

Edinburgh Support Services - Community Support Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003016213

About the service

Edinburgh Support Services - Community Support is registered as a support service (with care at home) to provide a care service to adults with learning disabilities in four premises in Edinburgh, in the community and in their own home. The service is provided by the City of Edinburgh Council.

At the time of this inspection the service was provided by three staff teams based at three of the four premises.

There were 17 people using the service, and one person was in the process of being introduced to the service.

About the inspection

This was a (short notice) announced inspection which took place on Wednesday 3 December between 09:30 - 15:00, Thursday 4 December between 9:00 - 15:00 and Monday 8 December between 11:15 - 12:15. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors 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:

- observed people being supported at all three premises
- observed interactions between staff and people using the service
- spoke with two family members, and received three feedback questionnaires
- spoke with seven staff and the management team and reviewed 10 feedback questionnaires
- considered feedback from two visiting professionals
- reviewed documents in connection with people's care and support
- reviewed documents relating to staffing and the management of the service
- considered the progress that had been made in improving the four premises.

Key messages

- People benefitted from the management team and staff's strong values of respect, rights and inclusion.
- People were supported by staff who knew and understood them well.
- Opportunities to take part in community based activities continued to increase.
- People were encouraged to try new activities, to maintain and develop skills.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	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 evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as good. We found several strengths regarding the support provided and how these supported positive outcomes.

People benefitted from being supported by staff who had often known them for many years and understood their personality well. People experienced warm and caring interactions with staff. We saw that people were comfortable, and engaged with staff and others confidently.

People's support plans provided a valuable description of the care and support people needed whilst at the service. They gave extremely detailed guidance on how each person wished and needed to be supported. This included aspects of nonverbal communication such as body posture and gestures. We saw that staff used this guidance and that they understood people's communication well. As the support plans also described triggers that might cause distress, staff were able to anticipate situations and minimise stressful situations effectively.

A family member commented: "They understand the needs of the individual."

Risk assessments covered activities pertinent to the person's time at the service. These were specific to each individual and meant that measures were taken to enable the person to undertake activities safely. Some risk assessments were more generic, for instance fire evacuation. We suggested that these are reviewed to ensure that they take account of each individual's specific strengths and abilities.

Family members played an active role in developing and reviewing support plans. They felt well informed and involved in their relative's support from the service. Communication was very good with daily contact, and more in depth discussions to support change, problem solving and decision making. It was clear that the support people received supported family life and the person's ability to enjoy a family setting. Accidents and incidents were recorded, reviewed, and shared with family members when they occurred.

One family member said: "They work alongside families to keep them well informed and involved in the service user's plans and activities."

Efforts were made to ensure good continuity of care and support. People's support plans and associated documents were available to all staff. This meant that staff could familiarise themselves with the person's support needs and wishes before meeting them. In addition, new staff worked alongside colleagues before supporting individuals on their own.

Some people required assistance to eat and drink. This was done in a respectful and careful way. Likewise, staff supported people to move around freely whilst keeping them safe. Staff were aware of the impact of people's behaviours on others and worked hard to ensure an amenable group setting. This promoted people's involvement and social skills. Staff were alert to people's changing health and wellbeing over time, and in consultation with family members, adapted their activities to suit. This flexible approach meant that people could continue to enjoy activities that were important to them.

People could be confident that there were effective procedures to support them with their medication. This included clear protocols for medication that was prescribed for emergencies, safe storage and recording of medications. Some people were supported to do their physiotherapy exercises whilst at the service. The

visiting physio therapist worked closely with staff, people and family members to support these individuals to do their exercises whilst. This promoted people's mobility and independence. The management team were working with the local learning disability health teams to offer them clinic space within the service premises. This has the potential to build on positive working relationships for people using the service.

People's support plans highlighted three key objectives relating to activities, describing what support was needed to achieve them. Objectives were agreed with family members and were reviewed every six months. We saw that efforts were made to achieve the chosen aims. Staff and family members told us there had been an heightened focus on activities, and that opportunities for people had improved since the service had relocated to the three community based premises. Activities undertaken at the premises included cooking, pampering, table top games and listening to music. People enjoyed a range of activities in the community such as trampolining, a drink at a local pub, coffee in a cafe, and walks. Staff continued to explore new opportunities. The recent availability of two wheelchair adapted vehicles and the use of public transport, gave people greater choice in their transport. People benefitted from staff making efforts to consider how they could make use of a range of community facilities. This was described by a family member as positive problem solving. They added: "Staff have gone out of their way to help get (their relative) to be able to take part in activities they enjoys."

People were supported to use their money to participate in their chosen activities. We discussed the need to improve how financial transactions were recorded, in particular when staff support people to spend money from their individual wallets. The registered manager responded positively by initiating an addition to the existing recording systems. This will ensure better accountability and transparency for both staff and the people they support. Staff showed a good understanding of their role in keeping people safe from harm.

We assessed that people were benefitting from the recent implementation of the management team's vision to create meaningful opportunities for individuals within their own communities.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as good. We found several strengths regarding the staffing of the service and how these supported positive outcomes.

We assessed that the values of respect and inclusion were evident in the interactions between staff and the people they supported. Staff were enthusiastic about their role in supporting people's independence, skills and introducing them to new opportunities .

A family member told us: "My relative has come on so well under their care. The staff see the whole person and not just a list of disabilities. Friendly and professional staff."

Staff communicated well with each other to ensure they shared pertinent information about people's wellbeing. They understood people's expressions and behaviours and communicated with them in a gentle and easy fashion. This created a welcoming atmosphere. There were enough staff to support people to participate in their chosen activities in the way that suited them best.

A staff member told us: "A good number of the staff group have worked in the service for some time, which allows for good support relationships with service users to be maintained, giving them confidence and reassurance."

The management team had successfully increased its focus on training. As a result, uptake of training opportunities was high amongst the staff teams. As well as the planned mandatory training, staff could request additional learning opportunities to support them in their role. Staff took part in regular supervision and annual conversations about their practice and development. Staff told us consistently that they felt well supported. The quality of recording of supervision varied. This meant that some staff and their line managers' records of achievements or need for improvement was limited. The registered manager agreed to address this.

All staff agreed that they were able to play an active part in evaluating and improving the quality of the service. We heard positive examples where staff suggestions had been taken on board.

Communication between staff and family members, and with visiting professionals was good. This meant that concerns, or opportunities in connection with people's wellbeing were acted on with ease. A visiting professional said: "Staff have been very pleasant, attentive and engage well with the service user and physio therapy, can provide insightful feedback/ have a good knowledge of the client or can identify staff members who can offer guidance, and engage well physio therapy recommendations." They were also described as: "open to feedback, and can recognise and raise concerns of safety (transfers/manual handling/pressure injury/positioning)."

The registered manager told us that staff had adapted well to the recent move to a more community based service. Staff showed enthusiasm in sharing new opportunities with the people they support.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

To ensure people experience meaningful activities which supports their physical and mental wellbeing, the manager should review the way in which activities are organised and planned with people. This should focus on developing more person-centred activity plans with people, considering their likes and dislikes as recorded within their personal plans.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I can choose to have an active life and participate in a range of recreational, social, creative, physical and learning activities every day, both indoors and outdoors.' (HSCS 1.25).

This area for improvement was made on 4 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Since the last inspection there had been an increased focus on ensuring that people's wishes and interests were known. As a result people benefitted from activities they enjoyed.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

To ensure people are supported to eat healthy meals at lunchtime, the manager should introduce appropriate systems to check the temperature of any pre-cooked foods prior to serving, in line with relevant food standards guidance and best practice.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.9)

This area for improvement was made on 4 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Where people were supported to have pre cooked meals, the temperature was taken and recorded before the meal was served. This followed relevant food standards guidance and best practice.

This area for improvement had been met.

Previous area for improvement 3

To ensure when people are supported to spend their day-to-day money it is delivered in a way in which safeguards their interests, the manager should introduce appropriate systems including quality assurance and regular auditing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'If I need support managing my money and my personal affairs, I am able to have as much control as possible and my interests are safeguarded.' (HSCS 1.5)

This area for improvement was made on 4 August 2023.

Action taken since then

Where people were supported to spend their money, systems were in place to ensure that all transactions were recorded and accounted for.

This area for improvement had been met.

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?	4 - Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	4 - Good

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