

Moray Continuing Care Services Adult Placement Service

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Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
18 March 2022

Service provided by:
The Moray Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001892

Service no:
CS2020379353

About the service

Moray Continuing Care service is an adult placement service linked to the Moray Fostering service and supports young people to remain living with their carers past the age of 18.

What people told us

Young people we spoke to told us about their very positive experiences of living in caregiver families and had benefitted from continuity of support and enduring loving relationships. Carers were positive about the support they had received from the adult placement service.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

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| How well do we support people's wellbeing? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our leadership? | 4 - Good |
| How good is our staff team? | 3 - Adequate |
| How well is our care and support planned? | 4 - Good |

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

We have evaluated this key question as good as important strengths were noted that outweigh areas for improvement.

Young people in continuing care had developed meaningful, affectionate and secure relationships with the caregiver families. Young people experienced individualised care that adapted to their changing needs supporting transition to adulthood with a greater emphasis on independence and choice.

Young people were achieving positive outcomes in education and had access to a range of leisure and social activities. Fostering families supported children to have fulfilling lives with high aspirations for success. This supportive and positive culture contributed to positive outcomes for children and young people.

Young people moving to continuing care and adult services had clear information about their rights and discussions around transition were begun at an appropriate stage with engagement from the Throughcare Aftercare service.

Safeguarding practice in the service meant that children in the service were safe and protected from harm.

The service recognises that training on adult protection for carers is a priority, this will form an area for improvement (see area for improvement 1).

Young people were supported to use formal advocacy to express views and the "Better Meeting Project" a collaborative art project with care experienced young people in Moray was a good example of children's views driving change. The service was changing its language in line with 'The Promise' recommendations from the Independent Care Review and was considering children and young people's experiences of social work.

Fostering families told us that they felt supported by their current social workers but continuity of relationships had been impacted by staff turnover and changes in management. This led to carers feeling disconnected from the wider service with a lack of clarity around who new managers were or the overall vision of the service.

Areas for improvement

1. To keep all young people safe from harm, the provider should ensure that all continuing care carers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to adult protection. This should include but is not limited to the provision of specific training in adult protection for adult carers.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20).

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We have evaluated this key question as good as important strengths were noted that outweigh weaknesses.

The service had some effective quality assurance systems in place to ensure children's wellbeing is maintained. Performance relating to statutory checks for carers was now effectively monitored to ensure that ongoing statutory requirements were met to ensure the safety of children. The service has new management and governance arrangements in place and has taken steps to monitor performance but this is at an early stage.

The Fostering and Adoption Panel and Agency Decision Maker provided robust scrutiny to carer review and applications for approval for fostering families and were able to challenge assessments presented to them. A panel advisor role further supported quality assurance but the service needs to improve how social work staff are supported and how practice issues are identified at an earlier stage. We did see some delay in carers being formally approved as adult placement carers but this did not have an impact on the outcomes for young people in the service.

A service development plan is in place which outlines a number of areas of improvement for the service. Some of these elements were contained in previous plans so the service needs to evidence how it can move from planning to delivery based on feedback from children, carers and other key stakeholders.

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We have evaluated this key question as adequate where strengths just outweigh weaknesses but key areas of performance need to improve.

Staff practice observed through tracked cases reflected values and principles of the Health and Social Care Standards. Fostering families told us that staff had worked hard to build genuine trusting relationships but this had been impacted by high levels of staff turnover in the service. There were improved working relationships with the Throughcare and Aftercare team with improved communication and joint working. A shared approach to child's wellbeing across both teams ensured greater consistency of support for children.

Staff had been supported through development sessions run by the service to improve their knowledge and members of the team were also due to undertake external training provided by The Fostering Network. Although these are positive improvements, staff expressed that changes in management meant that they had not had continuity of support and some areas of practice were unclear. Staff had regular supervision but not consistency in their line manager which impacts on the quality of the supportive relationship. Staff also had not had access to a clear induction or annual appraisals (see requirement 1).

1. By 30 June 2022 the provider must ensure that all staff are fully trained and supported effectively to provide consistent support to Fostering families.

To do this the provider must as a minimum ensure:

- a) there is a clear induction process for new staff joining the service
- b) there is a clear training plan for all staff
- c) all staff have regular access to annual appraisal
- d) there is continuity of supervisory relationships for all staff
- e) exit interviews are undertaken and information analysed to understand reasons for staff turnover so that this can be addressed.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the SSSC's Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers, which state that the employer will: 'provide effective, regular supervision to social service workers to support them to develop and improve through reflective practice' (3.5).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes. (HSCS 3.14)

How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

We have evaluated this key question as good where important strengths outweigh weaknesses. Children were included in their care planning and were able to influence the direction of their care with support from formal advocacy where this was required. Children's reviews were held regularly with children and parents often included in decision making. Language in documentation was in line with 'The Promise' with children's needs and wishes reflected.

Young people were included in the completion of Welfare Assessments which clearly reflected their voice throughout. Planning for young people was supported by close working relationships between the adult placement service and the Throughcare Aftercare service.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

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| How well do we support people's wellbeing? | 4 - Good |
| 1.1 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families experience compassion, dignity and respect | 5 - Very Good |
| 1.2 Children, young people and adults get the most out of life | 4 - Good |
| 1.3 Children, young people and adults' health and wellbeing benefits from the care and support they experience | 5 - Very Good |
| 1.4 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families get the service that is right for them | 4 - Good |

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| How good is our leadership? | 4 - Good |
| 2.2 Quality assurance and improvement are led well | 4 - Good |

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| How good is our staff team? | 3 - Adequate |
| 3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to support children, young people, adults and their caregiver families | 3 - Adequate |

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| How well is our care and support planned? | 4 - Good |
| 5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of children, young people and adults | 4 - Good |

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