

Snowball Care UK Ltd

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Inspection report

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25 March 2022
01 April 2022

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Snowball Care UK Ltd is a care agency providing personal care and support to people living in their own homes. At the time of our inspection 85 people were using the service. Not everyone who used the service received personal care. In this service, the Care Quality Commission can only inspect the service received by people who get support with personal care. This includes help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where people receive such support, we also consider any wider social care provided.

People's experience of using this service and what we found

People gave positive views about the care workers that visited them and of the quality of care they received. Comments we received included, told us, "They're [care workers] all very kind. I know them well" and "They are all very kind and considerate."

Risks to people were assessed and reviewed when changes in their health or care needs occurred. We found that risks related to people's health, safety and well being including their individual mobility needs were assessed. Plans to mitigate those risks were in place providing staff with guidance to manage these safely. We saw these records had been updated and reviewed to ensure they reflected people's current needs.

Staff understood the provider's safeguarding policy and the procedures to follow to keep people safe from harm. The provider's safeguarding processes was understood and followed by staff to ensure allegations of abuse were managed safely. The staff Code of Conduct was reviewed and updated and provided staff with information on how to act in an emergency or if they suspected abuse.

The provider had a recruitment policy and process that was used to employ suitable staff. Staff records contained pre-employment checks to ensure they were safe to work with people.

For more information, please read the detailed findings section of this report. If you are reading this as a separate summary, the full report can be found on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection:

The last rating for this service was requires improvement (7 May 2020).

Why we inspected

We were prompted to carry out this inspection due to information of concern we received about risk assessments and the plans to mitigate any concerns or risks. We also received some information of concern regarding recruitment practices of newly employed staff. We decided to carry out a targeted inspection to examine those risks.

The overall rating for the service has not changed following this targeted inspection and remains requires improvement.

We use targeted inspections to follow up on Warning Notices or to check specific concerns. They do not look at an entire key question, only the part of the key question we are specifically concerned about. Targeted inspections cannot change the rating from the previous inspection. This is because they do not assess all areas of a key question.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Snowball Care UK Ltd on our website at www.cqc.org.uk

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was not always safe.

Inspected not rated

At our last inspection we rated this key question requires improvement. We have not reviewed the rating as we have not looked at all of the key question at this inspection.

Inspected but not rated

Snowball Care UK Ltd

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

This was a targeted inspection to check on a specific concern we had about the quality of risk assessments and whether people's risk management plans were suitable to meet their individual needs. We also received some information of concern regarding recruitment practices of newly employed staff.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by one inspector and two Experts by Experience. An Expert by Experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Service and service type

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own homes.

This service is required to have a registered manager. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in post.

Notice of inspection

We gave the service 24 hours' notice of the inspection. This was because it is a small service and we needed to be sure that the provider or registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

What we did before the inspection

The provider was not asked to complete a Provider Information Return (PIR) prior to this inspection. A PIR is information providers send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We received feedback from the local authority commissioners of care services and received by people. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with the registered manager and two office-based workers. We reviewed records of care, support for three people who used the service. We looked at records of recruitment for five members and

information relating to the management of the service, including policies, staff communications and audits.

After the inspection we sent a questionnaire to staff for their views and opinions of the care provision and the management of the service. We received feedback responses from 12 members of staff.

Inspection activity started on 16 March 2022 and ended on 7 April 2022. We visited the location's office/service location on 16 March 2022. We made telephone calls to people and relatives who use the service on the 25 March 2022. A meeting was held with the registered manager on the 1 April 2022, to discuss the inspection feedback.

After the inspection we sent a questionnaire to staff for their views and opinions of the care provision and the management of the service. We received feedback responses from 12 members of staff.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm.

At our last inspection this key question was rated requires improvement. We have not changed the rating as we have not looked at all of the safe key question at this inspection.

The purpose of this inspection was to check a specific concern we had about the quality and effectiveness of risk assessments and risk management plans. We also looked at risks related to safeguarding and recruitment.

We will assess the whole key question at the next comprehensive inspection of the service.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risks to people were assessed and reviewed when changes in their health or care needs occurred. People had an assessment of their health, safety and well-being which included their individual mobility needs.
- People gave positive views about the care workers that visited them and of the quality of care they received. Comments we received included, "The carers have been very attentive" and "They are all very kind and considerate."
- There were processes in place to manage risks related to people's health and care needs. Risk management plans to mitigate those risks were in place providing staff with guidance to manage these safely. Staff reviewed and updated risk assessments and management plans to ensure they reflected people's current needs.
- People's risk management plans had enough details and guidance for staff to manage the risks. For example, a person who was at risk of choking while eating and drinking had a detailed plan in place. This person's risk management plan contained details of what foods could present a choking risk for them. Staff followed this guidance to reduce those risks.
- Each person had a home environmental risk assessment in place. These assessed and found any concerns within the home that may put the person or care worker at risk of harm. The risks assessment reviewed the home for risks and hazards, including whether people smoked, had loose flooring or pets.
- Staff understood how to identify risks and when to escalate their concerns. All staff told us if they had any concerns about the safety of a person they would inform the office first.

Staffing and recruitment

- People had enough staff available to support their needs. People told us, "Can't fault them [care workers], they always stay for the full time", "We feel safe and confident [with care workers]" and "They're all very kind. I almost always get the same people, so I know them well."
- All of the staff we spoke with after the inspection said they felt there was enough staff to provide care and support.
- The staff rota was planned to ensure people received their assessed level of care to support them safely. People were happy with the care they received and had no concerns about staffing levels.

- The provider had recruitment processes in place to ensure suitable people were employed.
- Staff personnel files hold recruitment records. These included pre-employment records including job references and the right to work in the UK. The office staff checked and verified each reference provided. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks were requested and returned before staff worked with people. The DBS provides information including details about convictions and cautions held on the Police National Computer. The information helps employers make safer recruitment decisions.