

# Homelink Caithness Housing Support Service

Pulteney Centre  
Huddart Street  
Wick  
KW1 5BA

Telephone: 01955 608530

**Type of inspection:**

Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**

9 December 2019

**Service provided by:**

Pulteneytown Peoples Project

**Service provider number:**

SP2003003632

**Service no:**

CS2013317609

## About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

The service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 20 January 2014.

Homelink Caithness provides a combined housing support and care at home service to people with a range of needs living in the community. The service aims to help individuals develop independent living skills which will help them maintain their tenancies. It also provides a care at home service which strives to deliver high quality care.

## What people told us

For this inspection we sought the views of people in a variety of different ways. In October 2019 we asked the manager to hand out questionnaires to people who were using the service.

Twenty Care Standard Questionnaires were issued to people using the service and 9 were returned

100% of returned questionnaires indicated respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that they were happy with the quality of the care and support received.

During the inspection we spoke with 23 people who used the service and 4 relatives. Comments were all positive.

"Staff are lovely, very helpful. I couldn't stay home if it wasn't for the girls."

"I get the same staff all of the time and I know who's coming in and then they are coming."

"There have been recent improvements with changes in the rounds which mean I see the same staff more often than I did. I like to know which staff are coming and when. Having the same staff means they know me better and what my needs are. They know my physical disabilities and my idiosyncrasies."

"I love meeting people and the food at lunch club is better than hotel food. "

"Going to the gym has made me feel a whole lot better physically and mentally. I can't drive so the staff help me get to places, they help me keep connected. "

## Self assessment

The service has not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the care and support provided 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 observed that staff were compassionate, and treated people with dignity and respect. They knocked on people's doors or called out to let people know when they had arrived at their home. One person told us, "the staff assist me and give me plenty of time. I never feel rushed. They stop and talk to me and offer lots of reassurance when I need it."

Care and support was provided by a small team of staff who knew people very well and who had built up positive relationships with them, their carers and relatives. One person commented, "if you know that you have someone who understands you, which is what I have, then you feel good about things." Another person told us, "they have helped me become more confident. They take me shopping and they've helped me to get back into photography. My worker has the same interest and she has now encouraged me to print my photos - this has increased my confidence."

The service had recently revised the care at home service which enabled people to have care consistently provided by the same staff members, at a time which best met their health and care needs. One person explained, "the staff are great - they know what I need and they come when they say they're going to come - I can't praise them enough."

We saw a number of examples where people had been supported to get the most out of life. One person said, "Homelink Caithness has done more for me in the last few months than other service providers have done for me in 5 years. They don't take a one size fits all approach, they help you get back on your own feet in your own house, where you're most comfortable.". Other comments included:

"I never went out till I came to lunch group, as I have rheumatoid arthritis and can't manage. The staff are great at helping me. I enjoy the food and I love the company. I now have new friends that I look forward to seeing every week."

"The entire ethos is tremendous. Homelink Caithness has grown to support the communities needs. It responds to what people need, and it helps to keep them safe. Homelink Caithness incorporates people in to the heart of the service. They've looked after us and our needs, and always know exactly what is required and what we need."

"I'm personally very happy for various reasons. I didn't have the confidence to get out before but having someone to support me with mobility means that I get out now."

"The staff know how to care for me they know how to keep me well. The help is practical and invaluable."

"I was initially fearful and guarded but I can really trust these people and that can be difficult when you don't know people. They don't judge you, they accept you for who you are. They are brilliant with me."

Care plans demonstrated that people and their relatives and carers were involved in reviewing their health care needs at regular intervals. Health and risk assessments were undertaken by a competent person who involved other people and professionals as required. One relative commented, "I am very happy with the care my wife receives. I wouldn't change anything. I feel included in any decisions, and I have lots of support from the carers and district nurses."

We observed that the service was well led and managed. People were actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service. For example, the quarterly newsletter was used to seek people's ideas regarding potential new services. Community forums, meeting minutes and newsletters were all used to keep people informed.

There was a strong focus on continuous improvement, and the service improvement plans demonstrated that people and staff were consulted.

Homelink Caithness had a robust employment and selection process. The induction identified that staff did not start work until all pre-employment checks and mandatory training had been completed. The staff recruitment process ensured new staff had the skills, experience and knowledge required to meet people's health and care needs. Staff told us they had enough training to enable them to meet people's health and care needs. One staff member told us, "Training has helped me to identify when there may be a problem, and when I should call for help."

Staff told us they enjoyed working for Homelink Caithness. One staff member confirmed, "I love working for Homelink, both the staff and our service users. Katrina and the rest of team in the office are a support too. Although we might not all meet up together often, we are free to phone each other and do. It's a pleasure to come to work here."

The manager and staff presented as committed to continually improving the service to ensure that people had as good a quality of life as possible.

## What the service could do better

The service had sourced Scottish Government funding to run a staff training program titled 'New Beginnings'. The manager should continue to progress this and we will consider it further at the next review.

## 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](http://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.

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
30 Jan 2019	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>5 - Very good</div>
13 Feb 2018	Unannounced	<div>Care and support</div> <div>4 - Good</div> <div>Environment</div> <div>Not assessed</div> <div>Staffing</div> <div>5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership</div> <div>Not assessed</div>

Date	Type	Gradings	
24 Jan 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
23 Jan 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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