

Flexible Support Options Limited

Flexible Support Options Limited (Thorntree Way)

Inspection report

13-15 Thorntree Way
Blyth
Northumberland
NE24 4LS

Tel: 01670545568

Date of inspection visit:
19 January 2022

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08 April 2022

Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Flexible Support Options Limited (Thorntree Way) consists of two purpose built bungalows situated in a residential area of Blyth, Northumberland. It is registered to provide accommodation and personal care for up to 10 people with autism and/or a learning disability, some of whom may also have physical disabilities.

We found the following examples of good practice.

Staff used PPE safely and effectively. The service was clean and well maintained. One person who lived at the home was very knowledgeable about the additional cleaning procedures which were carried out to keep everyone safe.

Relatives spoke very positively about the communication with staff, infection control, visiting arrangements and activities provision during the pandemic. Comments included, "They always keep me informed, they phoned every day to keep me up to date. The staff are fabulous it's like a family," "She has a better social life than me, she's been at shows, panto and goes out for meals. I can't sing their praises enough they are wonderful" and "The place is nippin' [very] clean."

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

Inspected but not rated

Flexible Support Options Limited (Thorntree Way)

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.

As part of CQC's response to care homes with outbreaks of COVID-19, we are conducting reviews to ensure that the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) practice is safe and that services are compliant with IPC measures. This was a targeted inspection looking at the IPC practices the provider has in place. We also asked the provider about any staffing pressures the service was experiencing and whether this was having an impact on the service.

This inspection took place on 19 January 2022 and was announced. We gave the service 24 hours' notice of the inspection.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Staffing

- The registered manager told us they had measures in place to mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19 related staff pressures

How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?

- We were somewhat assured that the provider was preventing visitors from catching and spreading infections. We signposted the provider to additional resources in relation to recording the checks on visiting professionals who attended the service.
- We were assured that the provider was meeting shielding and social distancing guidance.
- We were assured that the provider was admitting people safely to the service.
- We were assured that the provider was using PPE effectively and safely.
- We were assured that the provider was accessing testing for people using the service and staff.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises.
- We were assured that the provider was making sure infection outbreaks can be effectively prevented or managed.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.

Visiting in care homes

Whilst visiting procedures did not fully align to government guidelines at the time of the inspection; relatives told us they were very happy with the arrangements in place. The registered manager was going to revisit the essential care givers role with people and relatives. The essential care giver role was introduced by the government in March 2021. Essential care givers should be able to visit inside the care home even during periods of isolation and outbreak to provide companionship, emotional support or carry out personal care. We also signposted the provider to additional resources to develop their approach in the recording of individualised visiting arrangements for people.

From 11 November 2021 registered persons must make sure all care home workers and other professionals visiting the service are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless they have an exemption or there is an emergency.

- The Government has announced its intention to change the legal requirement for vaccination in care homes, but the service was meeting the current requirement to ensure non-exempt staff and visiting professionals were vaccinated against COVID-19. We have however, signposted the provider to additional resources in relation to recording the checks on visiting professionals who attended the service.