

J & S Health Care Services Ltd

3 Broadway Chambers

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service well-led?

Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats. It provides a service to older people, some of whom may be living with dementia. On the day of our inspection the service had 11 care packages.

There was a registered manager in post. 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.

We previously carried out an announced inspection of the service on the 25 June and 9 July 2018. During this inspection we found concerns about the safe recruitment of staff. This was due to the lack of references for staff employed by the service. The service was rated as requires improvement with a breach in Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulation 2014.

Following on from our inspection the provider sent us an action plan, which set out what they would do to meet the legal requirements in relation to the breach and to improve the service.

On the 23 and 24 October 2018 we carried out a focussed inspection of the service due to concerns raised by the local authority who had visited at the beginning of October 2018. We also checked to see if the service had implemented their action plan and to establish whether they now met the legal requirements.

During this inspection we inspected against two of the five questions we ask about services, is it safe and is it well led. Although we found some improvements had been made we could not be assured this would be sustained and therefore we have continued the breach of Regulation, 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. The service remains with a rating of requires improvement in both domains as sufficient improvements had not been made.

Improvements were needed to the recruitment process. The registered manager had obtained appropriate checks for the current care workers but we found they had started work prior to receiving them all. Care worker's references could not be verified as they were not on headed paper or stamped by the company providing the reference.

People told us they felt safe, and except for the shortfalls identified in the recruitment process, were protected from the risk of harm by the systems, processes and practices in the service. Care workers were trained and felt well supported, and knew how to safeguard people.

The registered manager, who is also the provider, operations manager and the office manager was supporting with the direct delivery of care whilst they continued to recruit more staff but this has meant a reduced capacity to ensure that all aspects of the management and monitoring of the service was being

handled as robustly as needed. This had led to a breach of regulation in relation to recruitment of staff.

There were systems in place for managing people's medicines. Care workers had access to personal protective equipment and were trained in infection control.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

The service was not consistently safe.

Care workers were not always safely recruited. The appropriate checks had not always been completed before the person started work.

Risks were not always adequately assessed to ensure people were supported to stay safe.

There were systems and processes in place to help ensure people received their medication as prescribed.

People were protected from the risk of infection due to the service's infection control practices.

The registered manager shared investigation and audit information with care workers and ensured that improvements were made and lessons were learnt.

Is the service well-led?

Requires Improvement ●

The service was not consistently well led.

The registered manager/provider were delivering care which unfortunately led to concerns and a breach of regulation regarding the safe recruitment of staff. There were also further weaknesses in other records such as risk assessments.

People had confidence in how the service was run. They knew the registered manager well and told us they would recommend the service to others.

Care workers were supported and worked together with the registered manager to provide people with good care.

The service worked well with other professionals to ensure people received appropriate support.

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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 took place on 23 October 2018 and 24 October 2018 and was announced at short notice to ensure the registered manager was available. It was carried out by two inspectors. Another inspector made phone calls to people who use the service for feedback about the service.

Before the inspection we had been in contact with a representative from the local authority. They told us about concerns they had identified during their visit at the beginning of the month.

We spoke with four people, two relatives, the registered manager, operations manager and one care worker. We reviewed four people's care files and five recruitment records. We also looked at the service's medication, quality assurance and complaints systems and at care worker's training records.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

When we visited this service in June 2018 we had concerns around the safe recruitment of staff and lack of detailed risk assessments. The provider had subsequently forwarded us an action plan outlining how they would ensure they were meeting this regulation. We found that some improvements had been made however, we still found that further improvements were necessary. Therefore, the breach of regulation still stands and the requires improvement rating.

We requested the current care workers staff files to enable us to establish if the service was recruiting people safely. We were told that a lot of staff had either left recently or not started work due to the correct paperwork being in place. The local authority had recently visited the service and found that several staff did not have the correct paperwork in place. For example, no references, or DBS checks, therefore the service had terminated these staff's employment. The five staff files we looked at on our inspection four of these had references and DBS checks carried out. However, the operation manager who was also a director had not had a recent DBS check carried out and did not have a completed application form and was carrying out care visits. The registered manager told us they would apply for the DBS immediately and the operation manager said they would complete an application during the inspection.

This was a breach of Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

We looked at three care plans and found some of the risk assessments were not adequate enough in covering all of the risks to people. For example, there were no environmental risk assessments in place for two of the people's care plans we looked at. However, the risk assessments that had been completed were comprehensive in detail. We discussed our findings with both managers who then showed us on the computer a fourth care plan with clear comprehensive risk assessments covering all aspects of risk. One of the directors had been recently employed as the operations manager and their job was to review all the care plans and ensure the documentation was relevant and up to date. However, because they had been supporting the registered manager carrying out care calls this had fallen behind.

There were systems and processes in place to safeguard people from abuse. People told us they felt safe when their care workers were in their homes. One person said, "Yes, I always feel safe they are all really nice and kind." Another person told us, "I feel safe as they look after me nothing is too much trouble they always ask if they can do anything else before they leave." A relative said, "They never rush [name of relative] they always ensure she has everything she needs. They are very good definitely safe good care."

The registered manager and the two current care workers had received training in safeguarding people and demonstrated a knowledge of the services procedures on how to keep people safe and protect them from the risk of harm. They knew to inform the local authority and/or CQC.

We did not look at the management in people's homes of medicines on this inspection. However, people we spoke to told us that staff supported them to take their medicines and that they had never had any missed

visits therefore, receiving their medication at the times specified. There was a policy and procedure in place and a system had been set up to manage medicines. The registered manager and care workers had access to medication guidance. Staff had been trained and six monthly competency assessments were carried out to ensure they were following safe medication practices.

The service provided care workers with appropriate protective equipment to enable them to minimise the risk of infection. There were policies and procedures in place that clearly informed care workers of the best way to minimise the risk of infection by frequent hand washing. People said that their care workers were very particular about washing their hands and that they used fresh protective clothing when providing them with care.

The registered manager understood their responsibility to record safety incidents and near misses. They told us they monitored accidents and incidents and would analyse the information and share it with care workers at team meetings.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

During our last inspection we had concerns around recruitment and risk assessments being in place. On this inspection although some improvements had been made further improvements were necessary. Therefore, this is still rated as requires improvement.

The registered manager/provider were working alongside care staff to complete visits to people they were caring for. This had unfortunately led to concerns and a breach of regulation regarding the safe recruitment of staff. Further weaknesses had also been noted in other records such as risk assessments. Although it was clear that the service and staff were delivering good quality care, this would be very difficult to maintain with their current way of working. People would be at risk should the service expand further if the systems in place could not be sustained.

There was no documentation of any training for staff who carried out care calls to people who were living with diabetes or required stoma care. The registered manager told us they supported staff on these visits and coached staff however, these observations were not formerly recorded. Therefore, we could not be sure that staff were fully competent to carry out care calls to people living with these conditions if the registered manager was unable to support them. We spoke to the registered manager who told us they would formerly record observations of practice and audit staffs level of competency and consider accessing some external training.

People told us they felt safe in care workers presence and there were clear whistle blowing, safeguarding and complaints procedures in place and care workers were confident about implementing them. The registered manager explained how they kept people safe and care workers knew how to protect people from the risk of harm.

The registered manager and operations manager were highly thought of by the people they supported during care visits. Comments included, "The manager visits me they are very professional and really do care" and "I have both of the managers visit together, they are very friendly. I feel that they have set a high standard of care they expect their other staff to follow."

The registered manager worked in partnership with other organisations to ensure people receive the care and support they needed. They had worked together with other professionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, GP's and district nurses. This ensured that people received the right support to enable them to have a better quality of life.

People's personal records were stored in the own homes and were easily accessible to staff. The registered manager told us that they did not have a hard copy of the paper care and support files in the office as all documentation was stored on the service's password protected computer system. There were policies and procedures in place for dealing with confidential data and care workers were trained, and knew who they could, and could not share confidential information with. This ensured that people's confidential information was protected in line with data security standards.

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Personal care	Regulation 19 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Fit and proper persons employed safe recruitment processes were not being followed no references or DBS checks for staff that had commenced employment