

Epiphany Trading Ltd

Chrysalis Holidays

Inspection report

St.Davids Presbytery
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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good 

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement 

Is the service effective?

Good 

Is the service caring?

Good 

Is the service responsive?

Good 

Is the service well-led?

Good 

Overall summary

The inspection was unannounced and took place on 01 February 2015. An arranged visit to complete the inspection was then undertaken on the 02 February 2015. The service was registered with CQC in March 2014 and this was the first inspection of the service since registration.

The service has a registered manager. 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.

The organisation provides supported holidays for adults with learning disabilities. All holidays are led by experienced managers and the activities by qualified professionals wherever appropriate. A member of care

Summary of findings

staff is individually assigned to support individuals during activities, and provide any care assistance which may be required. The service is managed from an office located on the outskirts of Warrington.

We found that Chrysalis Holidays provided a personalised service to people who used the service. Staff provided people with support which was tailored to their individual needs.

The support staff were fully trained to provide flexible services that enabled people to enjoy their break and be as fulfilled and independent as possible. There were good systems in place to protect people from harm and staff had a good knowledge of people's individual needs and of what people liked or disliked and of how they wished to live their life. Care plans were in place but those looked at lacked detail. Staff told us that that person centred thinking is as important as the planning. However they revealed that most of their knowledge about individuals was written in care file notes which had been provided by other professionals and not transferred to individual care plans. The actual care planning details were recorded in people's own care plans in their homes and a copy provided to the support worker four days prior to the commencement of the holiday. Discussions with local authority social workers confirmed this.

Discussions with four staff members identified that they felt happy and supported and worked well as a team. They told us that the manager was most supportive and was knowledgeable about the needs, wishes and choices of all the people supported by Chrysalis Holidays. Comments included; "The manager has a clear understanding of the people we support and ensures that they are provided with holidays and support staff that provide all the support they need" and "We are passionate about assisting and promoting social inclusion where everyone has the opportunity to carry out activities and interests of their choice."

We saw that the service had a safeguarding procedure in place. This was designed to ensure that any possible problems that arose were dealt with openly and people were protected from possible harm.

We looked at the files for the three most recently appointed members of staff who were employed to work for the agency to check that effective recruitment procedures had been completed. We found that

appropriate checks had been completed by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and qualifications had been checked and verified. However the registered provider told us that prior to Chrysalis CQC registration, staff references were not requested. Discussion with the administrative manager identified that the supported holiday service had been functioning since 1991 although it had not been registered with CQC until March 2014. Prior to registration it had not been the company policy to seek written references and verbal references had been accepted. However since CQC registration the recruitment policy and procedures have been updated. In future all applications for employment will include the provision of two written references to further ensure that people are suitable to work with vulnerable people. Therefore at the time of our inspection we did not find any references on file to give assurances that people were suitable to work with vulnerable adults.

The provider had their own induction training programme that was designed to ensure staff members had the skills they needed to do their jobs effectively and competently.

We asked three staff members working in the service about training and they confirmed that they received regular training throughout the year and that it was up to date.

The service had a range of policies and procedures which helped staff refer to good practice and included guidance on the Mental Capacity Act 2005. This meant that the staff members were aware of people's rights to make their own decisions.

The staffing rotas we looked at demonstrated that there were sufficient numbers of staff provided to meet the needs of the people receiving a service from the agency. This was confirmed by the two people we spoke with who had been accompanied by support staff on a recent holiday. The service has provided structured supported holidays for over 1500 people. The vast majority of people who requested a supported holiday were in need of minimal support or assistance with personal care.

People we spoke with who were professionally involved with the people who used the service were positive about how the agency was being managed and the quality of the support being provided.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was not always safe

The provider took a number of steps to make sure that the people employed by Chrysalis holidays were suitable to do this kind of work. However they had not asked for written references from past employers to check if people were suitable to work with vulnerable people.

People who used the service and their relatives told us they felt safe and no one that we spoke with expressed any concern about this aspect. Medicines and finances were properly looked after and people were protected from risks.

Managers and staff respected and promoted people's human rights and ensured people were protected. Risks to people's welfare were addressed in a positive and proportionate way and care and support interventions were designed to be the least restrictive possible.

Requires Improvement



Is the service effective?

The service was effective.

The staff were committed to their role in providing consistent individual support. They delivered personalised flexible services, the level of which was always decided by discussing all the options and ensuring the person being supported was always in control.

Staff records showed that they had been provided with training to develop their understanding of supporting people when they lacked capacity to make informed decisions, including the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Feedback from other professionals indicated that Chrysalis provided a service that enabled people to enjoy a fulfilling life which enhanced well-being.

Good



Is the service caring?

The service was caring

People were treated in a friendly manner with respect and dignity by the staff at the service.

Relatives of the people who used the service felt their relatives were supported well and provided with the support they needed.

Staff displayed awareness of individual's needs and how they liked to be cared for.

Good



Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive.

Good



Summary of findings

Changes in people's needs were quickly recognised and appropriate action taken, including the involvement of external professionals where necessary. This meant that people received safe and effective care.

People felt the service was flexible and based on their personal wishes and preferences.

The service played an active part in the wider community for the purpose of seeking additional holiday resources for people who used the service

Is the service well-led?

The service was well led.

The managers of the service promoted strong values and a person centred culture. Staff were proud to work for the service and were supported in understanding the values of the organisation.

There were effective systems to assure quality and identify any potential improvements to the service. This meant people benefited from a constantly improving service.

Good



Chrysalis Holidays

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.

We carried out an unannounced inspection on the 1 February 2015 and then undertook a second announced visit on the 2 February 2015. The inspection was carried out by one adult social care inspector.

We looked at any notifications received and reviewed any other information we hold prior to visiting. We also invited the local authority to provide us with any information they held about Chrysalis Holidays

At the time of the inspection of the service we were told that since 1991 Chrysalis had provided a holiday support service to over 1500 people who were either living in their own homes or in supported accommodation. The vast majority of these people needed minimal support. We spoke with two of the people using the service, two of their relatives, four staff members, the company director, administrative manager and registered manager. We also spoke with other professionals who had involvement with the people who used the service. This included two social workers, two local authority care workers and a service manager.

We looked at a total of four supported living care files and looked at other documents including policies and procedures and audit materials.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

We spoke with two people who used the service, their relatives and other professionals who were involved with their care. Everyone we spoke with told us they felt people who used the service were safe from abuse or harm from the staff of the service. In discussions, people said they felt safe and that staff understood their needs. Comments from people included ; "The staff are good to me and make me feel secure" and "I love my holidays and staff make sure I am safe and that nobody bullies me."

Staff we spoke with demonstrated a good understanding of peoples' needs and the support required to promote their safety and wellbeing. Care workers were able to discuss the risks individual people faced and speak confidently about how they maintained their safety.

We saw that the service had a safeguarding procedure in place. This was designed to ensure that any possible vulnerability that arose were dealt with openly and people were protected from possible harm. The registered manager confirmed that she was aware of the relevant process to follow. They would report any concerns to the local authority and to the Care Quality Commission [CQC]. Agencies such as Chrysalis DCA are required to notify the CQC and the local authority of any safeguarding incidents that arise. We checked our records and saw that there had been no safeguarding incidents requiring notification since they were registered with CQC.

Staff members confirmed that they had received training in protecting vulnerable adults and that this was updated on a regular basis. The four agency staff members we spoke with told us they understood the process they would follow if a safeguarding incident occurred and they were aware of their responsibilities when supporting people. They said that they would report any concerns regarding poor practice they had to the agency manager. This indicated that they were aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding the protection of vulnerable adults and the need to accurately record and report potential incidents of abuse. They were also familiar with the term 'whistle blowing' and told us that they would have no hesitation to pass on information about bad practice if the need arose.

Care workers told us they received a good level of training and that they felt confident to support people in a safe

manner. This information was supported by training records that showed all staff were trained in important health and safety areas, such as moving and handling, infection control, first aid and food hygiene.

Risk assessments were carried out and kept under review so the people who were supported on their holidays were safeguarded from unnecessary hazards. Records identified that the agency's staff members reassessed each person prior to them having a supported holiday to ensure they could identify and manage any changes to keep them safe. This ensured that people were able to live a fulfilling lifestyle without unnecessary restriction. Relevant risk assessments, for example, on the environment were maintained as an ongoing process.

There had been no new staff members recently employed to work for Chrysalis so we looked at the files for three of the eight staff members who had worked for the agency for several years to check that effective recruitment procedures had been completed. We found that the appropriate checks had been completed by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). These checks aim to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups. We saw from these files that potential employees had to complete an application form from which their employment history could be checked. Each file held a photograph of the employee as well as suitable proof of identity. There was also confirmation within the recruitment files we looked at that the employee had completed a suitable induction programme when they had started work for the agency. However we noted that no written references from past employers or personal friends were on file. Discussion with the administrative manager identified that the supported holiday service had been functioning since 1991 although it had not been registered with CQC until March 2014. Prior to registration it had not been the company policy to seek written references and verbal references had been accepted. However since CQC registration the recruitment policy and procedures have been updated. In future all applications for employment will include the provision of two written references to further ensure that people are suitable to work with vulnerable people.

There were policies and procedures in place in respect of medication management. Staff were provided with updated information in respect of prescribed medication, if

Is the service safe?

appropriate, each time a person wished to go on a supported holiday. The medication was provided in lockable boxes and medication record sheets were completed by two staff members, one to sign the sheet and the other to sign to verify that the medication had been given. We looked at a sample of completed medication record sheets which confirmed this process occurred.

Records showed that the organisation had policies and procedures in place in respect of supporting people to manage their finances over the short term holiday period. Records of all financial transactions which occurred during the holiday period were recorded and signed by the person who used the service or their representative and a support worker. This showed that people's finances were protected during their holiday period.

The staffing rotas we looked at during the visit demonstrated that there were sufficient numbers of staff available to meet the needs of the people receiving a service from the agency. This was confirmed by the two people we spoke with who had enjoyed a supported holiday.

From our discussions we found that the staff members knew the people they were supporting well. Staff told us that they were always provided with updated information about any changing needs to ensure that safe care and support was provided at all times.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

We saw that the service followed thorough assessment processes on every occasion when the people they supported wanted to book a holiday. All the care files we viewed included care needs assessments which had been carried out before the person's package of support was commenced. This meant that care workers had a good level of information about people's needs and understanding of the support they required.

We viewed a selection of people's care plans and found that although they held basic information about people's daily life activities other documentation kept on the care file gave clear details of the support each person required. This documentation was provided by the person's social worker prior to people requesting a supported holiday and provided a good level of information about people's health and social care needs. We noted that each care file included the person's preferred term of address and was signed by the person who used the service or their representative to show their agreement with the information recorded. People's own views about how they wanted their care to be provided and the things that were important to them were central to the care documentation, demonstrating that their personal wishes had been taken into account.

Feedback from social workers and service managers was most positive about Chrysalis Holidays. Comments included: "They ensure that they have updated details about anyone who requests a supported holiday to ensure they provide effective interventions" and "Staff update their information about people who use the service such as any changes in communication, health issues or mental capacity. This helps them to provide appropriate levels of intervention."

Records seen identified that reviews took place with the person who used the service and their representatives to ensure that their views about how the holiday support was provided was as agreed.

We saw that the staff induction covered a variety of areas including principles of good care, such as promoting privacy and dignity, as well as practical training in areas like skin care, moving and handling, challenging behaviour and diffusion techniques. Staff told us that they were provided with on-going training to make sure they had the

appropriate skills and knowledge to meet the needs of all the people they supported. One staff member told us that he had recently updated his training in epilepsy and medication management to ensure he could provide effective intervention if required. The provider used computer 'e' learning for some of the training and staff were expected to undertake this when required. The registered manager explained that the training records were constantly monitored in order to ensure they were kept up to date. The staff member's competency was assessed through the supervision system and through the auditing of records such as medication and care records.

Policies and procedures had been developed by the registered manager to provide guidance for staff on how to safeguard the care and welfare of the people using the service. This included guidance on the Mental Capacity Act. This is a legal requirement that is set out in an Act of Parliament called The Mental Capacity Act 2005 [MCA]. This was introduced to help ensure that the rights of people who had difficulty in making their own decisions were protected.

The staff members we spoke with demonstrated their understanding of the MCA and the training records showed that they had completed training in this area. Staff told us that they understood that as people who used the service were only provided with care for a short duration any involvement with the Court of Protection would be undertaken by care providers who held responsibility to provide long term support for people in their own homes. This responsibility was confirmed by social workers from various funding authorities.

Staff told us that they felt consistency of care was an important aspect of the service. They told us that it helped ensure people received their care from people they were familiar and comfortable with. This was supported by the feedback we received from people who used the service or their representatives. One person commented, "The staff have worked for Chrysalis for a long time and therefore X has got to know them and they have also got to know him." Other comments included; "Staff understand her well and as a consequence we never have any worries when she has her holiday" and "These holidays do him good and have a most positive effect on his health and happiness. He really looks forward to his breaks and is saving up for another one now."

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People who used the service told us that they felt “happy and well cared for” when they went on supported holidays. Representatives of the people who used the service told us that they felt that the staff really did care about the people they supported and “made them feel cared for and secure.”

Staff that we spoke with appeared highly motivated and proud of the service. The staff team had worked together for many years and they understood the importance of building positive relationships with people who used the service and spoke of how they were able to spend time with people to get to know them and understand the things that were important to them. They told us that they felt that the level of care provided was always decided by discussing all the options with the person who used the service or their representatives. They said that people should always stay in control of the level of support provided. They told us that they had a flexible approach so that support was adapted and provided as needs changed so that people would always receive the care that best suited them. The registered manager said that individuality was pivotal to the provision of support and the service worked with people to design a support package that delivered as much or as little support as required.

Staff told us that they were able to communicate effectively with people who used the service. Any specific communication needs and people’s individual methods of communication were addressed in their care records. Staff said that they were able to build relationships with people they supported and were able to develop understanding of them and recognise non-verbal cues.

Professionals we consulted were highly complementary about the positive culture of the service. Comments included; “They assist people to enjoy fulfilling semi-independent breaks and enhance the quality of their lives” and “They have a flexible approach and adapt support involving the people themselves to maximise their wellbeing.”

The provider had developed a range of information, including a service user guide and a holiday brochure for the people using the service. This gave people detailed written and pictorial information on such topics as key staff, the services provided, communication and complaints.

We saw that personal information about people was stored securely in locked cabinets which meant that they could be sure that information about them was kept confidentially.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Staff understood the support that people needed and were given time to provide it in a safe, effective and dignified way. When people's needs changed, this was identified and prompt, appropriate action was taken to ensure people's wellbeing was protected.

Every person who requested a supported holiday was assessed to ascertain what assistance they required. We looked at the pre-service paperwork that had been completed for three people who used the service and could see that the assessments had been completed.

We looked at three care files to see what support people needed and how this was recorded. We saw that each file was personalised and reflected the needs of the individual. We also saw that they were written in a style that would enable the support workers and the people receiving support to have a good idea of what help and assistance someone needed at a particular time. The files we looked at were being reviewed as and when required and were well maintained. Any changes were recorded so staff members would know what actions to take and why the changes had been made.

The files we looked at contained some relevant information regarding background history to ensure the staff had the

information they needed to respect the person's preferred wishes, likes and dislikes. For example, food the person enjoyed, preferred social activities and social contacts and people who mattered to them.

Professionals we consulted told us that the service provided a person centred approach to ensure that care was planned taking into account people's individuality and personal choice. Comments included; "Chrysalis work with people to assess their unique wishes and needs and deliver flexible support to ensure that they can enjoy a holiday that enables them to be as independent as possible and promotes their mental and physical wellbeing", "Staff of Chrysalis work with us to ensure people's transition from supported living to a supported holiday is seamless" and "Chrysalis continue to develop supported holidays within the wider community to ensure they can meet the needs, wishes and choices of the people they support."

The agency had a complaints policy and processes were in place to record any complaints received and to ensure that these would be addressed within the timescales given in the policy. There had been no recorded complaints since the service was registered with CQC. People were provided with a copy of the complaints procedure when they were assessed to use the service. The information was also available on the company website. All the people we spoke with during the inspection told us they did not have any concerns but if they did they would know how to raise them.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

There was a clear management structure including a registered manager who had been in place since the service was registered with CQC. He had worked for the organisation for several years as a support worker prior to his promotion and had a thorough knowledge of all aspects of the service provision. People who used the service and staff, were fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of managers and the lines of accountability.

We spoke with the registered manager, company director and the administration manager who each demonstrated their knowledge of the service and the needs of the people who used it. They spoke of the importance of effective communication across the service and of how this was addressed. They said that regular staff and management meetings took place and daily phone calls were held to discuss any areas of concern or provide an update of information. We saw minutes of both management and staff meetings to confirm this.

The quality of the service was monitored using formal tools such as quality audits. Evidence was available to demonstrate that audits were used effectively and enabled the registered manager to identify any shortfalls in a prompt manner. We noted one issue had recently been identified and actions and outcomes had been recorded and implemented to ensure the efficiency of the service was not at risk.

Questionnaires were used to request feedback from the people who used the service and/or their representatives. The registered manager gave us a copy of the most recent findings from the returned questionnaires; this showed that the service was rated highly by the people who used it and that the people who had completed the questionnaires were happy with the holiday and support service being provided.

Staff members we spoke with were positive about how the agency was being managed and the service being provided. The staff we spoke with described the registered manager as knowledgeable, approachable and supportive. We asked staff members how they would report any issues they were concerned about and they told us that they understood their responsibilities and would have no hesitation in reporting any concerns. They all said they could raise any issues and discuss them openly within the staff team and with the registered manager. One staff member said that the service had greatly improved on the amount of staff meetings, supervision and training sessions since the registered manager had been appointed. They told us that the registered manager had updated all the policies and procedures and had introduced new risk assessment and care management documentation to raise the standards of Chrysalis.