

Agincare UK Limited

Agincare UK Poole

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Agincare UK Poole is a domiciliary care agency providing person care and support to people in their own homes, flats and specialist extra care housing. The service provides support to older people some of whom are living with dementia. At the time of our inspection there were 76 people receiving personal care.

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 the inspection, the location did not care or support for anyone with a learning disability or an autistic person. However, we assessed the care provision under Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture, as it is registered as a specialist service for this population group.

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

Right Support

Developments and changes to the leadership of the service had strengthened oversight. This meant the service was safe. Improvements had been made in various areas of the service but specifically in the prevention of avoidable harm. Since our last inspection the service had improved in areas such as; infection prevention and control, medicines management and staffing levels.

People, their loved ones and staff told us Agincare UK Poole provided a safe service, many commenting on the improvements which had been made. Staff had received training in safeguarding adults and knew who to report to if they had concerns. They told us they felt confident their concerns would be followed up appropriately.

Right Care

People received their medicines as prescribed and the introduction of an electronic system had improved safety with medicines. There were enough staff to meet the needs of people using the service, procedures were in place to manage last minute changes and staff shortages with minimal effect on people. Communication between the service and people when changes were made to their visits had improved. However, for some people this was still a concern, the registered manager told us they were continually working on improving this for people.

Staff were recruited safely, trained and supported to settle into their role. People and their relatives told us staff were kind and caring, they were complimentary about the service. People's needs were assessed before the service started; they were given an opportunity to discuss the things important to them during their assessment. People were treated with dignity and respect; staff knew the importance of asking consent and offering privacy.

Right Culture

Quality assurance systems were in place and embedded within the service. Additional checks at provider level ensured the service operated effectively. The registered manager and staff understood their roles and responsibilities within the service.

Staff felt appreciated and proud to work at the service. The service had made all notifications to CQC as required by law and appropriate referrals to external agencies. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback about the management of the service and office team at Agincare UK Poole.

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

Rating at last inspection and update

The last rating for this service was requires improvement (published 25 January 2022) and there were breaches of regulation. The provider completed an action plan after the last inspection to show what they would do and by when to improve. At this inspection we found improvements had been made and the provider was no longer in breach of regulations.

Why we inspected

We carried out an announced inspection of this service on 9 and 15 November 2021. Breaches of legal requirements were found. The provider completed an action plan after the last inspection to show what they would do and by when to improve safe care and treatment, staffing and the governance of the service.

We undertook this focused inspection to check they had followed their action plan and to confirm they now met legal requirements. This report only covers our findings in relation to the Key Questions Safe, Caring and Well-led which contain those requirements.

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 changed from requires improvement to 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 Agincare UK Poole 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 caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well led.

Details are in our well led findings below.

Agincare UK Poole

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 Health and Social Care Act 2008.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by 2 inspectors and an Expert by Experience. 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

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats and specialist extra care housing. Extra care housing is purpose-built or adapted single household accommodation in a shared site or building. The accommodation is rented and is the occupant's own home. People's care and housing are provided under separate contractual agreements. CQC does not regulate premises used for extra care housing; this inspection looked at people's personal care and support service.

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 we needed to be sure that the provider or registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

Inspection activity started on 13 February 2023 and ended on 16 February 2023. We visited the location's office on 14 February 2023.

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 service improvement and safeguarding teams. The provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR) prior to this inspection. A PIR is information providers send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 8 people who used the service and 4 relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with and received feedback from 12 members of staff including the registered manager, deputy manager and care workers. We received feedback from health and social care professionals on their experience of working with the service.

We reviewed a range of records. This included 6 people's care records and medication records. We looked at 2 staff files in relation to recruitment and staff supervision. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures were reviewed.

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 requires improvement. At this inspection the rating has changed to good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Preventing and controlling infection

At our last inspection the provider had failed to follow government guidance in regard to the use of personal protective equipment. This had placed people at the risk of avoidable harm. This was a breach of regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 12.

- Infection prevention and control procedures were in place and robust. Staff had received training in safe practice and how to prevent avoidable infections.
- There were enough supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE). Staff wore the necessary PPE in order to keep themselves and others safe during personal care and support. People and their relatives confirmed staff compliance with PPE.
- The service had an infection prevention and control policy in place and kept up to date with changes and best practice guidance.

Using medicines safely

At our last inspection the provider had failed to follow its procedure for the safe administration and recording of medicines. This had placed people at risk of avoidable harm. This was a breach of regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 12.

- People received their medicines as prescribed. There were safe procedures in place including the introduction of an electronic system for medicines management. A person told us, "The staff give me medicines and I check them first. They watch me take them and they record them. I've no problems at all with medicines."
- Medicine administration records (MAR) were completed correctly and checked. Staff were able to update and make changes to people's MAR immediately following instruction from the GP or pharmacist. This meant people were receiving the correct treatment.
- Staff responsible for giving medicines had been trained and had their competency assessed. Regular checks ensured safe practice was carried out.

- Where people were prescribed medicines they only needed to take occasionally, guidance was in place for staff to follow to ensure those medicines were administered in a consistent way.

Staffing and recruitment

At our last inspection the provider had failed to provide enough suitably experienced staff to meet the needs of people. This had placed people at risk of avoidable harm. This was a breach of regulation 18 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 18.

- The service had made significant and sustained improvement with providing regular staff for people. This included rearranging visits to ensure consistency throughout the service. However, we did receive some feedback from people that communication could be improved when changes were made. The registered manager and deputy manager told us this area continued to be their focus. A health and social care professional told us, "From my working experience I feel that Agincare UK Poole will try their upmost to provide regular, familiar care staff to people."
- Recruitment of staff was ongoing. The service had faced the same challenges as other providers due to the national shortage of care workers. However, they had explored new ways of securing staff to join their team and had made good progress.
- Recruitment processes were in place and included values-based interviews and a thorough induction.
- Staff files contained appropriate checks, such as references and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. DBS checks provide information including details about convictions and cautions held on the Police National Computer. The information helps employers make safer recruitment decisions.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People told us they felt safe with the service they received from Agincare UK Poole. Some of their comments were: "Yes, I am definitely safe. Staff are precise and are good at making sure I am safe and clean", "Oh yes, I am safe", "It's safe, the staff move me safely", "Yes, I think my loved one [name] is safe." A health and social care professional told us, "I don't have any safeguarding concerns."
- Staff told us they knew how to recognise the signs that someone may be at risk of harm or abuse. They knew who to report their concerns to both inside the home and externally.
- There were clear communication channels for raising concerns within the service. Posters displayed around the service reminded staff of the importance of speaking up and gave the number to call should they need to raise concerns to the local authority. A member of staff told us, "If concerned about abuse this can be reported to the registered manager, social services, CQC or the police."
- Staff had received training in safeguarding and were confident any concerns they raised would be taken seriously and acted upon by the registered manager and deputy manager. A member of staff told us, "They are always dealt with when they have reported."
- Safeguarding concerns were reviewed monthly; records showed all necessary actions and referrals had been made.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management; Learning lessons when things go wrong

- People had risk assessments in place for all their care and support needs. Risk assessments were updated in response to a change in a person's condition or during annual review.
- Risk assessments were detailed; staff understood the risks and knew people well.
- People had environmental assessments which covered potential hazards within the home, such as

specialist beds and equipment.

- There was an open culture within the service to learn from accidents and incidents. Accidents were recorded and analysed, the outcomes were used to reduce the likelihood of the accident or incident happening again. The registered manager checked to make sure all necessary actions were taken and monitored on an electronic system.
- Accident and incident reporting had provider oversight and was monitored across the provider's locations. This meant learning was shared which supported reducing risks for people.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect.

At our last inspection we rated this key question requires improvement. At this inspection the rating has changed to good. This meant people were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- People and their relatives told us staff were kind and caring. Comments included: "Staff are very good and kind. They do their tasks and get on well with my loved one [name] well", "They are perfect. They are wonderful. They are very caring", "Some [staff] I have a real laugh with, others are quieter. I find them all kind and pleasant", "They [staff] are gentle, caring and explain what they are going to do."
- Staff had received training in equality and diversity. Staff told us they would support people from any background with their care needs, understanding and appreciating people's differences was important to them. A person told us, "The carers are respectful."
- People were supported to observe their faith if they chose to and details were recorded in their care plans.
- People's lives and background were detailed in their care plans. Staff knew people well and encouraged conversations about day to day life.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- People's right to privacy was protected, care took place in their own home. When care and support was being provided privacy was maintained. People were happy with the service they received. Some comments were: "The service turned everything around for us as we couldn't manage. Now, it's a different world. We are very happy with what they do for us", "I couldn't cope without them", "The carers [staff] are friendly and communicate with my loved one [name]."
- Confidential documents were kept securely locked away in the service office and password protected on electronic systems. Staff were aware of the procedures for handling sensitive information and had a good understanding of confidentiality when communicating with the service office.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People told us staff treated them with dignity, respect and offered them privacy. A person told us, "They [staff] greet me, knock on the door and ask me how I am. When helping me they make sure I'm covered up. They close the curtains and the door."
- Encouraging independence was important to staff at the service to support people to remain in their own home for as long as possible. A member of staff told us, "It's important to talk to the person about what it is you're doing so they feel included in their own care."
- Staff told us they always gave people choices throughout their visits with all their care and support needs. A relative told us, "The carers [staff] do what my loved one [name] asks and respect their wishes." A person said, "If I say not today then they respect my views."

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 requires improvement. At this inspection the rating has changed to good. 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

At our last inspection the provider had failed to have effective processes in place to ensure it assessed and monitored the service. This had placed people at risk of avoidable harm. This was a breach of regulation 17 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 17.

- Improvements had been made to the oversight of the service. Quality assurance processes were in place, sustained and robust which enabled Agincare UK Poole to monitor the standard of the care provided.
- Oversight of the service was multi-layered. Audits and checks were in place within the service and at provider level. Additional staff were in place to support with compliance.
- Staff understood their role and had clear responsibilities. Staff had job descriptions and told us they were clear on the expectations of the registered manager and the provider.
- The registered manager was passionate in their vision for the service and empowering the staff team. They told us, "I don't manage, I lead."
- Improvements made were part of an overall service improvement plan which was ongoing. A member of staff said, "The registered manager [name] is an essential member of the team. They keep us all on track and motivated to reach the same end goal."

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 registered manager understood the requirements of the duty of candour, that is, their duty to be honest, open and apologise for any accident or incident that had caused or placed a person at risk of harm.
- The registered manager understood CQC requirements, in particular, to notify us, and where appropriate the local safeguarding team, of incidents including potential safeguarding issues, disruption to the service and serious injury. This is a legal requirement.

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

- The registered manager told us they actively engaged staff in decisions about the service whilst working

closely with the area manager and deputy manager. Staff felt involved and worked together to provide a good service. A member of staff said, "There is good leadership, and I feel appreciated."

- Staff were proud to work at Agincare UK Poole, their comments included: "I like to see that what I do makes a difference to people", "I am proud to work for the registered manager [name] and Agincare and every day I enjoy coming to work and seeing our lovely service users and putting a smile on their face", "I am very proud to work for Agincare Poole", "I'm proud to provide amazing service and be part of a such a good team", "I am proud for working for a company like this, being a part of a hardworking and determined team."

- People, professionals and staff were complimentary about the leadership of Agincare UK Poole. Some of their comments included: "The registered manager [name] is amazing, since I've been with the service, they have been the best manager and they deserve a lot of credit! The deputy manager [name] too they are absolutely amazing! They both work so hard together to not only make sure our service users are happy but the care workers too", "They [registered manager] has strived to make clear improvement to the team, and is effective in their approach to management", "The registered manager [name] invests their personal time in their work day if you need a friendly face to talk to", "The registered manager [name] has very good views on things and every time they have ensured we all work safe and people are safe and happy with their care provider."

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

- Agincare UK Poole undertook regular surveys and questionnaires to monitor the standard of the service they provide. Results were positive and continual feedback was welcomed by the service.

- Staff felt appreciated. The registered manager told us it was important to ensure they had a happy team. 'Employee of the month' schemes and staff rest station, which included snacks and drinks available in the branch office and just a thank you! A staff member said, "I feel appreciated. Saying thank you goes a long way. The office staff are always asking about how you are, how you are doing and if there is anything they could help with."

- People and their relatives were encouraged to feedback about the service in between the formal annual reviews. The service had received compliments. We read, "I really cannot thank them [staff] enough for everything they did, including all of the thousands of little things that families don't get to see. Thanks to them my loved one [name] spent their final years with dignity and respect, and surrounded by good hearted, kind and loving people."

- The registered manager told us they have a good working partnership with outside agencies. A health professional told us, "Communication and professionalism with the senior team has improved and this has meant we have worked better and jointly to resolve some of the issues raised by the client, their carer or staff at Agincare." Another told us the service was, "An excellent care team who place the service user at the heart of their business."