

Risborough Carers Limited

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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?

Outstanding ☆

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

What life is like for people using this service:

People continued to receive an excellent, caring and compassionate support from kind and committed staff. The extremely caring nature of the service was sustained as a result of the well-established provider and the fact this is their family run business set up 27 years ago. The management led by example and successfully created a stable, loyal and reliable team.

People's continued to be extremely complimentary about the support they had and about meaningful relationships they were able to form with the staff. People referred to staff as 'friends' and staff referred to working together 'like a family'.

Staff continued to exceed in recognising what was important to people and ensured individually tailored approach that met people's personal needs, wishes and choices was delivered. There was evidence the staff often went 'the extra mile' to meet people's needs.

The staff discussed with people and helped people explore their needs and preferences in relation to support received and all people told us they were a driving force behind any decisions about their care. Staff excelled at respecting people's privacy and dignity. People were supported to be as independent as possible, which was in line with their goals and outcomes that stated people wished to remain at their own homes for as long as possible.

All people and relatives, without an exception said they would definitely recommend this service to family and friends.

The provider ensured people received safe care and treatment. People complimented the continuity of care provided by regular, skilled and competent staff which contributed to building meaningful relationships. People continued to receive their medicines safely and as prescribed. Risks to people's well-being and safety were assessed, recorded and updated when people's circumstances changed. The registered manager ensured any lessons learnt were reflected on to improve the service further.

People received personalised approach that met their needs and the service remained flexible to people's changing needs. People's rights to make own decisions were respected. People remained well supported to maintain good diet and access health services if needed.

The service remained well-led. The provider's quality assurance processes were effective and there was a focus on continuous improvement. People, staff and relatives were involved and listened to. The service worked well in partnership with other agencies, social and health professionals and external organisations.

More information is in Detailed Findings below.

Rating at last inspection:
Good (report published 21 April 2016).

About the service:

Risborough Carers Ltd are a domiciliary care agency (DCA). The service provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats in the community. At the time of our inspection the service supported 84 people of which 57 received personal care as the regulated activity.

Why we inspected:

This was a planned inspection based on the rating at the last inspection.

Follow up:

We will monitor all intelligence received about the service to inform the assessment of the risk profile of the service and to ensure the next planned inspection is scheduled accordingly.

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 safe.

Details are in our findings below.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Details are in our findings below.

Is the service caring?

Outstanding ☆

The service remains exceptionally caring.

Details are in our findings below.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service remains responsive.

Details are in our findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remains well-led.

Details are in our findings below.

Risborough Carers Ltd

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The 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.

Inspection team:

The inspection team consisted of one inspector, an assistant inspector 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:

Risborough Carers Ltd are a domiciliary care agency (DCA). The service provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats in the community. There was 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.

Notice of inspection:

We gave the service 48 hours' notice of the inspection visit because we needed to be sure the management would be in the office. We visited the office location on 11 October 2018 to see the registered manager and office staff; and to review care records and policies and procedures.

What we did:

Before the inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service and the service provider. The registered provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We looked at the notifications we had received for this service. Notifications are information about important events the service is required to send us by law.

We contacted 12 people and 5 relatives to gather their views about the support received. During the office site visit we looked at records, which included five people's care and medicines records. We checked recruitment, training and supervision records for four staff. We also looked at a range of records about how the service was managed. We also spoke with the director, the registered manager and three care staff.

After our site visit we contacted number of external health and social care professionals and commissioners to obtain their views about the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People were safe and protected from avoidable harm. No people or relatives we spoke with raised any concerns around any aspect of safety.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management:

- Risks to people's well-being were assessed, recorded and updated when people's needs changed.
- People's risk assessment included areas such as their mobility, skin integrity or medicine management. Staff were familiar with and followed people's risk management plans.
- The provider had a system to record accidents and incidents. We viewed the accidents log and saw appropriate action had been taken where necessary.

Systems and processes:

- People were supported by staff that knew how to raise safeguarding concerns.
- The provider had safeguarding policies in place and copies of both the local authorities' (they worked with) safeguarding procedures were available in the office, the team reported concerns accordingly.
- There was a business continuity plan that included various emergencies. The provider had a pool vehicle available for staff should their own cars were out of order which provided an additional contingency.

Staffing levels:

- People were supported by consistent, reliable, punctual staff and praised the continuity of care received. One person said, "It's one of the things that I like about the agency that I have a small number of regular carers that I see most of the time".
- People were protected against the employment of unsuitable staff as the provider followed safe recruitment practices.
- The provider used electronic system to ensure people's visits took place as planned and in the timely manner.

Using medicines safely:

- People continued to receive their medicines safely and as prescribed. One person said, "I always get my tablets at a time that I should have them".
- People's care records contained lists of people's current medicines.
- The register manager ensured people's medicine records were completed accurately.

Preventing and controlling infection:

- The provider ensured staff were trained in infection control. People told us staff washed their hands and use disposable gloves and aprons where required.
- The staff had access to protective personal equipment such as gloves and people's care plans highlighted the importance of using these.

Learning lessons when things go wrong:

- The registered manager ensured they reflected on where things could have been improved and used this

as an opportunity to improve the service for people and for staff.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes, promoted a good quality of life and was based on best practice.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law:

- The provider ensured people's needs were assessed prior to the commencement of the service to ensure these needs could be met and individual care plans put in place.
- People and relatives, if appropriate, told us they were fully involved in assessment and care planning process. One person said, "I was certainly asked what time I wanted the calls (visits) to happen".

Staff skills, knowledge and experience:

- People were supported by skilled staff that had ongoing training relevant to their roles.
- Staff were well supported in their roles and had regular one to one meetings with their line manager.

Eating and drinking:

- People's dietary needs and preferences were included in their care plans.
- People were supported by staff to maintain good nutrition and hydration.

Staff providing consistent, effective, timely care and involvement of health professionals:

- People benefitted from staff that knew how to meet people's needs well. One person said, "The carers that come to me are very knowledgeable and know what they are doing in terms of what I need help with".
- Staff worked well with external professionals to ensure people were supported to access health services and had their health care needs met.

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance:

- People's rights to make own decisions were respected and people were in control of their support. One person said, "As far as I'm concerned, I'm given plenty of choice, whether that's over when the calls happen, or how the week is organised, or indeed who I have as regular carers".
- People were supported by staff that knew the principles of The Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- The provider had systems in place to record people's capacity assessments related to specific decisions, if that was required.

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 as far as possible people make their own decisions and are 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.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

The service remained exceptionally caring and people told us they were always treated with upmost compassion, kindness, dignity and respect.

Treating people with kindness, compassion and respect:

- The service was a family run company which contributed to creating a 'personal touch' and a strong, visible person-centred approach. There was a high emphasis to sustain a 'family like' environment for people and staff alike. One staff member said, "(We are) like a one big team and carers are not looked at any less, carers are the face of the company".
- The management had very much a hands-on approach, this meant they led staff by example so the staff remained highly motivated to deliver excellent care.
- People remained exceptionally complimentary about the staff and the support received, people told us staff had empathy for them. Feedback from people reflected people were able to form meaningful, caring relationships with staff. Comments included, "They are really like good friends" and "My carers always want to know how I am, whether there's anything I'm worried about and if they can do anything else for me".
- Staff continued to exceed in recognising what was important to people and ensured individually tailored approach that met people's personal needs, wishes and choices was delivered.
- There was evidence the staff often went 'the extra mile' to meet people's needs. For example, to ensure people had their food topped up if they were unable to go out because of adverse weather, acute medicines delivered on time or had their hot meal in a power cut situation. There were numerous examples of staff going out of their way to help people.
- The team recognised and worked with people to reduce social isolation, they were particularly sensitive to times when people needed caring and compassionate support. People told us, "Nothing is ever too much trouble for either the carers or the agency. At Christmas they hire a room and decorate it all out with Christmas decorations and then all of the clients and their relatives can gather to spend time together playing party games and we have a lovely buffet. I've never heard of any other agency doing anything like this and I always look forward to it because it's nice to see other people who are cared for by the agency" and "My husband looks forward to the Christmas event that the agency organises. He loves playing bingo, and they usually make sure this is on offer when we are there together with all the other games. They put on a lovely spread of food and for my husband, these days, it's the only Christmas event that he goes to outside of our home, which is why I think we value it so much". This contributed to building and maintaining meaningful relationships with people, their families, friends and staff.
- All people and relatives we spoke with commented how satisfied they were with the service received. One person said, "We were both very impressed that they were able to deliver everything that I asked for and to be honest, nothing was too much trouble".
- All people without an exception said they would definitely recommend this service to family and friends.

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

- The staff discussed with people and helped people explore their needs and preferences in relation to

support received.

- All people told us they were a driving force behind any decisions about their care and support. One person said, "I must have spent a good couple of hours chatting to the manager about my health, what help I need and my life in general, felt involved with every aspect of my care".
- Where required, information was provided to people in a format that was accessible to them, for example, we saw one person received their weekly roster in a large print.
- People's communication needs were assessed and recorded in their care plan. For example, where one person's care plan said, '[person] may not hear, please check (understanding) and repeat if necessary'.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence:

- All people and relatives we spoke with told us staff excelled at respecting people's privacy and dignity. One relative told us, "I always hear [person's] carer going up to the bedroom and they always knock on the door and wait for him to say he's ready for them to come in".
 - People were supported to be as independent as possible, which was in line with their goals and outcomes that stated people wished to remain at their own homes for as long as possible.
 - People's care plans highlighted the importance of respecting privacy and dignity.
- The provider recognised people's diversity, they had policies in place that highlighted the importance of treating everyone in the same way. People's diverse needs, such as their cultural or religious needs were reflected in their care planning. Staff told us how they supported people's diverse needs. One member of staff said, "One person is able to practice their first language with me as I speak it too, and they always look forward to our visits so they can practice and learn (new words)".
- The provider ensured people's confidentiality was respected. People were fully involved around the recent changes to data protection legislation. One external professional told us, "Security and clients' confidentiality is obviously a high priority, any clients' information sent to me needs a password to open and the password is sent to me by other means".

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People continued to experience responsive care and support.

How people's needs are met, personalised care:

- The provider recognised people's changing needs and they implemented a creative way of ensuring staff were well informed about any changes to people's care or condition. This ensured staff had access to an up to date information at all times and were able to deliver right support.
- People were supported by regular staff that knew people's needs well. One person said, "It's one of the things that I like about the agency, that I have a small number of regular carers that I see most of the time. It's important to me because my memory isn't exactly what it used to be and I like to have carers who have been with me for some time because it gives them the opportunity to get to know me and importantly, know how I like things to be done". Another person said, "I think because the carers have been with me for a while, it allows me to get to know them better and for them to get to know me and how I like things to be done. It just happens naturally then".
- The management were responsive in terms of people's requests to accommodate changes to their scheduled visits. One person told, "If my carers weren't able to come early on the Wednesday, I wouldn't be able to go (for my appointment)".

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns:

- The provider had effective systems to manage complaints and the records reflected any issues received were recorded, fully investigated and responded to as per provider's policy.
- People told us they knew how to make a complaint, but never needed to. People told us any concerns were dealt with immediately. Comments included, "Just occasionally in the past I haven't got on well with a certain staff, but once I've spoken to the office, they've replaced them with someone else" and "I wanted to change the days I was having a bath. I mentioned it casually, to my carer and someone from the office rang me the same day and it was all sorted before bedtime!"
- The registered manager monitored all feedback received and ensured positive comments were passed on to the staff.

End of life care and support:

- The registered manager informed us no people received end of life support at the time of our inspection. The team would occasionally support people with end of life care and the service would work closely with other professionals to ensure people had dignified and pain free death.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The service remained well-led, the leadership and management assured person-centred, high quality care and a fair and open culture.

Leadership and management:

- The provider and the director were both very much involved in the day to day running of the service including working hands on, alongside staff where required.
- All people and relatives we spoke with praised the management and told us the service was well run. One person said, "I can't think of anything to demonstrate that they're not well-managed".
- The registered manager has worked for the company for 14 years and as in her post for over 4 years which contributed to the stability and continuity. The registered manager successfully created a good working atmosphere that contributed to high staff retention. The registered manager said, "It's not just about their (staff) work, it's about being supportive in other areas of their lives".

Plan to promote person-centred, high-quality care and good outcomes for people:

- All people and relatives we spoke with praised the service received. One person said, "I certainly think they are very well run and very open as well".
- The provider successfully maintained an open and transparent culture which contributed to staff work satisfaction and in turn the staff delivering good care for people.

Managers and staff are clear about their roles, and understand quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements; continuous learning and improving care:

- The provider had effective quality assurance systems in place. These included, medicine records, care planning, staff files and quality satisfaction surveys.
- The provider involved external consultancy for additional support around health and safety or human resources issues.
- There was a clear staffing structure and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities. For example, a designated member of staff was responsible for auditing medicine records, they held a meeting with the registered manager on monthly basis to go through the results and ensure if needed any concerns identified could be raised with the individual staff.
- The registered manager promoted continuous learning, they held reflective meetings with staff to discuss work practices, training, development needs and staff's well-being.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff:

- The provider involved people and more importantly ensured people were informed about any changes made as a result of the feedback. One person said, "They have definitely sent us a number of surveys over the time and what has always impressed me is that they also get back to us with the results and let us know what people have said to them".
- The staff told us they felt listened to, valued and able to contribute to the running of the service.

Working in partnership with others:

- The provider worked well with the local health and social care external professionals. One professional said, "I would recommend Risborough Carers to people who need care in their own homes and in fact, have done so in the past".
- The provider was a member of the relevant industry associations to ensure they were updated in terms of any changes to policies or good practice guidance.