

TLC Homecare Limited

# Town & Local Care

## Inspection report

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08 July 2021

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## Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

### About the service

Town & Local Care is a domiciliary care service that provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats in the community. Not everyone who used the service received personal care. CQC only inspects where people receive personal care. This is help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do, we also consider any wider social care provided. At the time of inspection, the service was providing personal care to 39 people

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

People felt safe when care workers visited. Recruitment checks were carried out before staff were employed and there were enough staff to keep people safe. Most people were very happy with the staffing arrangements although some felt the timing of calls could improve. Systems were in place to identify and manage risks associated with people's care. The provider checked staff were working in a safe environment. People's medicines were well managed. The service followed safe infection, prevention and control procedures.

Systems and processes for monitoring quality and safety were effective. The management team had identified some audits were overdue and had started taking action to address this. The service had a positive culture that was person centred and involved people and their families. Staff were well supported in their role.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

### Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was good (published 17 October 2017).

### Why we inspected

This was a planned inspection based on the previous rating.

We undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only.

We reviewed the information we held about the service. No areas of concern were identified in the other key questions. We therefore did not inspect them. Ratings from previous comprehensive inspections for those key questions were used in calculating the overall rating at this inspection.

### Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If we receive any concerning information we may inspect sooner.

## The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

### Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

### Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

# Town & Local Care

## **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 Care Act 2014.

### Inspection team

This inspection was carried out by two 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.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

### Notice of inspection

We gave the service 24 hours' notice of the inspection. This was because it is a small service and we needed to be sure that the registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

Inspection activity started on 8 July 2021 and ended on 20 July 2021. We visited the office location on 8 July 2021.

### What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return. This is information providers are required to send us with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. This information helps support our inspections.

During the inspection

We spoke with seven people who used the service and four relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with seven members of staff including the registered manager, support workers, care co-ordinator and field care supervisor.

We reviewed a range of records. This included four people's care records and multiple medication records. We looked at three staff files in relation to recruitment. A variety of records relating to the management of the service 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 the last inspection this key question was rated as good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were protected from the risk of abuse.
- Everyone told us they felt safe when care workers visited. One person said, "It feels safe with the carers because they're all trustworthy and they do a good job."
- Safeguarding systems were in place with clear records of safeguarding concerns and any action taken.
- Staff received safeguarding training and understood their responsibility to report all safeguarding concerns. They were confident any issues would be dealt with appropriately.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risks associated with people's care were assessed and managed safely. Care files had assessments which were reviewed and showed action was taken to reduce the risk of harm. For example, one person had support from a specialist around eating and drinking; this was well recorded in their assessment and care plan.
- The service ensured people lived and staff worked in a safe place. Environmental risk assessments were completed when people started using a service and reviewed alongside care plan reviews.
- Staff were appropriately trained and knew how to support people safely. They told us they received information about any changes in how they should deliver care. One care worker said, "We read the care plans whenever we are in the calls and when needed. [Name of registered manager] rings us to inform us of immediate changes and updates the care plans."

Staffing and recruitment

- Enough staff were deployed to keep people safe. Electronic call records indicated visit times were consistent although we got a mixed response from people about the timing of their calls. Some people told us their visits were sometimes late or times were changed. The registered manager said they regularly reviewed staffing arrangements and would closely monitor timings.
- People received their care from a familiar group of staff and told us they were happy with this. A relative said, "[Name of person] has three regular carers and she's very fond of them. It makes such a difference to have familiar faces every day."
- Recruitment was robust. Appropriate checks were carried out before staff were employed.

Using medicines safely

- Medicines were managed safely. The provider had appropriate systems in place to support the management of medicines. Staff who supported people with their medicines were trained.
- Care plans and medication administration records (MARs) were maintained. One person had a

handwritten MAR but this was not clearly legible and entries did not fully match the daily notes. The registered manager addressed this as soon as we brought it to their attention.

- People told us they received their medicines on time and these were administered safely. One person said, "The carers are very good at spotting if there's a problem with the medicines in the dosette box. They've even rung the GP to check I've got the right tablets." Another person said, "I can do my own tablets, but the carers remind me to take them and that's very helpful because sometimes I can forget."

#### Preventing and controlling infection

- The service had effective systems for managing infection risks including those presented during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Staff practices helped prevent and control infection. People who used the service and relatives consistently told us care staff wore appropriate personal protective equipment and disposed of it at the end of each visit. People told us the standard of hygiene and cleanliness during visits was good and their homes were always left in a clean and tidy condition.
- Staff completed infection, prevention and control training and had been provided with additional guidance around COVID-19. Staff told us they had received good support during the pandemic and had received updates as guidance had changed.

#### Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Accidents and incidents were monitored and analysed. The service identified lessons learned and took action to help prevent repeat events.
- The service communicated important information to staff, so they understood learning gained through experience. The management team used different communication systems, such as, App, emails and group chat to ensure staff were kept up to date.

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

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people; Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- People were generally very happy with the service and most said they would recommend it to others. Comments included, "This company is outstanding. The staff, that's the carers and the office staff, are so capable. It's all very efficiently run." and "My daughter says that Town and Local Care is 'A1' and I agree." One person told us they were concerned that the call times were not right for them, but said, "It's a well-run service generally."
- The service involved people in a meaningful way. People told us they were asked to give feedback about their experience. One person said, "The managers do ring quite regularly to ask how we're doing, and I can talk about any changes we might need."
- Staff felt valued and supported. They told us the provider focused on safe, quality care. One member of staff said, "Town and Local Care is very person centred and we try to improve the service at all times and engage with everyone. They [management] are great at communicating, they are friendly, and treat everyone as individuals."

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

- The registered manager was engaging and knowledgeable about the service. Staff told us the registered manager and office staff were approachable. People who used the service said they were comfortable talking to the management team and felt they were generally listened to although four people did say the service could improve the timing of visits.
- Systems and processes for monitoring quality and safety were effective. The service carried out a range of checks such as continuity audits, call monitoring and annual reviews with people who used the service. The management team identified they had fallen behind with some audits and had started taking action to address this.
- The provider had good oversight of the service and monitored service delivery. The registered manager felt well supported in their role.
- Communication across the service ensured everyone was kept up to date. Staff told us they were informed when any changes were made. Regular staff supervisions and team meetings were held which covered areas relating to quality and safety. One member of staff told us they had a recent supervision meeting and said, "It was all positive, I was very proud."

Working in partnership with others; 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 service worked collaboratively with others to benefit people using the service. People care records showed health professionals were involved in people's care.
- The registered manager understood the importance and benefits of working alongside other professionals.
- The provider had submitted important information to CQC to keep us informed of events such as expected deaths.