

Bluebird Care (Dunbartonshire) Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
Caledonian Care Consultants Ltd

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Service no:
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About the service

Bluebird Care Dunbartonshire provides support to people in their own homes in the East Dunbartonshire and West Dunbartonshire local authority areas. It operates from an office base in Bearsden.

At the time of our inspection, the service provided care and support to 55 people.

The service provides care and support based on people's needs and preferences.

The stated aims and objectives of the service are:

"The service aims to be friendly and approachable whilst always maintaining a very professional and customer focused attitude. We realise that making decisions about care can seem very daunting. The need for care and support can often arise at a stressful time, for example when you or a loved one has been ill. Or perhaps, it has been getting increasingly difficult for you or a loved one to manage at home and you are thinking that some help may now be needed".

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 28 June and 20 July 2023. The inspection was carried out by an 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 five people using the service and seven family members
- spoke with eight staff and management
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People receiving support from Bluebird Care Dunbartonshire are very satisfied
- People are encouraged to choose how they are supported
- The service is flexible
- Staff are well trained and supported
- Support plans require improvement
- Six-monthly reviews of people's care and support are not taking place.

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
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	3 - Adequate

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 who were supported by Bluebird Care Dunbartonshire and their families were very positive about the service. They told us that the staff were courteous, respectful and patient. One person said, "I think they are pretty good as they are. I'm very happy with them." They said they were given choice about how they wanted staff to work with them. For instance, people could choose to go shopping, go for coffee or take part in recreational activities and staff would support them. We were also told that the service was flexible when times had to be changed for hospital appointments and other commitments. One family member told us, "Sometimes I do need to change things, they don't make me feel like it's a big ask."

People and, when appropriate, their families were invited to complete feedback questionnaires about the care and support they received. Questions included how involved people felt in planning the care, how well the service communicated with them, how well staff provided the care and staff time-keeping. Overall, people said they were happy with the care and support.

Providing people with choice on how they are supported and encouraging comments on their experiences means that the individual is involved in decisions about their care and support.

The service helped some people with medications. This included prompting and assisting people by opening packs. In a small number of cases, where people were unable to safely do it themselves, the service took responsibility for administering medications. The service had a comprehensive policy on medication, staff were trained on their role with medication and managers directly observed their practice in people's homes. This approach ensured people got the right medicines, in the correct dose at the correct time. This contributed to people maintaining good health.

Staff were provided with information about how health conditions impact on people's lives, for instance, diabetes and strokes. This enhanced staff understanding of the conditions and how best to support people.

The service had recently reintroduced newsletters providing information to people supported and their families. These encouraged people to use the service to assist them to be active and get out and about, for example, going for a coffee or visiting the coast. Contents also included introducing new staff, information about local Alzheimer's Scotland activities, contact details for advocacy support and information on an information service, including carers support and benefits advice for one of the two council areas covered by the service.

People told us that staff followed good practice in infection control. This included staff washing their hands in people's home and using appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) like aprons and gloves. Staff told us they had ready access to PPE and had their practice monitored by managers. This helped protect people and staff from the risk of infection.

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 service had experienced considerable challenges due to significant changes in its electronic systems. This was outside of its control but meant it did not have access to the full range of information and previous records. It had also had a change of registered manager in 2022.

The service was committed to providing quality care and used a number of ways to develop further development. Accidents and incidents were rare but management looked to see if there were lessons to be learned. A similar approach was taken with any complaints.

A developmental improvement plan was in place for the current year. This identified key areas for attention. These included actions to further develop people having the same staff visit them and improving the quality and consistency of staff supervisions, care plans and reviews. The service intends on identifying members of staff who will be champions in dementia, end of life care and falls prevention. These staff will provide guidance to other staff on these issues and improve outcomes for people.

We were impressed with the action plan initiatives that related directly to the people they support and their families. The service intends on offering training in medication administration and moving and assisting to them. In addition it will provide access to its e-learning training. This is likely to be of interest and benefit to family members who provide care to loved ones. The service also intends for people and families to be invited to take part in the induction of new staff.

A number of processes were in place to help the service monitor quality and satisfaction. These included direct observations of staff practice on areas including supporting people with medication and infection control. We reviewed the paperwork on these observations. In some instances, they showed little evidence of how the observations helped maintain or improve practice. We have made an area for improvement on this.

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should review its use of direct observations of staff practice to improve outcomes for people and support to staff. Records of direct observations should include sufficient detail to reassure the provider staff practice is acceptable and specific actions where further support or training is required.

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 organisations codes' (HSCS 3.14).

How good is our staff team?

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.

We reviewed how staff were recruited and found the service followed good and safe practice in this area. Appropriate background checks were made on applicants and the service took effort in obtaining relevant references. New staff benefitted from a structured induction programme. This included essential training, shadowing more experienced staff and having regular sessions with managers. Direct observations on areas like use of personal protective equipment (PPE), moving and assisting and personal care ensured new staff were competent in their roles.

A recent survey of staff said staff enjoyed their work and intended to work with Bluebird Care on a long-term basis. This was confirmed in our interviews with staff. They also told us managers were approachable and available for advice, including outside of office hours. They said supervisions and direct observations of their practice were positive and helped them in their work with people.

The service had a comprehensive training programme in place for staff. This included refresher training on medication and moving people safely. We looked at training records and found very high compliance rates by staff. Together with direct observations this means people can be sure the people supporting them have the necessary training and are competent in their work.

How well is our care and support planned?

3 - Adequate

We evaluated this key question as adequate, where strengths only just outweighed weaknesses.

Support plans, sometimes called care plans, are important for care services and the people they care for. They record what areas people require support with, how that support should be provided and what outcomes should be achieved. We found some good examples of how plans should be written. For instance, one provided good information on how to help the person at times of stress. Some provided details about specific health conditions and how they affect people. However, overall, we found the quality of support plans in Bluebird Care variable. Important information was sometimes missing including life and work histories, names of family members and GP contact details. Tasks for staff to do were clear but the purpose or intended outcome was absent in some cases. Risk assessments were not always present or lacked detail to keep people and staff safe. We have made a requirement on care plans. See requirement 1.

Care services are required to ensure people's supports are reviewed every six months or more frequently if circumstances change. While there was evidence of some recent reviews, most were overdue, some in excess of a year. The quality of recent reviews was not acceptable with little evidence of how care was evaluated. This means that we were not satisfied that people were getting the care that took account of their current situations. We have made a requirement on reviews. See requirement 2.

Requirements

1. By 31 January 2024, the provider must ensure service users experience care and support which is consistent, safe, and meets their needs. To do this the provider must, at a minimum, ensure that service users' personal plans:

- a) are current, accurate, reflect good practice in being person-centred and outcome focussed
- b) have sufficient detail in them to ensure people's individualised support needs and outcomes are met
- c) include, when relevant, risk assessments that reflect good practice in keeping people and staff safe
- d) are subject to regular evaluation and audit to monitor quality and effectiveness.

This is to comply with Regulation 5 of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 5 - a requirement for a plan of care.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

2. By 31 January 2024, the provider must ensure that care plans are reviewed on a six-monthly basis as a minimum, in line with current legislation. To do this, the provider must, at a minimum, ensure:

- a) people are supported to understand and be included within their care review
- b) they collaborate with people and others involved with their care to gather their views on what is working well with the care and support
- c) ensure that any agreed actions are completed and reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective. Completed actions to be carried forward to the next agreed review date
- d) managers are involved in the monitoring and the audit of people's reviews.

This is to comply with Regulation 4(1) (a) and (d) (welfare of users) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011/210). This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state: 'I am fully involved in developing and reviewing my personal plan, which is always available to me' (HSCS 2.17).

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
1.5 People's health and wellbeing benefits from safe infection prevention and control practice and procedure	5 - Very Good

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

How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.1 Staff have been recruited well	5 - Very Good
3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to care for and support people	5 - Very Good

How well is our care and support planned?	3 - Adequate
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	3 - Adequate

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