

North Aberdeenshire Care at Home Service Support Service

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Unannounced

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Aberdeenshire Council

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About the service

North Aberdeenshire Care at Home is registered to provide a care and support service to people living in their own homes. The service is divided into four teams with each team having their own geographic area: Peterhead, Fraserburgh, Banff and rural Buchan. Each team has their own care team co-ordinators and care staff. The provider of the service is the Aberdeenshire Local Authority.

The service have introduced the Four Pillars model of care and support, that is: critical/complex care, rehabilitation/enablement, end of life care and rural care.

About the inspection

This was a short notice inspection which took place on 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 of May 2023. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 24 people using the service and five of their family
- spoke with 23 staff and management
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People were very satisfied with the quality of the service they received.
- The vacancies in the various staff teams were minimal, with successful recruitment to fill vacancies.
- People said that there was consistency in the staff and that positive and respectful relationships had formed.
- People said they were never rushed and were supported to retain skills, and to do as much for themselves as possible.
- Staff were mindful of being in people's homes and were professional in their conduct.
- Care plans and assessments were clearly written and available for people to access.
- There was high levels of confidence in concerns being listened to and acted upon.
- The management team were valued and respected, by people who used the service and by the staff team.

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

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good

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

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People said that the staff were professional in their conduct and were polite, kind and 'just toppers'. This contributed to positive relationships being formed.

Staff were mindful of being in people's homes and people said that staff were respectful, and their home never felt like the staff's workplace.

One relative was very positive about being recognised as the 'main carer' and respected by staff for their input in the care and support of their loved one. We felt that this demonstrated not only respectful practices but also recognised the importance of relatives being vital carers in the lives of their loved ones.

People said they never felt rushed. People who took their time, were supported by staff at a pace that was right for them, and they never felt under pressure. There was always time for a chat. A few people said this was very important to them due to having limited opportunity to have contact with other people during the day. The time taken to have a chat, 'made their day'.

A few people spoke about the 'enablement' approach by staff. It was positive to hear from people that they were informed about the enablement approach to care and why they were being supported to do what they could for themselves. We felt this demonstrated a service that was determined to help people retain skills and for them to remain as independent as possible.

People said there was consistency with the staff who attended to their care and support needs. This helped trusting relationships to form and also helped ensure that there was consistency in people's experiences. Many people said the stability in the staff group was much improved and they felt this was the main factor in the 'brilliant' service they received.

Confidence in the abilities of the staff were high. People said that staff 'knew what they were doing'. When a care or support need changed or a new piece of equipment was needed, staff were updated and trained quickly. This meant people could continue to get the care and support that was right for them.

Each person had a yellow folder in their home, and these contained relevant care plans and assessments. People and their families had access to the folders, and this meant that they were aware of the agreed care. Staff said that any updated care plan or the plans for new people using the service, were made available very quickly. This meant that care plans were reflective of the current needs of people.

Care plans and supporting documents were easy to read and would inform staff of how best to meet the care and support needs for the individual. The lack of jargon and terminology in the plans would help ensure that the content would be easy to understand by most people.

The service should look at implementing clear protocols for specific clinical needs, this will help inform staff decision making.

If staff identified changes to people's mobility or needs, specialists such as physiotherapists or occupational therapists were asked to review people. The outcome of this review was documented, and a report made available very quickly. A copy of the report was uploaded electronically, and a paper copy was placed in the yellow folder. This meant that any important changes could be implemented, to ensure people got the care that was right for them.

People said that communication was very good. They felt fully informed of any changes. People were particularly positive about the review process. They found these very useful and recognised that the review was an ideal platform to have their say and express any changes they wanted.

Almost all staff spoke about the high levels of satisfaction they got from doing their job. Most staff felt that they were valued and respected, and felt they were making a difference to people's lives.

Many people we spoke with said that they felt lucky to receive the care from the home care service. Many said it was very important to be able to live in their own homes, however, all said that the quality of the service they received, could not be any better.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The management team were visible and accessible. People knew who the managers were and had access to their phone numbers/contact details. It was important to managers that people could speak to them directly.

Staff said that if they had any concerns with meeting the needs of people or if they had identified any concerns with the people they support, that managers were always available for advice. As a result, staff never felt under pressure to make decisions on their own and could discuss any worries they had. We felt this contributed to the high staff morale and high levels of job satisfaction.

Regular meetings took place. Staff found these beneficial because they informed them of any changes to their role and also gave staff the opportunity to chat about any challenges they were experiencing.

The provider's complaint policy was easy to follow. It was positive that the managers aim was to resolve any concern via front line resolution. This would stop any delay in resolving any discontent and ensure that changes are quickly introduced in order to improve satisfaction.

People found care reviews important to enable them to discuss the care and support that was being provided and if any changes were needed. People felt valued and respected because they were seen as experts in how their care and support.

The service had a service improvement plan that helped identify the areas of the service that needed developed. The plan was clear and easy to read. The progress in making the changes were discussed at the management meetings, ensuring that staff remain focused on making the improvements.

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

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good

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