

Hartwig Care Limited

Hartwig Care Ltd - 5 Ella Mews

Inspection report

5 Ella Mews
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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Hartwig Care Limited is a domiciliary care agency that provides personal care to people in their own homes. The people who used the service had a variety of care needs and included elderly and frail people and those with learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, the agency provided care to approximately 480 people across three London boroughs. Not everyone who used the service received personal care. CQC only inspects where people receive personal care. This is help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do, we also consider any wider social care provided.

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

Before this inspection, we received concerns about allocating and monitoring care visits for people who used the service. We were also told that there was limited support for care and office staff, and that the service was not always following guidelines on COVID-19 safety. During this inspection, we identified that the service had been experiencing some shortfalls in how care visits were scheduled and monitored. We made a recommendation about it.

Overall, the care and office staff told us they felt supported by their managers during the COVID-19 pandemic. This included appropriate training, supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) and the managers always being available to guide and support. Overall, both the care and the office staff thought the service supported them when they had to self-isolate due to the COVID-19 risks. A few staff said this support was not sufficient. We fed this back to the members of the senior management team.

We reviewed infection control processes and procedures at the service. Overall, we were assured that these were sufficient to protect people and staff during the coronavirus pandemic. When people, relatives, or the staff identified shortfalls in infection prevention and control, the managers addressed this.

At this visit, we identified the service needed to make improvements in relation to the management of high-risk medicines. We made a recommendation about this. The service managed other aspects of medicines management well, and people received their medicines as prescribed.

The service had appropriate safeguarding procedures in place to protect people from abuse. The service recruited staff safely, and staff received safeguarding training to help them recognise different types of abuse. The service assessed risks to people's health and well-being. We highlighted to the senior management team that some risk assessments needed more personalisation to reflect specific risks for specific individuals. When an accident or incident happened, staff notified the service about it, and respective managers acted to ensure people were safe.

Overall, people and their relatives spoke positively about the care staff and the managers at the service. They thought care staff were kind and caring, and people felt comfortable in their presence. People had care plans describing their care needs and preferences. We noted that some care plans needed more information

on specific aspects of care for individual people. People and relatives told us that some staff, who did not visit people regularly, would benefit from more information about people before visiting for the first time. We fed this back to the managers at the service.

People, relatives and care staff said that overall, it was easy to contact the service when they needed support and advice.

The managers undertook a range of quality checks to ensure people were supported as agreed. We noted that the senior management team knew about most shortfalls highlighted by us during this inspection and acted on improvements.

External health and care professionals said Hartwig provided effective care to people, and when they identified issues with care, the managers acted on improvements to ensure people received safe care.

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

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was good (published 01 February 2019).

Why we inspected

We received information of concern about following COVID-19 safety guidelines, scheduling and monitoring of care visits and care and support provided for staff at the service. A decision was made for us to undertake a focused inspection to examine these concerns by reviewing the key questions of safe and Well-led.

We reviewed the information we held about the service. No areas of concern were identified in the other key questions. We, therefore, did not inspect these. Ratings from previous comprehensive inspections for those key questions were used in calculating the overall rating at this inspection.

We have found evidence that the provider needs to make some improvements. We made two recommendations about management of high risk medicines and care visits planning and staff allocation. Please see the safe sections of this full report.

The overall rating for the service has remained good. This is based on the findings at this inspection.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection by selecting the 'all reports' link for Hartwig Care Ltd - 5 Ella Mews on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If we receive any concerning information we may inspect sooner.

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 always safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-Led findings below.

Hartwig Care Ltd - 5 Ella Mews

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. We checked 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, one pharmacy inspector, one nurse specialist advisor and six Experts by Experience (ExE's). 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

Hartwig Care Ltd - 5 Ella Mews is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats and specialist housing.

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

This inspection was unannounced.

Inspection activity started on 8 April 2021 and ended on 13 April 2021. We visited the office location on 8 April 2021.

What we did before the inspection

Before the inspection, 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 also reviewed information we received about the service since our previous inspection. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 6 members of staff including the operations director, two managers including the registered manager, one care calls monitoring officer, one field supervisor and care manager.

We reviewed 28 people's care records, which included care plans, risk assessments and multiple medicines records. We also looked at 8 newly employed staff files in relation to recruitment, and a variety of records relating to the management of the service.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate the evidence found. We looked at training data and quality assurance records. Our Experts by Experience spoke with 74 people using the service and 29 family members. We received further feedback from 56 staff employed by the service and four professionals who regularly work with the service.



Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At the last inspection this key question was rated as good. At this inspection this key question has now deteriorated to requires improvement. This meant some aspects of the service were not always safe and there was limited assurance about safety. There was an increased risk that people could be harmed.

Using medicines safely

● Care plans were in place to help guide staff to support people's medical and health needs. However, we found three people who were prescribed anticoagulants. These people's care plans did not have guidance for staff to help staff monitor and manage the side effects of these medicines. Anticoagulants are high-risk medicines that help prevent blood clots.

We found no evidence that people had been harmed. However, the lack of sufficient guidance for staff on high-risk medicines could lead to unsafe care. We recommend that the provider consider current guidance on the safe management of high-risk medicines and update their practice accordingly.

- There were some gaps in the Medicine Administration Records (MAR) we reviewed. These were infrequent, and the managers identified them during the monthly audit of the MARs. The service took appropriate action on improvements to make sure medicines were given as prescribed.
- The service had carried out medicines' assessments. This included information related to the level of assistance needed for medicines by people using the service.
- Information was available for people using the service in assessments to ascertain if staff, service users or their family were responsible for ordering, transporting or returning medicines from the community pharmacy.
- Some people were prescribed 'as and when required' medicines (PRN) Guidance in the form of protocols was in place to help staff give these medicines consistently.
- There was a medicine policy in place.
- There was a process in place to report medicine incidents and errors.
- Staff members were competency assessed and received training to handle medicines safely.

Staffing and recruitment

- The service needed to review their process around care visits allocation and monitoring to ensure all care visits took place in line with people's needs and staff availability.
- Staff scheduling and allocation in the Borough of Hackney needed to improve. Six out of seven people and two out of four family members we spoke with and who Hartwig supported in this borough reported frequent staff changes, poor staff punctuality, and shorter visits than planned. Four people said there were some occasions when staff did not turn up at all. We also received some positive feedback about staff punctuality and consistency in this borough.
- Most people and relatives receiving care from Hartwig teams providing care in the boroughs of Camden,

Barnet and for CHC (NHS continuing healthcare) and private clients told us they were happy with staff consistency and punctuality. They said there were no missed care visits. People and relatives said that staff usually arrived on time and the service informed people when staff were running late. Few people and relatives reported issues similar to people supported in Hackney. We fed this back to the management team at the service.

- Reviewed electronic calls monitoring (ECM) data confirmed shortfalls highlighted by people and their relatives. These included some calls taking place earlier or later than planned and shorter visits. Some staff were not logging in and out of their visits, making it difficult for us to ascertain if calls took place.
- We discussed highlighted shortfalls with the managers at Hartwig Care, and we could see that they were aware of issues around staff allocation and monitoring. They explained a range of complexities impacting care visits planning and staff allocation. These were related to the needs and preferences of individual people and staff and the complexities of delivering care in specific areas of London. They told us they were working on improvements. These included new staff recruitment and a recent short time self-embargo on new care packages in the borough of Hackney to ensure enough staff were available to support people.

We found no evidence that people had been harmed. However, issues around staff allocation affected people and could lead to unsafe care. We recommend the provider undertakes a review and further training on effective care visits planning and staff allocation.

- There were safe recruitment procedures in place. We reviewed files for eight staff whom the service had employed within the past 12 months. Required recruitment checks had been carried out, including employment or education history and references. Appropriate criminal records checks had been completed for all staff employed at the service.

Preventing and controlling infection

- People told us that care staff who visited them had used personal protective equipment (PPE) while visiting them. They said, "Staff put on their aprons and gloves in the hallway before they come in", and "they are all very tidy and clean, and all wear full PPE to protect me." A few people told us that some staff used PPE inconsistently or did not wear it properly. Reviewed records showed that when people or relatives informed managers about staff using PPE incorrectly, they addressed it.
- We were assured that staff received training in infection control and COVID-19 prevention measures. Staff said, "When the pandemic of Coronavirus started, I received training about it" and "We receive company updates and newsletter emails on all up to date procedures being put in place (regarding COVID-19) by Hartwig Care and the government."
- We were assured that the provider was accessing testing for staff.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy and other accompanying documents, including COVID-19 risk assessments, were up to date.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The service had a system in place for reporting and recording any accidents and incidents.
- Reported accidents and incidents had been investigated and analysed for any lessons learnt. Where required, managers supported staff through one to one conversations and additional training to ensure accidents and incidents did not reoccur.

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.

At the last inspection, this key question was rated as good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements, Continuous learning and improving care

- Before this inspection, we receive information of concern about the service. The information related to the service not always following COVID-19 safety guidance, issues around care calls allocation and monitoring and support for the office staff. At our inspection, we identified that the senior management team knew about matters related to COVID-19 safety and care visits monitoring, and they were working on improvements.
- Before, during, and shortly after this inspection, we received information that office staff were not always receiving support from their managers to complete their duties effectively. Following, we contacted and received feedback from 11 office staff. All but one told us they were clear about their roles, and they knew what the senior managers expected from them. They were happy with the support received and the opportunities the service gave them for personal and professional development. All 11 staff said they received appropriate support around office work during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The managers monitored the quality of the service delivery to ensure the required standard of care. There were a range of audits and checks carried out to ensure shortfalls were identified and addressed. Overall, the monitoring checks were sufficient as they identified most issues highlighted by the inspection team during our visit. These included medicine administration, care visits' monitoring, and individualisation of people's care plans and risk assessments. We described this in detail in the Safe section of this report.
- Overall, the care staff thought that the service was well managed. Care staff said they received enough training to support people safely. Staff could contact the service any time for guidance and with any queries. They said, "The response time has improved immensely, management is on point now, compared to a year ago. I would rate it 85% presently, there's room for change" and "Sometimes managers are busy, but there is always someone to contact. There are many ways to contact supervisors and managers. We can reach them through emails, calls, text messages or going to the office."
- Staff told us they received supervision from their managers in the form of one to one discussions or quality reviews with people who use the service. Their comments included, "I meet with my care manager regularly and speak with her on the phone if I have any concerns or if I need any advice" and "I have supervision with my manager, and if there are any concerns, they will come out and do a spot check."

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- Overall, we received positive feedback about the service provided by Hartwig Care. Although people and relatives reported shortfalls in planning and monitoring care visits, they were happy with the care staff and

the care managers overseeing people's care. People said, "They do listen to me and ask how I am when they come. Quite chatty and friendly" and "The positive thing is that the carers are really nice." Relatives told us, "Care staff go above and beyond to get to know dad, mum and me. Hartwig support me as well as my relative." and "My relative is only here because of their care; its exemplary care. I can only thank them from the bottom of my heart."

- Most people said they received support from the same staff who knew and understood people's needs. Some people and relatives thought that staff who did not support people regularly needed a more detailed induction covering what support people required before visiting. We fed this back to the management team.
- People had care plans which outlined the care they needed. We saw that people and relatives participated in care planning and reviewing.
- The service considered diversity amongst staff and people and respected their cultural and religious needs when planning and delivering care. Staff said, "We have great diversity among clients with different cultural needs. Before I visit the client, I get the information from the care plan to prepare myself, especially when his/her cultural needs are different from mine" and "We have a massively diverse workforce from all around the world. I am very proud of it. We all step in to help each other during religious or cultural festivals or religious holidays, Ramadan, Christmas, Passover and Diwali. "
- The service worked closely with staff, people and respective local authorities to support members of the diverse ethnic community amongst staff and people who used the service. This was to ensure always respectful and inclusive treatment for all people and staff at the service.

How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

- The managers understood their obligation under the duty of candour. The registered manager told us, "We need to be transparent if something happens, and make sure we report it appropriately and apologise if needed."
- Most people said they never complain about the service. When they did, this was mainly related to care visits scheduling and monitoring. Overall people said their complaints had been dealt with promptly.
- People's care records included information on people's complaints, the follow-up actions, and lessons learnt. We saw these had been used to update the person's care plan.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics; Working in partnership with others

- Care staff employed at Hartwig Care gave mixed feedback about working at this service. Most staff felt supported by their managers. They said, "My manager [name] has given me emotional support during a time for me. He called to check on me, and I appreciated it", and "My personal experience with the company is good. I do get support whenever it's needed."
- The majority of staff said they felt well supported by Hartwig Care during the COVID-19 pandemic. They said the service informed them about infection control safety measures and paid them when staff had to self-isolate due to COVID-19. Some staff felt less supported during the past 12 months. Two staff said the service did not tell them that the people they visited had COVID-19, and it worried them. Three other staff said they did not receive payment during their self-isolation. We fed this back to the senior management team and we asked them to look into it.
- People using the service were encouraged to give their feedback via visits or phone calls conversations with respective care managers. Most people confirmed they were asked about the quality of care provided by care staff. The service also carried out the quality assurance survey, with the last one taking place in October 2020. This was the first online-only survey, and 57 people responded. The survey outcome varied between the boroughs, with people using the service in Barnet being the most satisfied and in Hackney the least. The provided recognised that the response to the online-only survey was low. They told us the next

survey would also include telephone calls to people so more people and relatives could give feedback on the care they receive.

- The service worked with external health and social work professionals to ensure people received the care they needed. One person told us, "Staff had called the doctor for me when unwell and also called paramedics when they came and found I had had a fall. They waited while they got me to hospital." One staff member told us, "Where a client needs immediate nursing intervention, I immediately raise my concerns with my line manager, and the client receives outright support."

- External health and care professional spoke positively about the care provided by Hartwig. Their comments included, "The service is well run. Care Coordinators always communicate with me to ensure that service user is well cared for. The Team is proactive. If you point out that there is a need for them to improve in one way or the other, they welcome it" and "I worked with this agency on a difficult case. The agency was clear in its communication. I found them very informed and supportive. The way we worked together made the situation stabilise and safer. This was done efficiently too."