

Aberdeenshire Council – Central Care at Home Service Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
23 February 2026

Service provided by:
Aberdeenshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000029

Service no:
CS2018370741

About the service

Central Aberdeenshire Care at Home is registered to provide a care and support service to people living in their own homes. The service provides care and support to a large geographic area in Aberdeenshire

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 17 and 18 February 2026. Two inspectors carried out the inspection. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration and complaints information, information submitted by the provider and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluations we:

- Spoke and received questionnaires from 32 people who used the service
- Spoke with five families of people using the service
- Spoke and received questionnaires from 30 staff and management
- Observed practice
- Reviewed documents.

Key messages

- People were very happy about the quality of care and support they received.
- Most people knew who would be coming to support them.
- People received person-centred care.
- People were treated with dignity and respect.
- People were concerned about the redesign and who would be providing their care in the future.
- Staff were well-trained and confident in their role.
- Staff were worried about the redesign and felt communication was not as good as it should be.

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?	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?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided that supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People consistently told us about the very good care they received. One person told us they received a 'very high standard of care,' while another commented that 'staff supported me well.' We observed dignified, person-centred care. Staff took time to ensure people were comfortable and offered choice, for example, with meals. People benefited from warm, respectful interactions which were personable and unhurried.

Overall, people knew when to expect their care and if there was a delay, people were contacted. The service could provide an advanced rota to ensure people know who will be visiting them. As a result, people would be better informed.

Medication records were overall well managed, with evidence of daily stock checks and organised documentation. However, key supporting documents, for example, adults with incapacity information, were not always readily available to staff at the point of care. This was raised at inspection, with the leaders immediately ensuring this documentation was made available to staff.

Care plans and risk assessments were comprehensive, though some required improvement. A stress and distress risk assessment had previously resulted in increased support at bedtime. Ongoing review appropriately reduced support as the individual's stress decreased, demonstrating effective and responsive reassessment. However, some people did not have a detailed 'How to Support Me' overview. This document would support staff who may not know the person as well as others enabling staff to provide consistent support. We raised this at inspection and were confident the service would ensure these are in place.

Communication across the service was very good. People reported that staff kept them updated, particularly during bad weather. The community team coordinator contacted people regularly, and this consistent communication contributed to positive experiences and reassurance.

Overall, the service delivered care that people valued highly. Staff demonstrated kindness, respect, and patience, and interactions consistently reflected person-centred practice. People and families expressed high satisfaction with the support provided. Improvements were required in documentation, the availability of supporting legal documents, the consistency of timetables, and the provision of named rotas. Strengthening these areas would further enhance the reliability and person-centred quality of the service, building on what was already a positive and well regarded standard of care.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good as several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Staff told us they enjoyed their roles. The training they received was comprehensive which allowed them to feel confident in providing a very good standard of care. Practice observations completed by the care team support officer, including medication and infection prevention and control. This ensured staff were implementing their training into practice. One person told us, 'they are a joy to be around' and another told us that they felt comfortable about leaving the carers to support their relative. During the period of severe

weather, people told us about staff going 'above and beyond' to ensure their care and support was met. As a result, people felt safe and well supported.

The service was undergoing a redesign, which had led to changes within the service provision. People told us they were concerned they would lose their regular carers due to the changes. The provider acknowledged the uncertainty the redesign was having on people and the need for regular communications to support people with any transition.

We asked about contingency arrangements, should reprovisioning care and support take longer than expected. The provider confirmed that they would continue to ensure suitable staffing levels.

Staff were also concerned about these changes. Due to the freeze on recruitment, the service had been unable to recruit to vacant posts. Staff working in rural areas felt they had not been given enough travel time, which placed pressure on their schedules. As a result, the service had made temporary adjustments to people's care to ensure people received their care and support.

Staff felt well supported by each other and direct managers, telling us if they had a concern, they could contact someone for help and advice. Some staff felt senior leaders were not visible enough, especially through the redesign. The recently appointed manager had taken proactive steps to improve this, including meeting with staff to listen to their concerns and be more visible to them.

We reviewed supervision records, and staff told us they received supervision and attended regular team meetings. Staff knew who to contact if they had concerns about a person's safety, demonstrating awareness of protection procedures. As a result, people could be confident that staff were supported.

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?	4 - Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	4 - Good

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