo Group, purchased 100% of the share capital of GCG Holdings Limited, the parent company of The Good Care Group London Limited, and The Good Care group Scotland Limited.

The Good Care Group Scotland Limited is registered to provide a care at home service to people within their own home. The provider has chosen to do this on a live-in basis. The service offers personal care and support to predominantly older adults.

The service has an office base in Newbridge, Edinburgh from which it coordinates care throughout Scotland.

The Good Care Group Scotland Limited has an affiliated company based in London which is registered with the English regulator, The Care Quality Commission. The London office provides a 24-hour call line for The Good Care Group in Scotland's staff and clients.

The services stated mission statement is 'to provide the highest quality in home care and support services, enabling the elderly to enjoy staying safely in their own homes and own community for as long as possible'.

What people told us

At the time of the inspection there were 32 people using the service. The clients were geographically spread from the North of Scotland, across the central belt and to Dumfries and Galloway. We spoke with 4 people who used the service when we visited them at home and spoke with a further 4 family carers by telephone.

We also sent 20 questionnaires for the service to give to clients and their families. We received 18 responses. These had been completed by clients or their relatives or friends on their behalf.

People using the service described the staff who looked after them as caring, attentive and reliable. Both clients and families said that once a client carer match was found that they had confidence in the people who supported and cared for them. Relatives said that they could see that the level of care was very good and their relatives seemed happy and relaxed with the carers. Relatives were complimentary about both the carers and the support of the managers and office staff as illustrated by the following comments:

"The quality of the care provided by my (relatives) two regular live-in carers has been exemplary, and the level of support provided in turn by their line manager has been excellent",

"Any issues are dealt with quickly and efficiently and always resolved effectively. As a family we feel very fortunate to have the care and support of The Good Care Group".

"The service has been very well matched to our need. Individual carers have all been conscientious, well qualified and thorough. The agency has been efficient and handled the relationship professionally and with real care."

We saw that carers were courteous and respectful to their clients. Staff treated people and their homes with respect. Support was given to help clients with all aspects of their lives including maintain their daily routines,

maintain relationships with friends and family and develop and maintain their interests and hobbies. Clients told us that this improved the quality of life they experienced.

Self assessment

We are not asking services to provide self-assessments this year while we review how we inspect services in the future. Instead we are asking services to share their improvement or development plan. We spent time, with the manager, discussing the plans for the development of the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	5 - Very Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

The Good Care Group provided personalised, live-in care which met individuals needs and preferences. We saw that client's were treated with respect and staff were kind, caring and knowledgeable about their client's health and care needs.

People told us they were very happy with the service they received and with the quality and reliability of the carers. The provider made sure that they could provide the care and had suitable staff before starting the service.

Clients were fully involved in decisions about their care and were recognised as an expert in their own experiences, needs and wishes. All the clients we visited were happy with their carers and appeared happy and relaxed in their company.

Families said that contact with the management team was very professional from the initial set up and the terms of the service were explained clearly. Often families were in crises when they contacted the service and they told us that they were pleased with how quickly and smoothly a service could be set up.

A comprehensive assessment of each clients' needs was made prior to the service starting. The support plans kept in people's homes, reflected how the care should be given as well as their needs and choices. This information helped staff give the right care at the right time and helped staff get to know clients.

Client care plans were shared with carers before starting a placement so that they were well-informed and prepared. Carer profiles were shared with clients prior to the placement to help with the matching process and ensure clients were happy with the carer.

Clients usually worked with two carers on an agreed work pattern. Continuity of service was maintained during holidays or unexpected staff events by a rapid response team who were experienced at taking over care at short

notice. We saw that the service tried to send familiar staff to respite clients to reduce the potential disruption of introducing new carers each time.

Each client we visited and spoke with had a unique lifestyle. All were supported to have an active life and continue to participate in their chosen recreational, social, creative and physical activities every day. Staff we spoke with were knowledgeable about the benefits of fresh-air and exercise and helped clients to go outside. We saw good examples of how the service helped support clients to continue to enjoy family celebrations and the beneficial effect this had on the client's wellbeing and sense of fulfilment.

Meals and snacks were prepared and served by the carers. Clients directed and planned menus alongside their carers and there was a comprehensive record of likes, dislikes special dietary requirements and preferred meal and snack times in the care plans. Carers were respectful of clients wishes whether they preferred to eat with them or alone.

Clients who wished to be independent in medicines management were supported to do so. Where staff took responsibility for administering medicines there was a safe system including an electronic recording system which offered the ability to alert staff and management if a medicine was not given by the prescribed time.

The service continues to improve through innovative practice. By educating care staff to recognise symptoms of conditions such as urinary tract infections and equipping them to identify and seek appropriate treatment, unplanned and unwanted hospital admissions can be avoided.

We considered the service was sector leading and provided an excellent quality of care and support for clients.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 6 - excellent

Quality of environment

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We considered the overall quality of staffing was very good for this service because we saw major strengths and attention to detail alongside a culture of continuous improvement.

We sent questionnaires to staff and received a very good return. Staff were complimentary about the company and the support they receive from their direct line manager and the management team. Staff said they had received very good training and induction and felt well prepared for their role before starting their placement.

Staff said they were given comprehensive written care plans and a verbal briefing about clients and their needs before they went to client's homes. A comprehensive handover from the outgoing carer meant they felt well-informed and prepared for their role.

Only people with the right skills and values should work in health and social care. Recruiting the correct staff is key to improving outcomes for people who use services. The Good Care Group continued to refine the selection process and had a recruitment process which properly examined the skills, experience, qualifications and values of potential staff. The selection process we viewed gave candidates a good understanding of the situations they may face in live-in care and an understanding of the expectations of their role. Further attention to detail could improve the current process. See area for improvement 1.

A recruitment team carried out pre-employment checks and interviews which meant management time was not taken up with recruitment. However, this meant that the content of references was not seen by the manager or care managers. Access to this information could mean that managers were better informed about how individual staff could be supported in their roles. We have asked the service to ensure the manager has access to the content of employee references and following our feedback this process was introduced. We will follow this up at the next inspection.

Staff were recruited from varying backgrounds with different range and length of experience. All staff received a five-day induction process which also formed part of the selection process. This ensured that all new staff worked to the same standards and followed legislation and best practice, expectations of the quality of care was made clear.

We had contact from 36 of 75 carers who worked for The Good Care Group. All the staff were complimentary about working for the organisation. Comments we received reflected this:

" I'm very happy with the training and support I receive from The Good Care Group. I think there is a strong culture of communication and they have invested a lot in the systems to make the service more efficient and user-friendly,"

"A new IT forum has been introduced enabling me to chat/seek advice etc. from other colleagues within the company. Support from carer services is fantastic."

Staff said that they felt valued and supported by both their manager and carer services. Staff we spoke with said that there was always someone available to speak with and managers very quickly responded to them. Although the nature of live in care meant that there were less opportunities to speak with colleagues face to face, staff said that a carers community gave them a forum to share learning, talk to colleagues and access policies and procedures. An employee assistance service was provided by the organisation and was available to help staff with any work or non-work-related problems. Staff told us they felt valued and were asked for their opinion about how to improve the service.

Registration with Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is compulsory for workers in care at home services. To register with the SSSC you must satisfy the criteria for registration which includes holding, or agreeing to work towards a qualification appropriate for the job. All care staff had applied for registration within a short time of starting work. The manager was looking at how to support staff who needed to gain a Scottish

Vocational Qualification (SVQ) to allow them to maintain their registration. We will continue to check this at future inspections.

After commencing employment all staff were expected to complete an online training to achieve a care certificate. Further online training courses were available to help staff with specific conditions and circumstances such as end of life care, dementia and Parkinson's disease.

One staff member said:

"What is good about The Good Care Group is the fact that there is always somebody on the phone available in case we have a problem, any doubts or just want to talk with somebody. Also care managers are very supportive. It's a good working environment. Thanks to learning opportunities one may feel well-prepared to do the job."

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. To ensure that unsuitable staff do not gain access to vulnerable adults, the following improvements need to be made to recruitment practices,

-a review and implementation of a system to ensure that the information and checks carried out as part of the recruitment process can be overseen by both the manager and provider.

This ensures care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard HSCS 4.24 "I am confident that people who support and care for me have been appropriately and safely recruited" and HSCS 4.23 "I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed".

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We considered the management and leadership was very good for this service.

There was a new manager in post at this inspection who had experience, knowledge and skills of care management and there had been a smooth transition and continuity of leadership during the change of manager. This meant there had been no disruption to the service for clients, staff and families.

The number of clients in the Scotland region continued to increase. Growth in client numbers was well-managed and the service had maintained and improved standards during this period.

A range of systems and processes were in place to regularly assess and monitor the quality of service that people received. This information was gathered, analysed and used to drive service improvement through well formulated and evidence-based improvement plans.

Client, relative and staff feedback was an integral part of the quality improvement systems and feedback was used to improve the service for individuals and the overall service. Face to face client focus groups had been tried for the first time to offer clients and families to come together to discuss the service they received and offer ideas of how to improve it.

Client and carer surveys had been changed to allow the results for Scotland to be identified and analysed. This will help to ensure any feedback can be responded to for the specific region affected.

There was an ethos of mutual respect between carers and management. Staff told us they were listened to and could influence and shape the service. There was a range of ways for staff to give feedback including directly to the senior management team through an annual organised lunch arranged as part of annual refresher training.

There was a complaints system which all clients and relatives were aware of and would feel comfortable to use. The provider had systems to analyse and use learning from concerns and complaints to improve the quality of the service.

Thematic analysis of incidents had led to better understanding of issues which had resulted in policies and procedures for more effective management of suspected alcohol use at work.

An analysis of clients' health needs had led to the provider making specialist training available for common conditions and meant they could ensure that they continued to provide high quality care through a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

Daily care notes, medication administration, body maps, financial transactions and food and fluid charts could be accessed in real-time because of digital technology improvements. This meant that there was better management oversight of care, more timely support for staff and the potential to make further improvements in the outcomes of care for clients and families.

Improvements could be made to the way shopping receipts are photographed so that the time, date and all items purchased can be recorded and used for audit purposes.

Policies and procedures could be reviewed to ensure they use the language of adult support and protection, mental health and adults with incapacity legislation. This would ensure staff were clear about the principles of the legislation and help to uphold client's rights.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

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.

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

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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