

Home Instead West Lothian Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
Stevenson Care Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2021000009

Service no:
CS2021000011

About the service

Home Instead West Lothian is a support service providing care at home to people living in their own homes. The service registered with the Care Inspectorate in April 2021 and is a franchise of the Home Instead group.

The service is provided by a team of care staff to people living across West Lothian. Services include companionship, support with personal care, medication administration, meal preparation, domestic support, and getting out in the community.

At the time of the inspection, there were around 90 people receiving a service.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 26, 27, and 28 January 2026. 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:

- received feedback from 10 people receiving support from the service
- received feedback from 14 relatives and representatives
- received feedback from 19 staff, including management
- visited people in their own homes with staff
- reviewed documents
- received feedback from a wide range of professionals and community organisations.

Key messages

- People, and their relatives, were very happy with the service.
- Staff demonstrated positive qualities that reflected the service's values, aims, and objectives.
- The service was supporting people's health and wellbeing well which was leading to positive outcomes for people.
- People were supported by a small and consistent team of staff who knew their needs well.

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 staff team?	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 the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes of people. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

People experienced very good care and support. The values of compassion, dignity, and respect were central to service delivery. The staff team appreciated people for who they were, rather than simply focussing on their care and support needs. Staff enjoyed the time they spent with people. This approach was helping people to feel valued.

People received support that was tailored to their needs and wishes. Support was truly personalised, reflecting each person's preferences and how they wished their care to be delivered. Visits were scheduled for a minimum of one hour, allowing staff the time to listen and build meaningful relationships with the people they supported. One person shared feedback saying, "The two carers that are assigned to me are cheerful, helpful, and listen to my wishes". Other people we spoke with during the inspection shared this view. People were appreciative and trusting of their staff.

People had choice and control over their support. We observed staff taking time with individuals and actively promoting autonomy in daily decisions. People were encouraged to make choices about their care, including everyday matters such as meals, preferred support, and how they wished to spend their day. People were also encouraged to do things for themselves, even though this may take them longer. One relative told us, "They have a very person-centred approach when it comes to the activities [my relative] wishes to engage in". We also observed that where people were unable to express their preferences, staff involved relatives and observed individuals' responses to ensure they were offering support well. The service placed strong emphasis on supporting people to have control and staff consistently promoted and respected their choices.

The service had strong links within the community and played an active role in local initiatives. It worked closely with a range of voluntary organisations across West Lothian to provide information, signposting, and support aimed at improving the welfare and wellbeing of older people. Examples of initiatives included 'Be a Santa to a Senior', 'What's On Where' guide, and the Dementia Virtual Reality Tour van. Each of these focused on offering insight and helping others understand the challenges people may experience as they grow older. Working in partnership with other organisations, these activities contributed to increasing awareness and support within the wider community, leading to positive outcomes for older people.

Staff spoke with pride about their role in supporting people's wellbeing. Strong, well established relationships meant staff understood how best to engage with individuals and could recognise changes in their health and wellbeing. We saw examples of staff making a positive difference to people's lives, providing respite for families and responding promptly when health needs changed to ensure people received the care they required. One person told us, "I am very happy with the service I receive and believe it is an important part of my wellbeing". A relative also spoke about how critical the support was to them, saying they would struggle to continue in their caring role without it. People were confident that the service was contributing to positive health and wellbeing.

Care plans were of a high standard and provided clear information to guide staff in delivering support. They focused on what mattered to each person, including their needs and preferences. People receiving support

and, where appropriate, their families were involved in sharing information and agreeing the outcomes they wished to achieve.

Care plans were generally reviewed and updated regularly. However, we noted that a small number of plans were overdue a review, particularly where the service was experiencing difficulties in involving relatives. We were reassured that people's support needs had not changed but encouraged the service to consider how reviews are completed so that the plans are consistently updated.

Staff practice was safe and undertaken in line with good practice guidance, including medication administration, infection prevention, and supporting people with mobility. Staff understood their responsibilities in maintaining safe standards. The management team were completing audits and where areas of improvement were noted, these were acknowledged and managed well. This supported continuous learning and the recognition of good practice.

Incidents were being managed well, with good recording and, where appropriate, reporting to local health and social care partnerships. However, some of these events should also have been notified to the Care Inspectorate but were not. We discussed this with the manager and emphasised the importance of consistent reporting across the management team. We have made an area for improvement and will follow this up at a future inspection (see area for improvement 1).

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should ensure that they keep people safe and healthy by ensuring that all incidents are properly managed.

To do this, the provider should ensure that notifications are made to the Care Inspectorate in accordance with Care Inspectorate guidance 'Adult care services: Guidance on records you must keep and notifications you must make' (March 2025).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19).

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in the staff team and these supported positive outcomes of people. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

Recruitment practices were safe and exceeded best practice guidelines. The service demonstrated a rigorous approach to pre-employment checks and ensured that new staff aligned with the organisation's values. Induction training equipped staff with the skills and knowledge required to deliver high quality care and support. People could be confident that the service was committed to maintaining a skilled and values-driven workforce.

People were supported by small, consistent staff teams. The service prioritised building positive and knowledgeable relationships between each person and their support team. Time was taken to introduce new staff, ensuring there was a positive connection between them and the people they were supporting. Good staff retention was enhancing the quality and continuity of support. Prior to the inspection, care survey questionnaires indicated that a small number of relatives and staff had experienced changes to their

visits. We discussed this with the management team who acknowledged this had been an issue and had taken steps to address it. Feedback regarding visits and consistency was positive throughout the inspection.

Everyone spoke very highly of their staff and valued the support they received. One person told us, "I am very happy with the support I receive from Home Instead. I find them to be very reliable and the staff friendly and respectful. They accommodate my needs". Another said, "I am very happy with my care staff, they are all nice and I am comfortable with them coming into my home. They look after me well". During our visits, we observed these positive relationships and saw the high standards of care people described.

Family members of people receiving support also commended the staff, telling us:

- "My [relative] gets on very well with [their] carer and looks forward to them coming. They are matched well. [They] also gets on well with other staff members that have cared for [them]."
- "All are first class carers. They are a happy group and my [relative] senses this."
- "The carers supplied by Home Instead West Lothian who have supported my [relative] have been absolutely superb; going above and beyond to cater for [their] every need."

Staff were well trained. They completed a combination of online and in-person learning, which they described as good preparation for their roles. This included specialist training tailored to the specific needs of the people they supported. New staff received a structured induction and worked alongside experienced colleagues before supporting people independently. This ensured that staff were competent, confident, and skilled.

Staffing arrangements were appropriate. Staff had sufficient time to complete visits without feeling rushed and were able to travel between visits comfortably. They had time to engage with people, encourage participation in their care, and, where agreed, provide social support. The office team remained closely involved in people's care and could step in when needed. The overall focus was on ensuring people consistently received high quality support.

Staff were well supported and worked effectively as a team. Regular one-to-one meetings, appraisals, and staff meetings were scheduled throughout the year, with a strong focus on development and open discussion. Meetings also included guest speakers who provided specialist knowledge. Staff reported feeling comfortable approaching the office team for support or guidance.

All staff spoke positively about their roles and expressed confidence and pride in working for Home Instead West Lothian. The team was motivated and committed to achieving positive outcomes for people through the support they provided.

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
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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