

Allcare Shropshire Limited

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Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Outstanding 

Is the service safe?

Good 

Is the service effective?

Outstanding 

Is the service caring?

Outstanding 

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding 

Is the service well-led?

Outstanding 

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service:

Allcare Shropshire Ltd provides personal care and support to people in their own home. The agency provides care and support for older people, adults with disabilities and people who live with dementia. At the time of our inspection visit, Allcare Shropshire Ltd provided services to 85 people.

People's experience of using this service:

People told us the registered manager and staff were extremely kind and caring and very good at their jobs. They said they felt safe with their carers and liked and trusted them. People praised the standard of care provided and described the service as exceptional. They said their staff often gave them care and support that was way more than they needed to. We were repeatedly told of occasions where staff had gone above and beyond what was expected of them, often in their own time. This included staff making special meals, taking people on trips out and other extras.

The registered manager was one of the two directors of Allcare Shropshire Ltd and also the nominated Individual. They were passionate about supporting older people and people living with dementia. They worked closely and extremely effectively with other organisations and groups promoting dementia awareness. The management team encouraged and rewarded high performance and innovation and the staff team stepped up to this and were enthusiastic and dedicated. Staff were committed to delivering outstanding and inclusive personalised care and strongly focused on supporting people's diverse needs and preferences.

People were supported to attend events organised by the service or activities they chose. These included celebrations, coffee mornings, afternoon teas and various fund raising events. Transport was provided so they could attend. These events provided people with the opportunity to socialise and make friends.

People were supported by staff who had been recruited safely, extensively trained and supported. People told us the staff were extremely reliable, rarely late for visits, informed them if they were going to be late and never missed their visits. Staff turnover was low, and people told us they were supported by staff who knew and consistently met their needs. Staff had the skills, knowledge and experience required to support people with their care and social needs. The service used practical and creative ways to teach staff care skills and put this into practice to provide outstanding care.

The service liaised confidently and efficiently with health and social care professionals. They were prompt and proactive in seeking advice or referrals when people were ill. They also supported people to attend healthcare appointments to ensure their health and well-being was maintained.

People's care and support was planned proactively and in partnership with them. They told us they felt consulted and listened to about how their care was delivered and staff 'really' listened to them. They said staff were respectful, friendly and extremely conscientious. Staff had a strong emphasis on encouraging

independence and empowering people while balancing this against assessing risks and safety.

Staff worked in partnership with other organisations to make sure they followed good practice and people in their care were safe. The management team used a variety of methods to check the quality of the service and develop good practice. They were extremely proactive in encouraging people to discuss how their support could be improved or raise concerns. They acted promptly where areas of improvement were identified.

There was a strong emphasis on the importance to support people to eat and drink well. Staff were aware of people's individual preferences and had the skills, knowledge and ability to meet their dietary requirements. People told us staff managed their medicines safely and they received them at the times they needed them. Staff understood the importance of supporting people to have a comfortable, pain free and peaceful end of life. Where someone was heading towards the end of life staff were particularly flexible, changing times of or care at very short notice.

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

The registered manager continued to provide excellent leadership and showed empathy and a real desire to increase people's wellbeing. All staff had a clear vision of what was required of them and focused strongly on doing so.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection:

At the last inspection the service was rated good (published 22 August 2016).

Why we inspected:

This was a planned inspection based on the rating at the last inspection.

Follow up:

We will continue to monitor intelligence we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. We may inspect sooner if any issues or concerns are identified.

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 remained good

Details are in our Safe findings below.

Good 

Is the service effective?

The service improved to outstanding

Details are in our Effective findings below.

Outstanding 

Is the service caring?

The service improved to outstanding

Details are in our Caring findings below.

Outstanding 

Is the service responsive?

The service improved to outstanding

Details are in our Responsive findings below.

Outstanding 

Is the service well-led?

The service remained outstanding

Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Outstanding 

Allcare Shropshire Limited

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

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

Inspection team

This inspection was carried out by two inspectors and an Expert 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

Allcare Shropshire Ltd is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own homes. It provides a service to older people, younger people with disabilities and people living with dementia. Not everyone using Allcare Shropshire Ltd receives the regulated activity; CQC only inspects the service being received by people provided with 'personal care'; help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do we also take into account any wider social care provided.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. 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.

Notice of inspection:

We gave the service five days' notice of the inspection visit because we wanted to speak with people using the service and the registered manager. We needed the registered manager to contact people to ask their permission for us to speak with them.

Inspection site visit activity started on 10 May 2019 and ended on 14 May 2019. We visited the office location on 13 and 14 May 2019 to see the manager and office staff; and to review care records and policies and procedures.

What we did

Before our inspection we completed our planning tool and reviewed the information we held on the service. This included notifications we had received from the provider, about incidents that affect the health, safety and welfare of people supported by the service and previous inspection reports. We also sought feedback from partner agencies and health and social care professionals. □

We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return. This is information providers are required to send us with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. This information helps support our inspections. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection, we spoke with five people who received support from Allcare Shropshire Ltd and seven relatives. We spoke with eight members of staff including the registered manager and finance manager who are the directors of Allcare Shropshire Ltd, deputy managers, senior care staff, admin and care staff.

To gather information, we looked at a variety of records. This included care plan and medicine records related to two people supported by Allcare Shropshire Ltd. We looked at information in relation to staff training and supervision records. We also looked at other information related to the management of the service including audits, surveys and meeting minutes. We did this to ensure the management team had oversight of the service and they could respond to any concerns highlighted or lead in ongoing improvements.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

People were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were protected from the risk of abuse and avoidable harm. People's comments included, "I think the carers are superb and I feel absolutely safe." And, "I can totally trust them [staff]. They look after me lovely."
- The provider had safeguarding systems and staff had received training. They were aware of their responsibility to report any concerns and explained how they would make sure people were protected from harm or abuse.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People told us the staff were extremely reliable and never missed their visits. Comments included, "They always turn up, we've never been left with no care call." And, "It's mainly the same faces who come, no strangers. I have the same regular staff whom I have got to know." And, "It's the same staff who have a good rapport with my [family]."
- The registered manager was proactive in managing risk to ensure people were safe. One person said, "I feel safe. I can't walk but the carers are always very safe and careful." Risk assessments provided information and guidance to staff.
- The registered manager provided people with easily understood leaflets to alert them about particular risks. We saw information which highlighted the risk of and safe use of paraffin based creams and reduced the risk of avoidable harm.
- The provider had procedures for staff to follow should there be an emergency. In addition, on call support was always available to assist and advise as needed. One staff member told us, "You're never on your own, there's always someone there, even if it's just a little query."

Using medicines safely

- Medicines were managed safely and in line with good practice guidance. People felt staff knew how to give medicines. One person told us, "They do my medication and it is always done correctly and recorded in the book."
- We looked at a sample of medicines records and audits. These showed medicines were given as prescribed with any errors dealt with promptly.
- Staff told us they received medicines training and had regular checks to ensure they had the skills and knowledge to give medicines safely.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were sufficient, suitably recruited staff to meet people's needs. The provider followed safe systems for recruitment of staff. Staff told us of the checks the registered manager carried out before a new member

of staff was employed. This reduced the risk of appointing somebody unsuitable.

- We saw there was a very low staff turnover with most staff working for the agency for many years. They were clearly positive about the management team, enthusiastic and supported to provide excellent care. One staff member said, "I love working here, I think I've found my calling. I worked for another company and that was all about the money, not the people. Here people really matter. We'll do whatever we can do to help them."
- People supported and staff told us there were enough staff to provide safe care at the time agreed. They said they had enough time to support people without rushing them and travel time between calls. One person said, "My carers are rarely late for visits and let me know if they are going to be late." A staff member told us, "We always have enough staff to make sure people's calls are done when they should be."

Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff had received training and followed infection control practices to reduce the risk of cross infection. They used disposable gloves and aprons when they supported people with personal care. This helped reduce the risks of cross infection. A relative told us, "The carers wear gloves and aprons and are always clean and tidy."

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Staff learnt from situations that did not go as well as they should. The management team reviewed accidents and incidents, so lessons could be learnt and the risk of similar incidents reduced.
- The management team were aware of their responsibility to report any concerns to the relevant external agencies.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence

People's outcomes were consistently better than expected compared to similar services. People's feedback described it as exceptional and distinctive.

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People received a choice of food and drink to help them maintain a balanced diet and were positive about the support they received. Comments included, "They help with my meals and ask what I would like to eat. They always leave me with drinks and a flask when they leave." And, "They always ask what I want - I have a list and I choose what I want to eat."
- An example of staff going above and beyond to support people was staff called the office to say one person's microwave was broken and they did not have a cooker. The person only had microwavable meals. Senior staff went straight into town and got a new microwave for them, so they could have a hot meal.
- Staff had received training on healthy food choices and food safety, were aware of and supported people in safe food handling practices. Staff who needed help were taught how to cook basic meals for people. This meant that staff who had limited cookery skills could provide people with a nutritious they enjoyed. One person said, "I really enjoy [carer's] cooked breakfast's. They set me up for the day. This comment was discussed at a team meeting and staff encouraged to offer other people a nourishing meal where possible. A relative said, "They're very good with meals and offer nutritional advice and seemed to promote healthy eating to help [family member] make balanced choices."
- The registered manager kept an eye out for any safety alerts and passed this onto people. An example of this an alert about the contamination of a brand of frozen foods. Staff alerted people and assisted them or checked through their freezers for this product. With people's agreement staff disposed of the suspect frozen food for two people. If this had not been removed it could have made them ill. Although this was not a routine task and took longer than the allotted hours for each person, the registered manager and staff team saw it as a necessary part of their duty of care. Neither did they charge for the extra time it took to complete this task.

Adapting service, design, decoration to meet people's needs

- Senior staff carried out risk assessments where staff were working in people's homes to make sure everyone was safe. They provided information where people wanted advice. One staff member told us "Everyone is safe. If there are any concerns I know I can just phone the office and they'll sort it straight away." People told us staff significantly improved their quality of life and wellbeing. "We feel very lucky; they are all super-efficient. They are extremely pleasant and also do small jobs for us, which really makes a difference."
- The registered manager kept a list of equipment used in people's home and dates it needed servicing. They assisted people to organise the servicing to make sure it remained safe. Staff told us one example of this was finding a hoist sling was torn. They called the office who contacted the manufacture straight away to get a new one. A relative told us, "Staff seem trained and knowledgeable about the equipment." Although

the registered manager ensuring each person's equipment was safe and serviced on time was not strictly their responsibility and could be time consuming, doing this ensured people had equipment that was safe to use.

Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support; Working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care

- We saw people were supported to access health and social care professionals in a timely manner to help support their health needs. Relatives said the service responded quickly and efficiently in emergency situations and made a difference to people ill, injured or distressed. A relative told us, "The staff here are fabulous. There have been emergencies when [family member] has been unwell. They are always cool, calm and collected. They spot symptoms quickly and they always do everything needed to deal with it." This attention to people's wellbeing helped to ensure people's health needs were met. One example was when a service user stopped breathing. The staff member carried out cardiac resuscitation until the paramedics arrived, went to the hospital with the person and waited until the relative arrived. The relative was extremely distressed and had their own health issues. The staff member contacted the management team, who arranged for their calls to be met by other staff and for the staff member to remain with the relative.
- Staff helped people to live healthy lives, by encouraging them to eat healthy food, take gentle exercise and socialise. The registered manager had provided staff and people supported with healthy eating information including on fruits and vegetables to help people get enough fluids. Staff made sure people were able to keep well hydrated, including getting fruits and drinks from the shops where people were unable to, on their way into their visits.

The registered manager had researched and produced an out and about booklet about activities available in the area. They gave this to each person to let them know what was on and even supported people to attend these. They also arranged and invited people to events such as coffee mornings. This helped reduce the risk of isolation or loneliness and improved people's wellbeing. One person met up with a friend from many years previously at an event and the friendship was rekindled. Both people lived alone and the extra interaction improved both people's wellbeing.

- Staff worked effectively with other agencies. Other professionals praised the standard of care provided and described the service as exceptional, efficient and very responsive. Staff were very proactive in arranging for prompt health and social care referrals. They supported people to appointments and worked closely with health and social care professionals. They provided relevant information and followed advice to ensure people's needs were met. They also supported people where they needed assistance with equipment or other issues.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- Staff carried out robust assessments of people's needs, fully involving the person and their representatives. The pre-admission process was person-centred and made sure the service could meet the person's needs.
- Staff reviewed care plan records and updated them with people when changes occurred, so they identified people's current needs. People's care and support was planned proactively and in partnership with them. They told us they felt consulted and listened to about how their care was delivered. One person had written their own care plan which staff followed. A staff member said, "Care plans are very good, very thorough and easy to use with lots of personal preferences as well as care needs."
- Staff researched and applied learning effectively in line with best practice. This assisted them to provide care that met people's needs and preferences. The management team referenced current legislation, standards and evidence-based guidance to achieve effective outcomes.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff had received induction and thorough training relevant to their role and continually improved their skills and knowledge. Staff told us they were taught basic care such as how to wash and shave people on their classroom induction, so they did so correctly when they supported people. One staff member said, "I've never had such an intensive induction. It was extremely thorough." All staff supporting anyone with complex needs were trained in all aspects of their care before they could support them. A staff member said, "If I feel like I need specific training, I can just ask and I will get it."
- The management team provided support and supervision to staff to help them provide effective and up to date care. Staff told us they were approachable and available for advice. All staff spoken with said they received excellent support from the registered manager. One staff member told us, "I am really happy here. The support is great."
- Staff had yearly appraisal with people supported, colleagues and senior staff providing a 360 degree assessment and viewpoint. One staff member said, "It is really interesting and gives you other people's views of your work, not just your manager."

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

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.

- We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, We saw the staff team provided care that was following the MCA.
- People had been asked for consent to decisions where they were able to give this. One person told us, "Staff always ask consent before they do anything and they seem very well trained." Where people were unable to make a particular decision, staff were involved in decision making, to ensure any decisions were in the person's best interests.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect

People were truly respected and valued as individuals; and empowered as partners in their care in an exceptional service

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- People's preferences and the support needed to maintain their individuality, diversity and independence were recorded in their care plans and helped staff to deliver the right support. We found staff, without exception, provided outstanding care and support that focused on people's individual needs, preferences and routines.
- Staff respected people's human rights. The management team had made sure the agency information showed they welcomed and respected people who were LGBT+ or had other diverse needs. Welcome packs had LGBT rainbow picture on the front cover plus additional information inside the pack explaining how they welcomed people with diverse needs including cultural, religious or sexual orientation. There were several leaflets and posters in the office signposting information for people on different support services and interest groups. All staff had received equality and diversity and values based training. They told us the specific help and support they would give in a variety of scenarios. People told us the staff were non-judgemental. We saw staff supported one person who had a less common religion with their specific beliefs.
- Every person supported and relative spoken with were exceptionally praising of the care and support received. People told us they looked forward to the staff visiting and thoroughly enjoyed their company. One person said, "I am so happy and at ease with all of my carers. I would be lost without them. They really are the best." Another person stated, "My carers are exceptionally good. They know me so well, what I need and how I want it doing." A relative told us, "We can't recommend them highly enough. [Family member] knows and has a wonderful rapport with them all. I have great confidence and trust in them which is very important as I live away."
- We were repeatedly told of occasions where staff had exceeded what was expected of them. They carried out extra, thoughtful acts, not part of the person's care package, in their own time. One person said, "They are exceptionally caring and they always do little extras, anything they can to help." There were numerous examples of staff choosing to take people out for meals or taking meals to them in their own time. These included:
 - A staff member arranged a surprise party for one person's birthday, inviting the friends the person used to go out with. She appeared to thoroughly enjoy it and sent a letter in thanking the staff member for organising the party saying, "Thank you for everything, a day I shall remember for a long time."
 - One person had a hospital appointment and no one to take them. A staff member took the person saying they were going with a family member anyway so it was no problem.
 - A staff member took one person who is an avid Shrewsbury supporter, to watch Shrewsbury in the play-offs at Wembley stadium. This trip would not have been able to happen for this person, without the staff member offering to go in their own time and booking the transport and tickets.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- Staff encouraged people to express their views and opinions and supported people to make choices and decisions. They were involved in planning how their care was given. Where people had limited communication, or chose to include them, their families or representatives were also involved in decision making. One person said, "I feel they involve me a lot to make my own decisions and explain to me if I don't quite get it." A relative told us, "It is a real comfort to know [family member] has such excellent care and staff keep me very well informed. I know [family member] is really happy with them."
- People could contact independent advocacy services if they wanted guidance and support or for an advocate to act on their behalf. The service provided people with contact details. This enabled people to have an independent voice.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- The registered manager asked people to say what being treated with dignity meant to them. Once she had their answers she organised a social event to talk about this with people supported and staff, so they could discuss together how they felt their care could be improved. Although people were positive about their care, small actions were added to care routines. This included using a bell to give one person more privacy when using the bathroom, but staff still able to hear when they were ready for them.
- Staff were respectful of people's privacy, dignity and independence. They were supportive and sensitive to people's needs. People were extremely complimentary about the way they were supported. Comments included, "Care is done to an excellent standard and I am always left feeling fresh. They are considerate and respect my privacy too. I can't fault any of them." And, "The staff are kind and caring and they show respect for us and our home. There is real thought for privacy and dignity and we are involved in decisions about the care."
- Staff were sensitive and respectful when talking about the people they supported. People's care records were kept securely and their confidentiality respected.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs

Services were tailored to meet the needs of individuals and delivered to ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care.

Planning personalised care to meet people's needs, preferences, interests and give them choice and control

- People we spoke with consistently praised the way staff responded to changes and obstacles and supported them in their views and wishes. We saw staff responded to and managed difficulties promptly and proactively. People told us staff went the extra mile for them and were more than willing to support them, even outside their contracted hours.
- Examples included; A relative of one person's partner suddenly became seriously ill. However, they were unable leave their partner on their own while they visited them. One of the staff team who supported the person went to the house in their own time to sit with the person, so the partner could visit their relative. Another person was going away for Christmas when their washing machine broke. They had no family to help and needed clean clothes. A member of staff took the washing home, washed it, dried it and took it back ready for the person's holiday.
- Staff encouraged people to communicate their choices and decisions and supported them to have as much control and independence as possible. They encouraged people to be socially active and access the community. The registered manager told us, "Rather than saying they can't do something, we try to see how we can make something work." Staff told us they offer to take people shopping if possible rather than just do the shopping for them. They go for walks with people living with dementia who like to go outside rather than stay in. One staff member said, "As long as we do the risk assessment we can."
- One person told staff they would like to know where a family member had been buried many years ago. A staff member researched and found the family member had been buried overseas. They found out where the grave was and arranged for a photograph of the grave to be given to the person. They were so happy to have this.
- The registered manager provided 'what's on' information to people and organised social activities and events such as coffee mornings, afternoon teas and other events. People supported were invited and the service provided transport so they could get there. We saw the registered manager had been a 'shining light' in developing and running a fortnightly dementia drop in centre. They were also very proactive in encouraging people to become dementia friends and to make the village dementia friendly. This helped local people to understand more about dementia and people living with dementia to go about their routines safely.

From August 2016 onwards, all organisations that provide adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard (AIS). The standard sets out a specific, consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting the information and communication support needs of people who use services. The standard applies to people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss and in some circumstances to their carers.

- The registered manager was aware of the accessible information standard. Staff knew the ways each person communicated and recorded this in care plans. This made sure people with a disability or sensory loss were given information in a way they could understand. They used small pictures on the front of care plans so staff knew at a glance if a person had sight or hearing impairment, mobility problems or dementia. This helped on initial meeting.
- People told us communication from staff and management was exceptionally good and very frequent. One person said of the staff, "They are wonderful and always take the time to explain things to me." A relative told us, "I find the communication is excellent. It really works well as [family member] has problems with communication. We all share information and I find it really helpful."

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- Complaints information was available for people and their representatives. People told us they felt safe expressing any concerns with the registered manager and were encouraged to discuss any issues. They added, even minor concerns were encouraged. They were confident any concerns would be dealt with quickly and any changes needed would be made but had no complaints. One person said, "We have no worries or concerns at all. I have never had any reason to complain. I know how to, if I did want to and I think they would respond quickly." Another person told us, "I have never had any cause for complaint. I would recommend them to anyone, as we feel very fortunate to have them as our care company."
- Staff encouraged people to discuss any concerns, however minor. The registered manager kept a record of minor concerns that they used as a learning opportunity to improve the service.

End of life care and support

- Staff spoke of people at end of life fondly and were highly motivated to provide the best possible care. Several staff had volunteered to complete in-depth end of life training and be available to support people heading towards the end of life. The assisted people to stay at home supported by familiar staff they knew. A relative whose family member was supported as they headed to end of life praised the staff for their readiness to respond to changes or any difficulties encountered. They said, "It's [family members one wish to stay at home with the same carers to look after [them] to the end. The manager is working to make this happen."
- Staff understood the importance of supporting people to have a comfortable, pain-free and peaceful end of life and provided thoughtful and sensitive care. People's end of life wishes were recorded so staff knew how to meet these. They also supported the person's family and each other during and after the person passed away.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Well-Led – this means we looked for evidence that service leadership, management and governance assured high-quality, person-centred care; supported learning and innovation; and promoted an open, fair culture

Service leadership was exceptional and distinctive. Leaders and the service culture they created drove and improved high-quality, person-centred care.

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support with openness; and how the provider understands and acts on duty of candour responsibility

- At the last inspection the service was rated as outstanding in well-led. On this inspection they continued to provide an outstandingly well-led service. People had great confidence in the company and the care provided. One person said, "We feel very lucky to have care from this company. I can't suggest any improvements at all as we are very happy with the care. We are kept well informed and the care is very, very good."
- The registered manager was one of the directors of Allcare Shropshire Ltd. They were passionate about supporting older people and people living with dementia and had created a team of enthusiastic and dedicated staff. They encouraged and rewarded high performance and innovation and developed an open and supportive working culture. They continuously encouraged staff to innovate and develop the support the agency provided and to give the highest possible care.
- The management team were open and transparent. People told us they felt able to approach the registered manager or anyone from the office at any time. They added they were easy to talk with and available when they wanted to talk.
- The management team understood the duty of candour responsibility and supported people affected and staff if something went wrong.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- The registered manager was committed to engaging with people who received or were considering receiving care from Allcare Shropshire Ltd. They had actively sought to create stronger links with the community to benefit people using their service. They had been very involved in making Pontesbury a successful dementia friendly village. This helped increase the safety, support and involvement of people living with dementia in village activities and facilities.
- Allcare Shropshire Ltd had developed and helped run regular dementia drop in sessions for carers and people living with dementia. They had added a drop-in session in a different location, so they could reach more people. They also ran free dementia awareness sessions, to increase the knowledge of local people and businesses.
- The management team continued to use the office as a centre for a lot of community support activities including fundraising events and social events. These had been increased since the last inspection, including Remembrance Sunday events and other celebrations. This encouraged people to enjoy companionship and reduce any feelings of isolation. Refreshments, transport and activities were provided and staff were available to answer questions. Local residents of the area were also invited.

- People told us the management team proactively sought, listened to and promptly responded to the views of those involved with the service. This included using informal discussions, events, reviews, face to face and telephone checks and questionnaires. One person told us, "We have frequent questionnaires. And we are given lots of opportunity for feedback with the surveys and things." They added, "You can always ring them and get through to someone. I can't ask for better." Another person said, "I can't say anything needs to improve and I would recommend them." A relative said, "I am sent regular surveys for comments and I do feel that our views are heard. There are regular reviews as well and opportunity to give feedback."
- Staff told us the registered manager had an open door and listened to any suggestions, requests or concerns. They said they had regular newsletters, team and individual meetings and other opportunities to share ideas and updates on changes in care. Staff members related instances where the registered manager had gone over and above in supporting people in both work related and personal issues. They said they always responded promptly, positively and gave valid reasons if any request had to be refused. Comments from staff included, "I can come to them with any concerns, the door is always open, they're approachable, very supportive and they respect confidentiality." And, "It's one of the most supportive jobs I've had. The managers really care about the staff, they're all lovely." And, "They [managers] are very good at what they do, I couldn't go to another company, I wouldn't want to."

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The service was extremely organised. There was a clear and supportive staffing structure and lines of responsibility and accountability. Staff were highly competent and experienced. There was very low staff turnover and staff were highly motivated. A staff member said, "I can't fault the company, I love it." A relative told us, "I would happily recommend them, in fact I have done. They are an exceptionally well-run company."
- The service had effective systems of structured internal audits and checks. They were also audited by an external company who rated them well above the national average. They highlighted Allcare Shropshire Ltd had very strong and clear values and behaviours and a very good culture of recognising people's contributions and sharing successes. These systems assisted staff to provide people with high-quality personalised care which met their needs and preferences.
- The registered manager provided excellent leadership and staff were clear about their role. They had made plans for the future of the service, for when they stepped back a little and were no longer as actively involved day to day. Staff were aware of the plans to 'future proof' the service. Staff felt included, confident and supported in making suggestions. They told us they could call into the office any time for advice and support.
- The management team followed current and relevant legislation along with best practice guidelines. They understood legal obligations, including conditions of CQC registration and those of other organisations.
- Ratings from the previous CQC inspection were displayed in the office.

Continuous learning and improving care

- The registered manager focused on continuously reviewing and improving the service. They were extremely proactive in encouraging people to discuss how their support could be improved and to make comments, concerns or complaints. They dealt with these personally, promptly and to each person's satisfaction and appreciation.
- The systems to monitor the quality of the service were robust and effective. The registered manager acted on any errors or omissions raised or found on audits to help them further improve care.
- The registered manager reviewed accidents and incidents to see if lessons could be learnt and improvements made and shared these with the staff team.

Working in partnership with others

- We saw evidence of Allcare Shropshire Ltd working closely and extremely effectively with other organisations and groups and promoting dementia awareness. The registered manager had encouraged many staff and local people to become dementia friends. She had been a 'leading light' in the local village becoming dementia friendly and liaised with other health and care professions.
- Partner agencies found the service provided high-quality, excellent support, worked in partnership, followed advice and current good practice and provided safe care.