

Doves Care Agency 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 well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Doves Care Agency Ltd is a domiciliary care agency providing personal care for people living in their own houses and flats in the community.

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. At the time of this inspection there were 21 people using the service.

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

People felt safe supported by Doves Care Agency Ltd and received their care and support in line with their needs and wishes. Staff had received training in safeguarding and knew how to identify and report concerns. Any safeguarding concerns had been reported in line with guidance.

Accidents, incidents and falls were documented and reviewed to identify any patterns and trends, with lessons learned considered and shared with staff to help reduce future risks.

There were enough well-trained and competent staff available to meet peoples' care and support needs. People's medicines were managed safely by trained staff who had their competency assessed. People had received their medicines on time and as prescribed.

People's views about the quality of the service they received were sought through regular meetings and via questionnaires. The registered manager used a range of systems and processes to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the service provided. We found actions identified by these systems had been addressed in a timely manner.

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

For more information, please read the detailed findings section of this report. 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 05 December 2017).

Why we inspected

We received some concerns about staffing and the management of medicines. As a result, we undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only.

For those key questions not inspected, we used the ratings awarded at the last inspection to calculate the overall rating. The overall rating for the service has remained good based on the findings of this inspection.

We found no evidence during this inspection that people were at risk of harm from this concern. Please see the safe and well-led sections of this full report.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Doves Care Agency on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

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 was 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.

Doves Care Agency Ltd

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

We carried out this performance review and assessment under Section 46 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act). We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements of the regulations associated with the Act and looked at the quality of the service to provide a rating.

Unlike our standard approach to assessing performance, we did not physically visit the office of the location. This is a new approach we have introduced to reviewing and assessing performance of some care at home providers. Instead of visiting the office location we use technology such as electronic file sharing and video or phone calls to engage with people using the service and staff.

Inspection team

This inspection was undertaken by 1 inspector.

Service and service type

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats.

Registered Manager

This provider is required to have a registered manager to oversee the delivery of regulated activities at this location. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Registered managers and providers are legally responsible for how the service is run, for the quality and safety of the care provided and compliance with regulations.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in post.

Notice of inspection

We gave the service 48 hours' notice of the inspection. This was because it is a small service and we needed to be sure that the provider or registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

Inspection activity started on 04 April 2023 and ended on 19 April 2023. We had a video call with the

registered manager on 19 April 2023 to provide feedback about inspection findings.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We sought feedback from the local authority and professionals who work with the service. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR). This is information providers are required to send us annually with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We received written feedback from 3 people and 2 relatives about their experience of the care provided. We received feedback from 12 members of staff including the registered manager and nominated individual. The nominated individual is responsible for supervising the management of the service on behalf of the provider.

We reviewed a range of records. This included 2 people's care plans and associated records. We looked at multiple records relating to staff training, supervision, and those relating to observations and monitoring staff practice. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including audits, surveys and quality assurance records were also reviewed.

The registered manager shared findings of an independent feedback survey undertaken in January 2023 and recent feedback from local authority monitoring officers.

This performance review and assessment was carried out without a visit to the location's office. We used technology such as video calls and email to enable us to engage with people using the service, relatives and staff, and electronic file sharing to enable us to review documentation.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At our last inspection we rated this key question Good. At this inspection the rating has remained Good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- The registered manager and staff team provided people with safe care and support. People told said they felt safe with the care and support they received because the staff team were well trained and supervised.
- The registered manager was aware of their responsibility to report safeguarding concerns to the local authority and CQC and had a robust system to ensure any concerns were shared promptly.
- Staff received safeguarding training and were clear about how to raise an alert or any concerns they may have.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- As part of assessment and care planning, risks to people's health and welfare were identified and actions taken to mitigate the risk. People's risk assessments were reviewed regularly to help ensure they remained current or whenever there was a change in need.
- Staff felt safe working at the service because the management team responded well to any concerns and supported staff to provide safe and effective care. A staff member said, "When a concern is raised concerning people we support, it is promptly and appropriately dealt with by management at the earliest period possible. For instance, there was a time a person had a [health concern]. When this was reported the management acted there and then, called for paramedics and community nurses came to support."
- People and relatives told us the care and support provided was safe. A relative told us, "They (Staff) have always worked safely and not taken any risks whilst caring for [person]."
- The provider operated an 'out of hours' system to help ensure staff and people who used the service could make contact outside of normal office hours. Staff said this helped them feel safe when out in the community. A staff member said, "For example, an incident took place on a weekend and the on-call team where present in the place within a few minutes."

Staffing and recruitment

- The service employed enough staff to meet people's needs and to manage any changes. Staff told us there was enough time to provide people's care and support safely without rushing. A staff member said, "We have enough time to finish whatever is mentioned in the care plan and have extra time to act according to the client's needs and document everything."
- People told us there had been no missed care visits and a person said, "They (Staff) are very punctual and always stay the full amount of time sometimes longer."
- The registered manager used a robust recruitment process which included appropriate checks to help ensure staff were suitable to work in a care setting. Criminal record checks and satisfactory references were sought before staff started working with people. A staff member told us, "Besides my early care training,

certifications and work experience before joining Dove Care Agency, I was interviewed, screened, did additional care certifications/training with assessments by the registered manager to ensure I meet their standard. Fortunately, I passed and I am here, working happily with them."

Using medicines safely

- Staff were trained to administer people's medicines safely.
- The registered manager carried out staff competency assessments and undertook audits to help ensure people's medicines were managed safely.

Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff received training in infection control and had access to personal protective equipment such as disposable gloves and aprons. Staff were clear on the actions they should take to promote good infection prevention and control.
- The registered manager remained up to date with current national guidance to help ensure staff were working safely.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The registered manager operated systems to help ensure learning from events, incidents or accidents that may occur.
- The registered manager told us any learning from untoward events would be shared with staff during meetings, supervisions or via messages.

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

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

- The registered manager and nominated individual were open, honest and positive throughout the inspection. The vision and values of the service were clearly set out and reflected in working practices and in the way the management team supported staff. Feedback about the approach of the service from people, relatives and staff was positive.
- Staff said the registered manager had a naturally person-centred approach and they enjoyed working for them. One staff member said, "My line manager always asks me if I need any help and the few times I needed help, they swung into action immediately."
- Staff were proud to work for Doves Care Agency and said they would recommend the agency to people looking for care and support in their own homes. For example, a staff member said, "I would recommend Doves Care Agency Limited without hesitation or thinking twice to people looking for care. The reason being Doves Care Agency Limited has well qualified staff and management that has welfare of people at heart."
- People and relatives said they were satisfied with the service provided for them. A relative said, "Overall we have received a fantastic service from Doves Care Agency and would be happy to recommend them to others to help look after their loved ones." The relative went on to say, "We have always looked after [person] and struggled to trust anyone to look after them as we would. Seeing how the care workers are with [person] has given us great peace of mind that we can trust them to look after them as we would."

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; Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The registered manager understood their responsibilities in relation to the duty of candour. Staff said they were encouraged to speak up if there were any issues and the registered manager welcomed their feedback.
- The registered manager undertook regular monitoring across all key areas of the service. There was a clear system to address any shortfalls found.
- The registered manager understood the requirement to report certain incidents, such as serious injuries, to the CQC, and had systems in place to do so should they arise

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- Feedback was sought from people, their relatives, staff and external professionals. The registered manager

had arranged for an external independent quality assurance survey to satisfy themselves they heard any concerns or grumbles people may have. The registered manager said they valued this process so performance of the service could be evaluated, and any actions could be taken where needed.

- Staff feedback was gathered through team meetings and supervisions. Staff were positive about working for the service and the management team. For example, a staff member said, "I would be delighted to recommend Doves Care Agency to care staff as all staff are trained completely and enrolled to training on a regular basis. The relationship between the management and the carers is quite comfortable."

Continuous learning and improving care

- The service had a culture of learning, improvement and development.
- The registered manager had membership to the local care provider's association and attended training on offer and had updates sent to them.

Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager was prompt in their response to our requests for information. They were organised and shared evidence with ease. The systems in place and approach of the management team demonstrated they would be well equipped to work with other agencies and professionals when needed.
- The management team proactively liaised with external agencies including pharmacies and district nurses for the benefit of people who used the service.
- A local authority monitoring officer shared recent feedback they had received from a sample of 6 people or their relatives. The outcome was 5 people were either satisfied or very satisfied and 1 person was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
- An independent feedback survey conducted in January 2023 included feedback about the management of the service stating, "excellent and responsive leadership." One professional had stated, "Excellent communication with Doves Care where required and confident with their service including supporting individuals with complex and behavioural support needs."