

Sam2Sam Deaf Care Service Ltd

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## Inspection report

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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?	Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

Sam2Sam Deaf Care Service Ltd is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own homes in the community and in specialist housing. At the time of our inspection there were 4 people using the service who received personal care. People who used the service were deaf and were supported by staff that were also deaf.

At the last inspection on 3 February 2016 we rated the service Good. At this inspection we found that the service remained Good.

There was a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) 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.

People felt safe living in their own home and told us they felt safe with staff.

Staff received training and appropriate support to carry out their roles effectively.

Risk to people`s wellbeing were identified, regularly discussed with people and measures to mitigate the risks were regularly reviewed to ensure they were still effective.

People`s medicines were managed safely by well trained staff who had their competencies assessed. Where people were able they were supported to manage their medicines.

There were enough staff employed through robust recruitment procedures to meet people`s needs effectively.

People were involved in planning their care and support, signed their own care plans and consented to the support they received. People and staff felt the communication was excellent and staff were supported with learning through BSL videos.

People had opportunities to pursue their hobbies, interest and socialise in the community.

People`s feedback about the service they received was sought and they felt they could voice their opinions in conversations they had with staff and could use assisted technology such as face time to get their views heard.

People and staff were positive about the management of the service. There were robust systems in place to ensure the quality of the service was monitored and improved if the need was 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?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

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## **Detailed findings**

### Background to this inspection

This inspection took place on 7 and 8 March 2018 and was announced. We provided notice of the inspection because the location provides a domiciliary care service for deaf people and the staff that provides the care are also deaf. We needed to arrange for a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter to meet with staff and people who use the service to ensure they could talk with us. We also needed to ensure that records would be accessible. One inspector and a BSL interpreter undertook the inspection.

We checked the information we held about the service and the provider and saw that no concerns had been raised.

We spoke with two people who used the service and received feedback from one relative to obtain their views on the service provided. We spoke with three staff, the director, the provider and their personal assistant. The provider is also the registered manager for Sam2Sam Deaf Care Service Ltd.

We looked at the care records for two people who used the service. We reviewed three staff recruitment files and training records. We also looked at further records relating to the management of the service, including quality audits, in order to ensure that robust quality monitoring systems were in place.

## Is the service safe?

### Our findings

People told us they felt the service they received was safe and met their needs. One person said, "I feel safe, I am happy with the care I receive, [Staff] are very helpful."

Staff identified potential risks to people's health, welfare or safety and appropriately managed and mitigated risks to keep people safe. Staff told us that any changes to people's needs were reported back to the office. One staff member told us about one person that previously had a fall before Sam2Sam started to provide their support. They told us that the person was supported to de-clutter their rooms to ensure no trip hazards. The staff member confirmed that the person accesses the house freely and has not had a fall since Sam2Sam started their support. We saw in people's care plans that risk assessments for people and the environment were completed. We saw that there was clear guidance for staff on how to support people's needs.

Staff had received training about safeguarding people from harm. Staff were knowledgeable about how to identify any signs of abuse. They knew how to raise concerns, both internally and externally. One member of staff told us, "If I had any concerns I would always speak with my manager."

Safe and effective recruitment practices were followed to make sure that all staff were of good character and suitable for the roles they performed. The registered manager conducted all the necessary pre-employment and identity checks before staff were offered employment. There were enough suitably experienced, skilled and qualified staff available at all times to meet people's individual needs. Staff told us they received their rotas in plenty of time. People had been allocated regular staff to promote continuity of care. One person told us, "I have the same group of carers but sometimes they need to provide cover if someone is not able to come but that's fine." One staff member commented, "I have regular clients."

People told us staff arrived on time and if they were running late they were contacted by the office to let them know of a delay in the visiting times. One person told us, "The staff generally do come on time." One member of staff said, "Yes we have enough travel time if we are going to another call but if we are running late we always contact the office to let them know we are running late."

The provider had in place a system to monitor calls throughout the day to ensure people received their support. They confirmed that the system alerted them to any calls that were not logged into by staff. The call times were audited regularly to ensure people were receiving their calls at the correct times. People we spoke with confirmed that they received their calls on time.

There were processes in place to monitor incidents and accidents. Staff were familiar with the reporting and recording procedures. Staff understood that reporting was important to ensure that steps were taken to reduce identified and potential risks.

People who used the service told us that staff helped and supported them to take their medicines safely. Staff had been trained in the safe administration of medicines and knew how to ensure people received

their medicines safely. Staff had their competency regularly checked by the registered manager, there were also regular spot checks completed to ensure best practice. We saw that medicines were monitored and regularly audited by the registered manager.

Plans and guidance were available to help staff deal with unforeseen events and emergencies, which included relevant training such as first aid and fire safety. Regular checks were carried out to ensure that both the environment and the equipment used were well maintained to keep people safe. For example, once the initial assessment with a new service user had been completed. The registered manager with their permission, contacted the local fire brigade and if required, a new smoke alarm would be installed, this was a free service. An evacuation plan for both the person and staff were also completed to ensure their safety in the event of a fire.

## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

People who used the service were positive about the staff that provided care and support. One person told us, "Sam2Sam staff are brilliant they are a really nice team. They look after me, we go to the gym, swimming and cooking."

Staff helped, supported and encouraged people to eat a healthy balanced diet that met their needs. One person commented, "They [staff] help me with cooking healthy meals." Staff confirmed they support and encouraged them with exercising and going to the local gym.

Staff confirmed they completed a structured induction programme during which they received training relevant to their role and achieved a nationally recognised `Care Certificate`. Staff confirmed that as part of their induction they worked alongside other experienced colleagues and were not permitted to work unsupervised until they were competent in their duties. Staff received training in areas such as safeguarding, medicines, health and safety, moving and handling and received additional training such as bowl management to ensure they had the correct training in place to meet individual needs. Staff were also encouraged and supported to develop themselves. One staff member told us, "The training is really good, I received the training I needed."

Staff had 'one to one' supervision and meetings where they had the opportunity to review and discuss their performance. One staff member told us, "[Registered manager] is really a wonderful person; they are just so helpful with any problems. We have team meetings and I have supervisions, I can tell [registered manager] anything. The last meeting we had we talked about things I wanted to learn and do and [registered manager] supports me."

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 were 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. At the time of our inspection, we found that the provider was working within the principles of the MCA where necessary and appropriate to the needs of the people they supported.

Staff told us they obtained people`s consent before they offered any support. One staff member said, "Choice is important as people have a right to choose what they want. I always encourage people to do what they can, it is important to encourage their independence." One person commented, "Staff always asks me what I want." One staff member said, "We encourage [name] to make choices."

Staff reviewed and documented people's needs to ensure that the care and support they provided helped people to maintain the best physical, mental and emotional health. Staff liaised with appropriate health and social care services if they felt there was a change in people`s condition. One person commented, "Staff accompanies me to my hospital appointments." We saw in people's care plans that other professionals were involved to promote people's health.

## Is the service caring?

### Our findings

People who used the service told us that staff provided support in a kind, compassionate and caring way. One person said, "I am happy with the care, they [staff] are really helpful. I feel comfortable and they listen to me and understand me." Another person commented, "I like the staff they make me feel happy, I can have fun with them."

Staff told us they had continuity with supporting the same people this gave staff and people the opportunity to develop relationships and to get to know each other well. One person said, "They [staff] are like sisters to me. I have a good laugh, we laugh a lot." One relative said, "The carers are deaf themselves and they really understand my [relative]. They treat my [relative] like they are their [relative]."

People we spoke with confirmed that staff promoted their independence and supported them to live at home. People told us that staff were kind and caring and confirmed they were treated with respect. One person said, "They [staff] are all very good, they are all nice and kind. If I ask them to do some cleaning it's no problem, I sometimes don't have to ask." One staff member said, "To show respect I listen and follow there [people] lead. I always check they are happy." One relative said, "My [relative] is very happy with the carers, they don't just come round to do personal care. They sit down with them and play dominos and they care about my [relative] and provide them with the mental stimulation they need."

We found that people and where appropriate their relatives, were involved in the planning and reviews of the care and support they received. Care plans had good guidance for staff about the support and preferences people required. People told us they felt that staff had time to chat and they never felt rushed. One person said, "Staff and the registered manager are good at deaf awareness. I have deaf staff and they teach me a lot. I now go to a lot of deaf events and meet with friends."

Records were stored securely and staff understood the importance of respecting confidential information. They only disclosed it to people such as health and social care professionals on a need to know basis.



## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

People received personalised care and support based on their individual needs that took account of their preferences and personal circumstances. Staff knew people's preferences and wishes. People we spoke with were complimentary about the service they received and about staff. People told us they were involved in their care. One person told us, "Yes they [staff] sit and have a meeting, they ask me lots of questions and they type everything up that we agree. Staff respects my ideas." One relative commented, "Yes the communication is excellent and we are involved with the support needs."

People received information about the service. In addition, people told us they received care and support that met their individual needs. One person told us, "I have enjoyed working with Sam2Sam, they [staff] make me laugh. I feel we are close friends. I enjoy talking with death people and sharing in different cultures. I am happy with the care and support I receive."

Staff had guidance about people's health and care needs. People's identified needs were documented and reviewed to ensure they received appropriate care. For example, one person required support with a healthy diet. This involved a weekly food diary and encouragement to experience new foods, they were encouraged to become more involved in food preparation, food shop appropriately and become more independent in the management of their own nutrition.

We were told about one person who with the support of the registered manager received the appropriate equipment and care to help them with an on-going issue. This involved the registered manager consulting with a bladder specialist, having discussions with the person's GP and accompanying them to the hospital to support them during a procedure. This has resulted in a huge improvement to the person's daily life.

The registered manager told us that they only take on people whose needs they can meet. For example, they told us about a new package they were asked to take on and they explained that the package was delayed while the correct training for staff had been put in place and that they were confident that they could provide the appropriate support.

People had the opportunity to have their say the registered manager told us that there are regular reviews and spot checks where people's views were sought to ensure people are happy with the service. People could also contact the registered manager at any time using face time to chat this enabled communication with the use of sign language if they had any concerns.

There was a complaints procedure in place and people told us they knew how to raise concerns. People were aware of how to make a complaint should they need to. However, everyone we spoke with told us that they were happy with the service. One person commented, "There is lots of good communication and if there is ever a problem I can go to the [registered] manager. I can face time with them and they will come here to discuss any issues. The [registered] manager always asks if I'm ok and will always explain things."

## Is the service well-led?

### Our findings

People who used the service told us that the service was well led and they felt listened to. One person said, "I speak with the manager a lot they are very supportive."

The registered manager and the director were knowledgeable about the people who received support, They ensured that staff had the tools, resources and training necessary to meet people`s needs at all times. In an email to us they stated, "We feel that one of the key responsibilities of a manager is to promote staff personal development through training. Training is an essential part of an innovative and caring team. Without it, employees' skills become outdated and redundant and this is one of the reasons why we have invested heavily not only on training our care staff but also ensuring any one in a senior position is also able to deliver and explain the training and standards we must work to."

The registered manager and the director had completed their Level 5 in Health and Social Care and were both trained to deliver and teach such courses as First Aid, Health and Safety, Medication, Moving and Handling, Safeguarding, Care certificate and other areas of care. The registered manager and director were clear about the values and the purpose of the service provided. They told us they would only take on new packages when they had the right staffing levels and training in place. The registered manger told us they did not want their staff to feel rushed or not spend the time with people getting to know them and providing appropriate support.

There were systems in place to monitor the quality of the service. We saw that the audits were completed to identify where improvements were needed. There were action plans in place to make improvements. For example, the registered manager identified that on occasions staff did not understand all the documents that they were signing off, as they were too complex. They told us that they contacted several interpreters requesting for them to translate all Policies and Procedures into signed videos. We now have several Policies and Procedures as BSL videos in place with the agreement to continue producing such videos. The registered manager confirmed they had been a huge success. They felt that staff now had more of an understanding about the information they were given and what was required to carry out their job accurately.

Staff were positive about the registered manager of the service and felt there was strong leadership. One staff member said, "The communication is really good." The registered manager was clear about their vision regarding the purpose of the service, how it operated and the level and type of support provided to people. There was enough staff to meet people's needs and the registered manager was actively recruiting. One relative said, "The [registered manager] is in regular contact and I can contact them at any time. I have peace of mind and can get on with my life. I need to know my [relative] is well looked after and I know he is in good hands."

The manager and the director had regular meetings to talk about any concerns or ideas they had, there was lots of daily communication. They maintained links with the local authority for training and current legislation. Best practices was sought through association with such organisations as CQC, local authority,

Social care TV, NICE, deaf jobs UK and many more. The registered manager confirmed they had established a network of friends from other care agencies the registered manager told us that they have a good team around them. There was a clear staff structure in place and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities. The provider had an out of hour's service operated for people to ensure that people had support when required.