

Premier Healthcare Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
13 October 2023

Service provided by:
Dorothy MacLeod trading as Premier
Healthcare

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2008173018

About the service

Premier Health Care provides a care at home service to adults and older people living in their own homes. The company office is located in Helensburgh and services are mainly provided within the local area.

The service operates over seven days, 365 days a year. The office is open standard operating hours with an out of hours telephone number covered by the senior team outside of this.

The service's stated aim is:

"To help our clients stay at home and feel safe and supported for as long as possible."

At the time of the inspection, 61 people were using the service.

About the inspection

We visited the service on an unannounced basis on the 5 October 2023 however management were at meetings and the office was locked. We therefore phoned and arranged an inspection at short notice for the following day, 6 October 2023 from 09:30 until 14:00 and 12 October from 09:30 until 18.30. Inspection work was also undertaken remotely on 7 October and 13 October 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 nine people who use the service and 11 of their relatives.
- Reviewed six questionnaires returned from relatives.
- Reviewed six questionnaires returned from staff.
- Spoke with six staff and management.
- Observed staff supporting people.
- Reviewed documents.
- Spoke with two external professionals who know the service well.

Key messages

- Management met individual's needs because they knew people extremely well.
- The service had a very good reputation locally for being reliable.
- Technology was used innovatively.
- The service was consistently good at updating relatives which reassured them.
- The service retained good staff because they felt supported.

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 evaluated this key question as very good as the service operates at a high level across a range of indicators relating to health and wellbeing. This produced outstandingly high outcomes for people. The service was also innovative in areas around communication.

The service was particularly strong around the way they communicated with everyone relevant to the people they support. This was a consistent message from everyone we spoke with, and we spoke with over a third of the people who use the service or their relatives. For example, one relative told us; "I always get a prompt response to any issue I raise via email with managers. My views are sought by the agency regularly." This echoed the feedback from external professionals who have good knowledge of the service. As a result people felt valued.

The service very effectively implemented technology within the service. This made how they communicate stand out. Most relatives we spoke with told us they use the electronic system to get an accurate update to how their relative is. One relative told us "My sister goes online every day; it makes her feel connected." Another said; "I check every day, we know someone has been in, it gives us a prompt for discussions which gives us such reassurance." If relatives did not want to use the electronic system, the service still made sure they were kept informed; "The manager knows that I'm not online so she will send me text reminders and notify me of anything important." For relatives this level of communication meant they had confidence their loved one was being well looked after.

Staff were skilful in the way they worked in partnership with the people they supported. This meant supporting people to maintain as much independence as possible. Our observations and all of the feedback we received assured us of this. One relative told us; "They know how to speak to dad better than I do," another wrote, "My father is very independent of spirit and the carers respect his way of doing things at his pace."

The service was very successful at supporting people to remain safely at home, even if their health declined. They did this by reviewing support and ensuring additional help and equipment were in place when necessary. This was a clear message from relatives and professionals who know the service well. "Mum's wish was to end her days at home, it was really all down to the high level of care provided by (management and staff) that allowed my Mum's wish to be fulfilled." Another relative told us; "Mum started with one carer carrying out a welfare visit each morning and we ended with two carers four times a day."

The service was very effective at identifying when people required medical intervention and seeking help quickly. Several relatives gave examples of this. One wrote; "A carer spotted signs of a significant seizure and did everything and more to get the emergency services." Another wrote "We were very impressed with how they worked hard to engage and co-ordinate with physiotherapists, dieticians, speech & language therapists and the GP practice when necessary." Having support which recognises early when additional medical support is required helps to keep people safe.

There were outstanding outcomes for people using the service as a result of care being well planned and monitored. One relative told us their mother had been unhappy in a care home, they contacted the service, who took the time to carry out a detailed support plan. As a result the service was able to successfully support her mother back into the community where her quality of life improved.

The service advocates strongly for the people they support. Community professionals told us if the service were not such strong advocates, they would not have been able to pull the right community support together on time to meet one adults final wish, to be cared for at home rather than taken into hospital. Several others gave positive examples where the service had advocated for them.

People who use the service health benefits from taking their medication as prescribed. The service has robust systems in place to support this, underpinned by a comprehensive medication policy and effective training and supervision for staff. We observed a staff member on their induction clearly being explained the correct procedures for administering medication. The service will also inform the relevant people if someone's ability to manage their medication changes.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in the management and leadership of the service which contributed to positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Leadership was strong with managers leading by example in both their knowledge of the people they support and in their caring approach. Managers knew everyone who used the service well because they met with them before the service started supporting them. Managers visited people regularly to ensure that everything was as it should be. As a result, staff had confidence in their managements' judgement when discussing individuals, all staff said they felt management cared for staff and the people they support.

The service is systematic about getting feedback from people who use the service and their relatives. People were comfortable giving feedback because they know this is welcomed and responded to in a spirit of partnership. We received a higher response than normal when we sought feedback from staff and relatives, all the feedback was positive. The fact feedback was all positive can make it harder to identify areas for improvement. It was discussed at feedback that the Care Inspectorate's Quality Framework for housing support services may assist management develop their self assessment which could identify areas to be developed.

Leaders communicate clearly with external professionals. Professionals we spoke with trusted that leaders of the service care about the people they support and will do their best for them. The service is regarded very highly locally. Professionals told us that communication with the service was wonderful, not only would the service alert social work when some needed additional support, they would alert them if less support was required. This built up a good trust between the service and the health and social care partnership.

The service has robust policies which guide staff on how to support people. Management are effective at communicating these to staff. We saw examples of staff supervision meetings where policies and best practice issues are discussed with staff to support their understanding and ensure consistency across the service. As a result, people felt confident about all of the staff who supported them.

The service has effective quality assurance processes in place. The care coordinator will work shifts with different members of staff to ensure standards are consistent and staff feel supported. We observed a new member of staff receiving really clear guidance while supporting people. Several people who use the service commented that the staff were always happy because they were well looked after by the company.

Staff were knowledgeable about the people they supported. Staff told us the introduction of their electronic care planning system had improved the service as up to date information was accessible in one place. Staff all said they had time to review the electronic care plans for any updates before visiting someone. Care plans we saw were all being updated in the daily notes and changes to the care plan made as required. As a result people who were supported were safer because staff were kept updated whenever their support needs changed.

Management were using the electronic planning system to monitor quality assurance. This was still fairly new, by next year there should be a clearer idea how the system has supported key performance indicators. Management should consider how improved performance indicators, improve outcomes for people who use the 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

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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