

Universal Care Services (UK) Limited

Universal Care Services

Corby

Inspection report

31 Everest Lane
Corby
Northamptonshire
NN17 1PS

Tel: 01536211089
Website: www.universalcareservices.co.uk

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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?	Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Universal Care Services Corby provides personal care to people living in their own home. At the time of our inspection there were 120 people receiving care from the service. At the last inspection, in May 2015, the service was rated Good. At this inspection we found that the service remained overall Good but that there were some areas for improvement.

The systems in place to monitor the quality and performance of the service were not always effectively acted upon. People were regularly asked for their feedback about the service but did not always feel action was taken to address any shortfalls.

People continued to receive safe care. Staff were appropriately recruited and there were enough staff to provide care and support to people to meet their needs. People were consistently protected from the risk of harm and received their prescribed medicines safely.

The care that people received continued to be effective. Staff had access to the support, supervision and training that they required to work effectively in their roles. People were supported to maintain good health and nutrition.

People developed positive relationships with the staff who were caring and treated people with respect, kindness and courtesy. People had detailed personalised plans of care in place to enable staff to provide consistent care and support in line with people's personal preferences. People knew how to raise a concern or make a complaint and the provider had implemented effective systems to manage any complaints that they may receive.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

<p>Is the service safe?</p> <p>The service remains good</p>	<p>Good ●</p>
<p>Is the service effective?</p> <p>The service remains effective</p>	<p>Good ●</p>
<p>Is the service caring?</p> <p>The service remains good</p>	<p>Good ●</p>
<p>Is the service responsive?</p> <p>The service remains good</p>	<p>Good ●</p>
<p>Is the service well-led?</p> <p>The service was not consistently well- led and requires improvement</p> <p>The systems in place to monitor the quality and performance of the service were not always effectively acted upon when shortfalls were highlighted.</p> <p>Feedback from people was not always acted upon.</p> <p>People and staff had overall confidence in the management of the service and felt they were treated as individuals.</p>	<p>Requires Improvement ●</p>

Universal Care Services Corby

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 checked 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 was an unannounced comprehensive inspection that was completed by one inspector and an expert-by-experience on 26, 27 and 28 April and 2 May 2017. An expert-by-experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Prior to our inspection we reviewed information we held about the service. This included previous inspection reports, information received and statutory notifications. A notification is information about important events which the provider is required to send us by law. We also contacted social and healthcare professionals who visited the service, and commissioners who fund the care for some people using the service, and asked them for their views.

During our inspection we spoke with 13 people who used the service and 12 members of staff including the registered manager. We also spoke with nine people's relatives.

We looked at records and charts relating to five people and three staff recruitment records. We looked at other information related to the running of and the quality of the service. This included quality assurance audits, training information for care staff, staff duty rotas and arrangements for managing complaints.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People received care from a team of staff who strived to provide consistent care and support. The recruitment process ensured that staff were suitable for their role and staffing levels were responsive to people's needs. People told us that they had regular staff that generally arrived on time and stayed for the agreed time. One relative told us "The staff are on time and are always cheerful." However, there were a number of people who told us that their call times had varied overtime to what had been agreed and that not all staff stayed for the time agreed. We spoke to the provider about this who was aware that at times calls had varied; they had taken steps to address this by introducing an electronic call monitoring system which recorded when staff arrived and left a call, this enabled the provider to address with individual staff why a call time may have varied. Staff rotas had been revised to ensure that staff had regular set people and times they visited. We saw from the staff rotas that staff had fairly static rotas and staff confirmed that they had a regular set of people they cared for.

Risks to people had been assessed and staff were able to describe to us how they provided the care and support people needed to keep them safe. We saw that where a risk had identified that someone needed two people to support them, such as if they needed support to move from their bed to a chair that two staff were always rostered to support them. The provider had a clear safeguarding procedure and staff were knowledgeable about the steps to take if they were concerned. One member of staff told us "I would report any concerns to the office and they report to the local authority." Safeguarding notifications to the local authority had been raised when required and investigations had been completed in a timely manner.

People told us that they always received their prescribed medicines and the medicines management systems in place were clear and consistently followed. One member of staff told us "We are aware that we have time critical calls which we must keep to ensure that people receive their medicine at the required time." We confirmed that rotas reflected the time intervals needed between calls to ensure people received their medicines at the appropriate time.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People received care from staff that were knowledgeable and had received the training and support they needed. Staff training was relevant to their role and equipped them with the skills they needed to care and support people living in their own homes. All staff had regular supervision and appraisal; one staff member said "[Name of registered manager] is very good; she always listens to you and supports you with things." Another member of staff said "I am able to talk about any training I need in supervision."

People were encouraged to make decisions about their care and their day to day routines and preferences. One relative told us "The carer adjusted the times of two of our visits to meet [name of relative] needs." Staff had a good understanding of service users' rights regarding choice. Detailed assessments had been conducted to determine people's ability to make specific decisions and staff understood the principles of the Mental Capacity Act. Where appropriate people's relative's had applied to the court of protection to seek power of attorney. One person told us "The staff always ask me what clothes I want to put on and what I want to eat; they always check if I need anything else."

People were supported to maintain a healthy balanced diet and those at risk of not eating and drinking enough received the support that they required to maintain their nutritional intake. People had regular access to healthcare professionals and staff were vigilant to changes in people's health. Any changes in people's health were recognised by staff and prompt and appropriate referrals were made to healthcare professionals.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People developed positive relationships with staff and were treated with kindness and respect. One person told us "The staff are kind, gentle and respectful." A relative told us "I am very happy with the care that [name of relative] is given, they treat them with respect and recognise me as the main carer; there is a nice rapport."

People told us they felt happy and relaxed with the staff. One person said "The staff speak nicely to me and we have a laugh and a joke." A relative told us "We always have a chat and a good giggle at times which is good for me." We observed that staff knew people well and engaged in meaningful conversation. People told us that their choices in relation to their daily routines and activities were listened to and respected by staff; for example one person attended a day centre so call times had been agreed to ensure they were up and dressed in time for the transport to pick them up. Staff described to us how they treated people as individuals and listened to them and respected their wishes.

People were treated with dignity and respect. Staff were able to describe how they protected people's dignity. One member of staff said "I will always ask relative's to leave the room when I do personal care and make sure the person is covered up; I talk them through what I am doing."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People received care that met their individual needs. A range of assessments had been completed for each person and detailed care plans had been developed with people and where appropriate their relatives. Staff knew people well; they understood the person's background and knew what care and support they needed. One staff member said "We have regular people we care for which gives you the opportunity to get to know people and their families." Another member of staff told us about supporting someone with limited communication and being able to get to know them and understand the way they communicated.

People and their relatives knew how to make a complaint if they needed and were confident that their concerns would be listened to. One person told us "I feel that if I have to complain I am listened to." A relative said "I would ring the office if I had a concern, they would listen sure they would; the office staff phone here sometimes to see if all is well." We saw that there was a clear policy in place and records were maintained of all issues raised with the registered manager and detailed the action they had taken.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Quality assurance systems were in place to help drive improvements. These included a number of internal checks and audits and 'spot checks' and people were regularly asked for their feedback about the service. However, the information gathered did not appear to always be acted upon. For example a number of people told us that their call times had changed without their agreement and that carers did not always spend the time they were allocated. Although people had regular carers during the week they felt that at weekends in particular they did not always know who was coming or what time someone was coming. People told us they had fed-back to the provider when they had been asked but did not feel generally that this had been addressed. One person told us "I am not happy with the staff not staying the full time, but it is a waste of time telling the manager, they don't listen so I have to put up with it." We spoke to the registered manager and provider about this and they assured us that they were taking steps to address this. We saw that a new care plan was being introduced and was to be reviewed with people to ensure that their needs were being appropriately met at the times they needed; and there was a programme of recruitment in place to recruit more weekend staff to provide a more consistent service at the weekends. The provider needed to ensure that they consistently addressed any issues raised.

Although staff felt supported and that individually they were able to speak to the registered manager with any suggestions or concerns, there was no opportunity for the staff to come together to share best practice and explore together ways to improve the service. The provider needed to ensure that there were opportunities for all staff to contribute to the development and improvement of the service.

People were positive about the registered manager and staff members felt that they were always friendly and approachable. When we asked people whether they would recommend the service the majority of people said they would. Staff too felt they provided a good service to people and felt encouraged by such initiatives as 'Employee of the Month.'