

East Lothian Care Ltd Support Service

East Lothian Care (office 11)
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Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
10 March 2026

Service provided by:
East Lothian Care Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2023000580

Service no:
CS2024000463

About the service

East Lothian Care Ltd is registered to provide a care at home service to older adults with physical needs in their home and in the community. The provider is East Lothian Care Ltd. The level of support provided varies, depending on people's assessed care and support needs.

At the time of the inspection nine people living in East Lothian were using the service.

About the inspection

This was a (short notice) announced inspection which took place on Wednesday 4 and Thursday 5 March 2026. We gave feedback on Tuesday 10 March 2026. The inspection was carried out by an inspector and an inspection volunteer from the Care Inspectorate. This is the first inspection of this service.

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

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- observed three people being supported in their homes
- spoke with four staff and reviewed five feedback questionnaires
- spoke with one family member and reviewed ten feedback questionnaires
- met with the registered manager
- reviewed documents in connection with people's care and support
- reviewed documents relating to staffing and the management of the service.

Key messages

- Staff took the time to build trusting relationships with the people they supported.
- People gained confidence from the care and support they received.
- Staff felt well supported in their role.
- The leadership team needed to make suitable arrangements to avoid any conflicts of interest when supporting 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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	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 the performance of the service under this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of the care and support provided and how these supported positive outcomes.

People experienced gentle and respectful interactions with staff. They were clearly at ease in each other's company. By establishing trusting relationships with staff over time, some people were able to accept care when they had previously been ambivalent or resistant. People responded positively to the support they were offered. This led to positive outcomes for their health and wellbeing.

A family member told us: "They built up a trusting and caring relationship with my relative and acted in a clear and professional manner with me as my relative's next of kin/power of attorney."

Staff and the leadership team monitored people's daily wellbeing well, so that they noticed when a person's condition changed. In these instances they liaised with family members and sought medical attention appropriately. They also made referrals to other professionals, for instance Occupational Therapy and Social Work where they thought the person would benefit from their involvement. This had a positive impact on people's long term health and wellbeing.

There were good systems to support people to take their medication. Staff had a good understanding of how to give and record the administration of medication. And they did this with confidence. People benefitted from freshly cooked meals and snacks, improving their nutritional intake. One person told us that their diet was much improved since being supported during meal times.

A relative told us: "They are exactly what my dad needed at the most challenging of time."

We saw that staff gave people choices during the course of their support time. They discussed meal choices, interests, ways to stay mobile and enjoying the outdoors. This showed that people were supported to be in control of the support they received.

Communication with family members was extremely positive. Relatives valued the level and frequency of communication. This evidenced the service's success in working in partnership with people's family and legal guardians.

A family member told us: "I cannot praise their support, flexibility, response, and professionalism enough. They have enhanced our lives immensely and continue to do so. The ability to be able to check the app and get a detailed account of what my relative is doing and how they on a daily basis provides essential reassurance and continuity."

Staff practice was supported by the service's core values and clear policies and procedures. These were readily available to staff. We discussed the possibility of using team meetings to share experiences in relation to policies and procedures. This would support staff continual learning and development.

Where staff support people with financial transaction, for instance shopping for groceries, the service needs to consider what mechanism will keep the person and staff safe and accountable.

One person summed up the value of the support they received by telling us: "I feel confident and I am happy."

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

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

The relatively small size of the service had a positive impact on the leadership team's ability to have good managerial oversight. The leadership team undertook weekly quality assurance tasks to check that all visits and care had been provided. Where there were discrepancies the leadership team explored these further with a view to improving people's experiences.

Staff recorded their care notes in an effective on line recording system which was visible to the person supported and their family. This meant that levels of transparency and accountability were high. Staff shared information about people's wellbeing, and recorded incidents and accidents appropriately. The leadership team had started to share these with the Care Inspectorate where necessary. This meant that they had a good overview of people's wellbeing. Staff knew when to escalate concerns and made referrals to external agencies at the right time.

Each person being supported had a contract that outlined the service agreement between them and the service. We suggested these should be reviewed so that people could be clearer about the care and support they could expect. We also discussed the benefits of sharing the person's risk rating with themselves and families to ensure that expectations were clear in the event of the service not being fully available. In addition all staff should have a clear understanding of the remit of their visits to people being supported. This is to strengthen accountability and ensure that people being supported, their families and staff know what their roles and responsibilities are. We were assured the leadership team would consider these improvements.

The service continued to make efforts to gain feedback from people, their families, and from the staff team. Responses had been extremely positive to date. Feedback was shared with the staff team in a monthly newsletter and during team meetings. This was a good start to involving people, their families and staff in evaluating the service.

Although most people told us that they felt confident raising concerns, two family members commented that they did not know how to make a complaint. We discussed the possibility of using the quarterly newsletter for people and their families to share organisational information, including how to make a complaint. Staff were clear that they could raise any concerns with the leadership team. They reported that they felt listened to.

One staff member summarised the service's strengths by saying: "Excellent care service, our managers are brilliant, so responsive and always ensure that clients and families are fully involved with all care decisions/ updates."

We saw that the structure of induction and ongoing supervision sessions was strength based and encouraged reflective practice. Staff competency checks were also planned. This gave assurances that people were supported by staff who were competent in their role. However, objectively of the current leadership arrangements needed to improve. We made an area for improvement about this (see area for improvement 1).

The service improvement plan gave a good overview of how the service hopes to develop over time. The use of self-evaluation tools will support this further.

Areas for improvement

1. To support positive outcomes for people experiencing care, the provider should ensure that all aspects of staff leadership and management arrangements are objective. This will include, but is not limited to recruitment, supervision and performance management. This will reduce the risk that conflict of interests impact negatively on the care that people receive.

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 evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in the staff team and how this supported positive outcomes.

We saw that staff knew the people they supported well. We observed gentle and kind interactions with people responding positively to the care they received. Family members told us the service was responsive to any necessary changes and that they appreciated the flexibility of the staff team. Staff told us that they had enough time to spend with the people they supported. We saw that interactions were calm and unrushed.

New staff took part in a clear and thorough induction programme before supporting people independently. Ongoing training was planned for the year ahead. And supervision was structured to be strength based, promoting reflective practice. This meant that staff felt well prepared and confident in their role. Out of hours arrangements for staff were good. This ensured that staff could seek managerial support at all times.

A member of staff told us: "Although I work mainly on my own, I have numerous contacts with management and other support workers on a daily basis. This definitely makes it feel more like a team effort and the support available is amazing."

Arrangements for sharing information between staff members worked very well. This included the use of an on line recording tool, up to date support plans and discussions during team meetings. This meant that where people were supported by a team of staff, they experienced good continuity of care.

A family member told us: "I would like to thank you all for the care and kindness that you provide to my relative. You go above and beyond for them and it is very much appreciated!"

The leadership team actively promoted staff wellbeing. They did this by ensuring staff received regular supervision and support, attended team meetings and received information on mental and health wellbeing.

How well is our care and support planned?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in aspects of care and support planning and how these supported positive outcomes.

People who were supported and their families were heavily involved in developing their support plan. The leadership team worked carefully at the person's pace to build trusting relationships during this process. This gave the supported person time to determine what aspects of their daily care they needed and wanted support with. It also gave them the opportunity to become accustomed to receiving care, and confidence in the staff team. Support plans contained positive and respectful language throughout.

Staff shared their experiences of people's wellbeing with the leadership team so that this informed updates to the support plan. Where people experienced changes to their care needs, we saw that this was recorded and acted on. People and their family had opportunities to discuss their experience of support to ensure that it still met their needs. Family members always had access to up to date information about their relative's care and support. This ensured that they could be active partners in the care arrangements.

People's support plans and risk assessments were strength based and clearly outcomes focused. There was very good attention to maintaining and gaining skills and abilities. This meant that people could be as independent as they wished to be. Support plans contained detailed guidance about people's daily routines, what they needed assistance with and, how they liked to be supported. This ensured that people received person centred support that was in line with their wishes and needs. Support plans were easily accessible to all, so that staff could view any recent updates if they visiting somebody they were less familiar with or had not seen for a while. Staff told us that the on line system was easy to use.

Where people relied on others for decision making, support plans contained the relevant legal documents. We found that staff and the leadership team understood the need to promote people's rights to choice and protection well.

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 leadership?	4 - Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	5 - Very Good

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