

SSA Quality Care Limited

SSA Quality Care

Inspection report

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Gatehouse Close
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP19 8DP

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15 June 2017

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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

This inspection took place on 15 June 2017. It was an announced visit to the service.

SSA Quality Care is registered to provide support to people in their own home. At the time of the inspection the care agency provided care and support to twenty seven people who primarily lived in Buckinghamshire. The main office is based in Aylesbury.

At the last inspection, the service was rated Good. At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

We received positive feedback from people, their relatives and external social care professionals. People told us they had developed a good working relationship with the care workers and office staff. Comments included "We have a good chat, I have a very good relationship, they are very professional," "I only have to mention something and they do it straight away" and "They (Staff) respect my home and they are all very friendly."

People were supported by staff with right skills and experience, as robust recruitment processes were in place.

People were supported by staff who understood their role and were trained to provide safe care.

People were protected from abuse and avoidable harm, as staff understood how to recognise signs of abuse and what to do in the event of concern being raised.

People received a person centred service, as they had been involved in developing care plans which reflected their likes and preferences.

Staff understood the core principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) and processes were in place to ensure where people lacked mental capacity the service made decision in the person's best interest.

People told us they had confidence in the management and they would go to them if they had any concerns.

Staff told us they felt supported by management and felt involved in driving improvements. There was a positive culture within the organisation.

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.

SSA Quality Care

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 checked whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This was a comprehensive inspection.

This inspection took place on 15 June 2017 and was announced. The provider was given 48 hours' notice because the location provides a domiciliary care service and we needed to be sure that someone would be in.

This inspection was carried out by one inspector.

Before the inspection the provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). The PIR is a form that the provider submits to the Commission which gives us key information about the service, what it does well and what improvements they plan to make. We reviewed any information we had received about the service.

We spoke with four people who were receiving care and support and six relatives. When at the office we spoke with the registered manager and two staff. After the visit to the office we received feedback from four staff and six healthcare professionals. We reviewed four staff recruitment files and five care plans within the service and cross referenced practice against the provider's own policies and procedures.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People told us they continued to receive safe care. Comments from people included "They (staff) make sure my door is locked when they leave," "At the last visit they (staff) make sure windows are shut" and "I have no concerns at all."

People were protected from abuse and avoidable harm. Staff had received training and were able to tell us about potential signs of abuse and what action they would take if they had concerns. People told us they would report any concerns they had to the office.

People were protected from unsafe practices and avoidable harm as potential risks had been identified and action had been taken to reduce the risk. We noted risk assessments had been undertaken about the home environment, which included the state of flooring and lighting as examples.

Risk posed to people as a result of their medical or physical condition had been assessed. For instance, where people required to be assisted to move position using equipment, staff had access to information on how to do this safely. We found risk assessments to be comprehensive and provided information to staff on how to minimise risk and prevent harm to people.

We heard some mixed feedback about the continuity of staff. Some people were happy with the support they received. Two people told us they were not always aware of who would be visiting them. We observed staff in the office covering care calls when care workers reported sickness. This was conducted in a calm and professional manner.

We looked at staff rotas, and staff confirmed that enough time was provided to ensure care calls were not rushed or cut short. Staff were given travelling time. The registered manager told us how they had ensured they understood the geographical areas. This demonstrated they had an understanding on how poor planning of visits would have an impact on people and staff.

Where people required support with their medicine this was provided by staff who had received appropriate training to do this safely. People told us they were happy with the support they received with their prescribed medicines.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People told us they received effective care from staff who had been trained to provide safe care. One person told us "I only have to mention something and they do it straight away." A relative told us "They (registered manager) try to match up the carers with similar interests.

People were supported by staff who understood their role. New staff were fully inducted into their role; this included one to one meetings with a senior member of staff and going out with another staff member until they were confident to work alone. Each new member of staff attended initial training which covered the nationally recognised minimum standards for social care workers. Topics included communication, privacy and dignity; equality and diversity and working in a person centred way as examples.

Senior staff monitored the skills of care workers as spot checks were undertaken. Staff received supervision and an annual appraisal of their performance.

The service had provided training for staff in the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Staff were able to tell us how they would seek consent. The documentation demonstrated the service considered the code of practice of the MCA and sought consent from people or their legal representative.

People were supported with managing their health conditions. On the day of the inspection a care worker had reported a health concern to the office. We observed the registered manager dealing with the issue in a professional and assertive manner. One person told us how the service had been flexible in supporting them to attend a hospital appointment. A relative told us how a care worker had remained with their family member after a fall, to ensure they received the right support.

Where people required support with meals and drinks this was detailed in people's care plan. People told us "Whatever food I want, they (staff) always managed to get it" and "I always get a drink left, this is particularly important in this weather." A relative told us "Since the carers have been introduced her diet has much improved as she (staff) cooks what mum likes, like cheese on toast."

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People told us they had developed good working relationships with staff. One person told us, "(name of worker) is excellent and (name of care worker) is excellent. Another person told us "They (care workers) always say to me before they leave, 'have you got everything you need?'. A third person told us "It's the little things, they (staff) do that make me feel look after, they will do anything I ask, this week they have made sure I have the fan close to me."

A relative told us how their family member was supported by care workers. They told us how the live in care worker had supported the person to talk about family experiences in the past. The relative told us "In the evening the carer sits down with mum and they look through old photographs."

Staff gave us examples of how they had provided support to meet the diverse needs of people using the service including those related to disability, gender, ethnicity, faith and sexual orientation. These needs were recorded in care plans and all staff we spoke to knew the needs of each person well. People using the service also commented on how well their individual needs were met.

People were supported to express their views and be actively involved in decisions about their care. One person told us "(name of registered manager) comes to see me and we chat about what care I need."

People told us staff respected their homes, and treated them with dignity and respect. Staff were able to tell us how they would ensure they supported people in a dignified way. One staff member told us "I always protect the patient's privacy and dignity, by asking what are their wishes when it comes to something private, like showers."

People were supported with their chosen method of communication. A member of staff told us "I give clients time to speak to let me know their wishes, if they have an eye gaze they use this or sometimes we write between us." An eye gaze is a communication device, used by people who cannot speak.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People and their relatives told us the service was responsive to their needs. One person told us "If I want anything in the town they bring it." A relative told us "(name of staff) is fantastic, she is an angel."

Prior to people being supported an assessment was undertaken by a senior member of staff. The assessment gathered information from the person, relatives and professionals. This formed the details of a person's care plan.

Care plans were comprehensive and reflected individual needs, and staff told us they always used them as a point of reference. People's likes and dislikes were well known by the service. People told us they were involved in writing the care plans.

People told us they had regular contact with the office and were able to provide feedback to the service about how their needs were being met. We saw that reviews of care plans were undertaken with people. When at the office we observed staff arranging review meetings.

We saw where changes in people's needs had been identified a new care plan was written. Staff told us "I help people do things in the way they prefer I read through the care plan and also talk to the client to know what they like and prefer."

The service had a complaints procedure, office staff were aware of how to handle complaints. We reviewed a number of responses to complaints and these were investigated in a timely manner.

One person, who had a live in care worker, was supported to undertaken activities of their choosing.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

We received mixed feedback about the service being well-led. The majority of people and relatives told us the service was well led, comments including "(name of registered manager) is excellent," "The service is top class" and "My service is full proof." Two relative's and one person were less positive, they were concerned about the rostering of staff. They advised us there were too many changes to the rotas, which meant they were not always familiar with the care worker. However the people who provided that feedback also told us they were aware of how difficult it was to roster calls when staff called in sick at short notice. We provided the feedback to the registered manager who was receptive to our comments.

The service had a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission 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.

We received positive feedback from the professionals we had contact with, comments included "I have every faith that (name of registered manager) at SSA, would respond appropriately and address any concerns with their clients, particularly during a settling in period, and aim to provide a caring, flexible, and person centred service." "They are always professional when you contact them, they do not hesitate to ask questions regarding a service user. They have started the care packages on time, they do not hesitate to contact me with any issues arising around an existing package they have" and "I have always found them professional and able to answer any enquiries I have had."

The registered manager was keen to further develop team work within the service; they had introduced a suggestion box for staff to share their views. Staff told us "I feel confident with speaking to my manager" and "I would say that I feel comfortable going to the management with any issue I may have."

We found management and staff worked well together in the office, care staff told us there was good team work. Staff felt listened too and valued. One staff member told us "The management is always striving to improve. Two days ago I was asked in what area could the company get better and it wasn't the first time. I think the management takes our concerns in consideration and addresses them the best way possible."

We found there were measures in place to monitor the quality of the service and to drive improvements.