

Spring Cottages Home Care Limited

# Spring Cottages Home Care Limited

## Inspection report

Stone Moor Bottom  
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Padiham  
Lancashire  
BB12 7BS

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## Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good ●
Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service effective?	Good ●
Is the service caring?	Good ●
Is the service responsive?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

This inspection was carried out on the 09 November 2016. Spring Cottages Home Care Limited is a domiciliary care agency and was last inspected in November 2013. At this inspection we found no breaches in the regulations we looked at.

As the agency is small we gave 24 hours notice of our inspection. This was because the registered provider is actively involved in the day to day running of the agency and we needed to ensure they were available.

The office is based in Padiham with parking available. At the time of the inspection Spring Cottages Home Care Limited supported 80 people with care and support needs. An out of hours contact number is provided for use in the event of an emergency.

At the time of inspection there was a manager who was registered with the Care Quality Commission. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons.' Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

There were systems in place to ensure people who used the service were protected from the risk of harm and abuse. Staff we spoke with knew the action to take if they had concerns in this area. They told us they would report concerns to ensure people were protected from harm.

Staff were knowledgeable of peoples' assessed needs. People who received care and support and their relatives told us they were happy with the care provision from Spring Cottages Home Care Limited.

There were arrangements in place to ensure people received their medicines safely.

Recruitment checks were carried out prior to a staff member starting to work with the agency. Staff received training to enable them to give care that met peoples' needs. Staffing was arranged to ensure people received care and support at the time they wanted.

There was a complaints policy, which was understood by staff and was available to people who received care and support. People told us they were confident any complaints would be addressed and they considered staff to be caring. We were told, "They're gentle and kind to me." And, "I can't praise the staff enough. They're all so nice and thoughtful as well."

The management of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited demonstrated their understanding of the processes in place to protect people's rights if people lacked mental capacity.

People who received care and support and staff, told us they considered Spring Cottages Home Care

Limited to be well-led.

## The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

### Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service was safe.

The registered provider had procedures to protect people from abuse and unsafe care. Staff were knowledgeable of these.

There were arrangements to ensure people received medicines in a safe way.

Staff were suitably recruited, and staffing levels were sufficient to respond to peoples' individual preferences.

### Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Staff received training and support to enable them to deliver care which met peoples' needs.

The management and staff demonstrated their understanding of the Mental Capacity Act, 2005 (MCA).

### Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

People were involved in making decisions about their care and the support they received.

Staff were able to describe the likes, dislikes and preferences of people who received care and support and this was individualised to meet people's needs.

### Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

People were involved in the development of their care plans and documentation reflected their needs and wishes.

There was a complaints policy to address complaints made regarding the service provided.

## Is the service well-led?

The service was well-led.

Systems and procedures were in place to monitor and assess the quality of service people were receiving.

The registered provider consulted with people they supported and relatives for their input on how the service could continually improve.

Staff told us they felt supported by the management team.

Good 

# Spring Cottages Home Care Limited

## **Detailed findings**

### Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This inspection visit was carried out on the 09 November 2016 by an adult social care inspector. We announced our inspection. This was to ensure the registered provider was available to speak with us.

Prior to the inspection visit we reviewed information the Care Quality Commission (CQC) holds about Spring Cottages Home Care Limited. This included any statutory notifications, adult safeguarding information and comments and concerns. In addition we contacted the local commissioning authority to gain their views of the service provided. This helped us plan the inspection effectively.

As part of the inspection visit we spoke with six people who received care and support from Spring Cottages Home Care Limited and two relatives. We did this by telephone. In addition we visited two people in their own homes and met with a further relative. We spoke with a director of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited, four care staff and a care co-ordinator who worked at Spring Cottages Home Care Limited.

We looked at a range of documentation which included five care records and three staff files. We also looked at computerised training records, computerised staff rotas, and a completed audit. As part of the inspection we viewed a sample of medication and administration records.

## Is the service safe?

### Our findings

We asked people if they felt safe. One person who received care and support told us, "I feel totally safe with staff." A further person said, "They look after me well and keep me safe." All the relatives we spoke with told us they their family members' were supported safely.

We viewed five care records and saw individualised risk assessments were carried out and evaluated appropriate to peoples' needs. We saw risks to peoples' health and wellbeing were assessed and risk reduction methods were used to ensure peoples' safety was maintained. For example, we saw care plans documented the equipment staff should use to support people and the way people had agreed to be supported. We also saw environmental risk assessments had been carried out. The assessments identified risks and control measures to ensure the risk was minimised.

Staff were able to explain the purpose of the assessments and how these enabled risks to be minimised. Staff told us if they were concerned a risk assessment required updating they would discuss this with the person using the service, their relatives and the registered manager. This would ensure peoples' safety was maintained. This demonstrated to us there were systems in place, of which staff were knowledgeable to ensure people were supported safely.

Staff told us they had received training to deal with safeguarding matters. We asked staff to give examples of abuse and they were able to describe the types of abuse that may occur. Staff also demonstrated an understanding of signs and symptoms of abuse and explained how they would report these. Staff said they would immediately report any concerns they had to the registered provider, the registered manager, or to the local safeguarding authorities if this was required. One staff member told us, "It's all about the client. If I was concerned I would take action. I have a duty of care."

We saw there was a safeguarding procedure and numbers for the local safeguarding authorities were available to staff. The procedures helped ensure people could report concerns to the appropriate agencies to enable investigations to be carried out if this was necessary.

We reviewed documentation which showed safe recruitment checks were carried out before a person started to work at the service. The staff we spoke with told us they had completed a disclosure and barring check (DBS) prior to being employed. This is a check which helped ensure suitable people were employed to provide care and support. We saw records of the checks were kept and two references were sought for each new employee. We spoke with a recently recruited member of staff. They confirmed all necessary checks had been carried out prior to them starting to provide care and support to people who received the service.

We asked the director of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited how they ensured there were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff available to meet peoples' needs. They told us rotas and annual leave were agreed in advance. They explained this helped ensure there were sufficient staff available to support people. We were also told if extra staff were required due to a change in a person's needs, unplanned leave or external events being arranged, additional staff were provided. This was confirmed by speaking with staff

who told us additional staff were available if the need arose.

We viewed one week's rotas and saw staffing levels were consistent with the registered provider's explanation and the assessed needs of people who received care and support.

We asked people their opinion of the staffing provision. People were positive regarding the time keeping and availability of staff. They told us staff were prompt and if it was not possible for staff to arrive on time due to unavoidable circumstances, they received a phone call to explain why this was. People and relatives told us they were happy with the arrangements in place. Comments we received included, "Very good time keeping." And, "They more or less come at the time they say." Also, "You can't help being late sometimes but it's rare."

During this inspection visit we checked to see if medicines were managed safely. There were policies available to ensure staff were aware of the processes to follow. People we spoke with told us they were satisfied with the support they received to take their medicines. One person told us, "They give me the tablets I need and they are always on time, so I'm never late taking them." A further person said, "They give me medicines very well and safely."

Staff we spoke with told us they received training to enable them to administer medicines and this was refreshed to ensure their skills were maintained. We saw documentation which confirmed this took place. One staff member said, "I wasn't allowed to give medicines until I'd had the training and been assessed as competent. We get regular updates as well."

We looked at a sample of Medicine and Administration Records (MAR) and saw gaps in one record. We discussed this with the care co-ordinator who explained they had identified this and explained the action they had taken. They informed us this had been discussed with staff. Staff we spoke with told us if errors were identified, this was addressed with them to ensure the risk of reoccurrence was minimised.



## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

The feedback we received from people who received care and support was positive. One person told us, "They look after me really well." A further person said, "I'm happy with the help I get, it's very good." Relatives also made positive comments. These included, "You couldn't get any better, they're very good." And, "It's good care."

We spoke with staff to check they received sufficient training to enable them to deliver safe and effective care. Staff we spoke with told us they were happy with the training provided. Comments we received included, "I feel we constantly get training." And, "You're never too old to learn." Also, "We get regular training."

We discussed training with the director of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited. The director told us staff received an induction prior to starting to work with people who received care and support. We spoke with staff who confirmed this. Staff told us new staff attended an office based induction and received a period of shadowing prior to working with people. One newly recruited member of staff told us, "I was trained well by the right people."

Staff also told us they received feedback on their performance in a variety of ways. These included meetings with the registered manager. The staff told us these were helpful as it allowed them to discuss any areas of concern and also to plan any further training required. We were also told staff were observed delivering care in order to assess their competence and we saw evidence meetings and observations took place.

We viewed computerised records which showed staff attended a wide range of training which included safeguarding, moving and handling, medicines and food hygiene. Discussions with staff and reviewed training records confirmed staff had access to training and development activities. This helped ensure they could provide safe and effective care.

Care records evidenced people's nutritional needs had been assessed. The care documentation we saw contained information regarding the needs and preferences of people who received care and support. The care plans we viewed contained sufficient information to enable staff to support people effectively. For example we saw one care plan instructed staff in the support a person required to maintain a healthy and sufficient diet. All the staff we spoke with told us if they were concerned with a person's dietary intake, this would be discussed with the person and the registered manager. They told us this would help ensure people's needs were met. We observed a staff meeting taking place. During the meeting we noted a person's diet and nutritional needs were discussed and action agreed to support the person's wellbeing. This demonstrated people were supported to eat and drink sufficient to meet their needs.

Care files also contained contact details of people who were important to those who received care and support from Spring Cottages Home Care Limited. We saw details of doctors and relatives were recorded to enable contact to be made as required. Staff we spoke with told us if they were concerned about a person's wellbeing, they would contact the registered provider or registered manager after discussing it with the

person. They also told us they would contact the person's family member or other health professionals if the need arose. This demonstrated staff were aware of the action to take if a person became unwell.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that, as far as possible, people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

People can only be deprived of their liberty so that they can receive care and treatment when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA. We discussed the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 with the director of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited. They told us they were aware of the legislation in place and the importance of ensuring the correct processes were followed. Staff we spoke with demonstrated a good awareness of the importance of gaining people's consent and confirmed they had received training in these areas. They told us they would report any concerns immediately to the registered manager. They told us this would help ensure peoples' rights were protected and their safety maintained.

## Is the service caring?

### Our findings

People who received care and support from Spring Cottages Home Care Limited told us they felt the care provided met their individual needs. One person said, "Staff help me the way I want and the way I agreed." A further person said, "I don't know where I would be without them. Because of them I can stay at home." One relative we spoke with commented, "It's good care." A further relative said, "The care is excellent."

All the people we spoke with told us they had been involved in the development of their care plans and care documentation we viewed confirmed this. Comments we received included, "The staff wrote my care plan after I told them what I wanted." And, "My care plan was written with me." Relatives we spoke with also told us they were consulted regarding the care of their family member.

People who received care and support told us they considered staff were caring. People told us, "They're gentle and kind to me." And, "I can't praise the staff enough. They're all so nice and thoughtful as well." Relatives also told us they considered staff were caring. One relative described staff as, "The salt of the earth. Very compassionate." A further relative said, "The carers are considerate, caring and take an interest in [my family member]. You feel they genuinely care."

The records we viewed held person centred information about people who received care and support. We saw peoples' social histories, preferences and wishes were included. This demonstrated people were encouraged to express what was important to them in order to enable care to be delivered in a person centred way. Staff we spoke with knew the people they supported and were able to describe their preferences and care needs. This demonstrated staff were caring.

Staff spoke respectfully of the people they supported. Comments we received included, "It's a pleasure to help people live their lives." And, "Every time I visit someone I consider it an honour to be there helping them."

We discussed advocacy with the director. We were told there was no-one who received care and support from Spring Cottages Home Care Limited accessing an external advocacy service. The director told us this was available to people and information could be provided as required.

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

People who received care and support told us Spring Cottages Home Care Limited responded to any changes as appropriate. One person described how they had changed the support they required from staff. They said, "It wasn't a problem and they've agreed to review it with me so I can change my mind if I want." A further person said "Any changes, I just talk to them and we sort it out." Relatives told us they considered the service to be responsive to their family member's needs. One relative told us staff monitored their family member closely and informed them of any changes to ensure the person's wellbeing.

Care records we viewed recorded people's routines and preferences. We noted the care plans contained information on how and when people wished to be supported. For example, one care record described how a person wished support with personal care to be provided as it helped them maintain their independence. In addition we saw peoples' independence was promoted. For example we noted if people required equipment to maintain their independence, this was recorded in the care record. We saw one person required a pendant alarm. This is an alarm which can be activated if the person requires emergency support. During the inspection we saw the person was wearing this. They told us, "I always wear this. All the staff make sure I have it before I go." In addition a further person described how the support they received enabled them to stay in their own home. We were told, "If staff think I'm not well they talk to me and give me extra help." They went onto say, "I don't know where I'd be without them." This demonstrated care was responsive to peoples' needs.

There was a complaints procedure which described the response people could expect if they made a complaint. We reviewed the complaints file at the office of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited and saw if a complaint was made, this was responded to and concluded. This demonstrated there was a system in place which was used in practice to address any concerns.

People and relatives told us they had access to the complaints procedure. This was available in the care files held in people's homes. People and relatives also told us they felt able to talk to staff or members of the management team if the need arose. People who received care and support commented, "I could talk to anyone." And, "I've no complaints, but if I did I'd speak to the registered manager." One relative told us, "If I had a complaint I could complain." A further relative said, "I've no complaints at all."

Staff understood the complaints process and explained they would refer any complaints to the registered manager. One staff member told us, "Complaints are important. We may be able to learn from them and change for the better." A further staff member said, "All complaints would be reported so we can see if we needed to do things differently." This demonstrated there was a procedure in place, of which the staff were aware to enable complaints to be addressed.

## Is the service well-led?

### Our findings

People told us they considered Spring Cottages Home Care Limited was well-led. Comments we received included, "I get the right care when I need it and staff always arrive to help me. So I think it's run very well." And, "It's organised and staff are very good. That's well-led." Relatives told us they were happy with the way Spring Cottages Home Care Limited was managed. One relative told us, "I know the registered manager. It's a good agency." A further relative commented, "They're accessible. I can talk to the registered manager."

The director told us the service had recently been assessed and had retained its Investors in People (IIP) accreditation. The IIP accreditation is a business improvement and best practice people management tool. Organisations are assessed against a framework and if successful, are awarded an accreditation. The director explained they were committed to seeking external feedback in order to gain others views and improve the service provided. We reviewed the IIP report and noted staff were encouraged to be involved in the development of the service.

We spoke with staff and asked them their opinion of the leadership at Spring Cottages Home Care Limited. Staff told us they felt well supported and were encouraged to discuss any areas on which they wanted clarity, or feedback. One staff member told us, "There's always someone there to guide and advise." A further staff member told us, "We have excellent management. I can talk to them and they do their best to help." In addition we viewed records of staff meetings. These showed areas such as changes in legislation, any improvements required and training were discussed to enable staff to remain up to date with changes and seek clarity if required.

We asked the director of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited how they enabled people to give feedback regarding the quality of the service provided. We were told that in addition to verbal feedback, surveys were provided to obtain the views of people who received care and support and their relatives. We saw evidence this took place. In addition, people we spoke with confirmed they had received a survey. We were told, "They send me surveys." And, "I don't need to fill the surveys in. I'm happy with everything. Relatives we spoke with also told us they had the opportunity to complete surveys if they wished to do so.

We asked the director of Spring Cottages Home Care Limited what checks were carried out to ensure the service operated effectively and areas for improvement were noted and actioned. They told us checks were carried out on time keeping, care records, accidents and incidents and medicine records. They explained these were not formally documented, however any improvements were actioned. Staff we spoke with confirmed this. Staff told us they received feedback if improvements were required. For example if a care record required updating, a medicine record was inaccurate or if they had been late to a person's home. This demonstrated checks were carried out and action taken if improvements were identified.

The director also told us they had a forward plan to ensure any improvements were acted upon. We saw documentation which evidenced care records had been reviewed and those that required action had been identified.