

Brighter Days Staffordshire Ltd

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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?

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

We inspected this service on 13 January 2017. This was an announced inspection. Our last inspection visit took place in February 2016 and at that time we found the service was rated as Good overall, although our question 'Is this service effective?' was rated as Requires Improvement. This was because assessments had not been completed to ensure decisions were only being made in people's best interests when they lacked capacity. On this inspection we found that improvements had been made.

The service was registered to provide personal care for people. Three people with a learning disability were supported by the provider in their own shared home. People referred to the staff members as personal assistants.

There was a registered manager in the service. 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.

People made decisions about their care and their personal assistants helped them to understand the information they needed to make informed decisions. The personal assistants sought people's consent before they provided care and they were helped to make decisions which were in their best interests.

People were protected from the risks of abuse because the personal assistants understood where harm may be caused and knew what action to take. The personal assistants supported people to understand any risks to prevent avoidable harm. Where people were concerned about their safety they knew who to speak with.

People kept their medicines in the bedroom and were helped to understand what their medicines were for and to take responsibility for them. The personal assistants knew why people needed medicines and when these should be taken.

People received support from their personal assistant at the times that suited them to enable them to be involved with activities and do the things they enjoyed. People chose to work, continue with their education and be involved with activities they enjoyed. People's health and wellbeing needs were monitored and they were supported to organise and attend health appointments as required.

People were treated with kindness, compassion and respect and the personal assistants promoted their independence. People liked their personal assistants who supported them and they had developed good relationships. People maintained relationships with their families and friends.

The personal assistants listened to people's views about their care and people were able to influence the development of the service. People knew how to complain and concerns were responded to.

The registered manager assessed and monitored the quality of care to ensure standards were met and maintained. They understood the requirements of their registration with us and informed us of information that we needed to know.

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.

People were protected from abuse and avoidable harm. People were supported to understand how to be safe and to take responsible risks. There were sufficient personal assistants to support people to do what they wanted to do and receive support and people could be responsible for their medicines.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

The personal assistants knew how to support people and promote their independence and well-being. People received healthcare to keep well and could choose what they wanted to eat and drink. People were supported to make decisions and where they needed help; decisions were made in their best interests with people who were important to them.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

People were supported by personal assistants who were kind and caring and respected them. The personal assistants were highly motivated to ensure people developed and maintain relationships and looked at different methods to develop communication and for people to express themselves and make choices about their life.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

People were encouraged to develop and maintain their independence. There were a variety of activities which people could take part in their home or when out and they could try new

activities. People could raise concerns or make a complaint and these were responded to.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well led.

The personal assistants demonstrated positive values to enhance people's care and give them opportunities to improve the service. The personal assistants were supported in their role and able to comment on the quality of service and raise any concern. Systems were in place to assess and monitor the quality of care.

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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 was planned to check 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 inspection took place on 13 January 2017 and was announced. The provider was given two days' notice because the location provides a domiciliary care service for younger adults who are often out during the day, and we needed to be sure that someone would be in. Our inspection team consisted of one inspector.

People who used the service shared one home and were supported by staff who people referred to as their personal assistant (PA) and we have used this term throughout our report.

We checked the information we held about the service and provider. Before the inspection, the 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 also reviewed other information about the service such as notifications they are required to submit to the Commission. We also looked at information about incidents at the service and the feedback we had received from the public. We used this information to formulate our inspection plan.

We spoke with two people who used the service, two relatives, four personal assistants and the registered manager. We did this to gain people's views about the care and to check that standards of care were being met.

We observed how the personal assistants interacted with people who used the service.

We looked at three peoples' care records to see if their records were accurate and up to date. We also

looked at records relating to the management of the service including quality checks.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People knew how to keep safe in their home and when out. Each person had a copy of an easy read guide which explained how to keep safe and what to do if they were concerned. One person told us, "I know people shouldn't hurt me and if they did I'd tell someone. It's wrong." The personal assistants (PA) had a good understanding of how to protect people and told us they knew people well and would be confident in addressing potential abuse or harm. One PA told us, "We are here for people and committed to providing the best service we can. None of us would hesitate reporting anything." The PAs knew the action to be taken to escalate concerns and knew about the whistleblowing procedure and how to use this. Whistleblowing is when concerns are raised about a wrong doing at work. One PA told us, "If we saw something of concern, then we would have to put any friendship aside and be professional. It's paramount that we speak up and we wouldn't let any type of abuse occur."

People were supported to take responsible risks and the PAs helped them with living skills and when out. The service was organised to enable people to take responsibility for their life and how they spent their time. One person told us, "My personal assistant (PA) looks after me and we are good together. If I need to cross the road they help me to keep safe when I cross and make sure I'm okay." The PAs were clear about their role as people's assistants and promoted their independence. One PA told us, "People are gaining more and more independence and it's sometimes about taking a step back and letting people take risks." People's support plans included information about how to help people to stay safe and how to minimise any risks.

People felt there was enough PAs available to provide support for them. People were responsible for the level of support they received and this was organised through personal budgets. A personal budget enables people to purchase their own care to support independent living. Agency staff were not used and all shifts were covered by existing PAs. People liked to know which PA was providing support and there was a copy of the PA support in their home. One person talked with us about which PA were sleeping in at night time and how important this was. Where specific activities were organised, additional support was provided to enable people to do the things they liked.

Recruitment checks were in place to ensure new PAs were suitable to work with people. When new PAs started they had an interview and spent three days with people so they could decide whether they wanted them to work at the service. The recruitment included requesting and checking references of their characters and their suitability to work with the people who used the service.

People stored their medicines in their bedroom and had responsibility for taking them. One PA told us, "People have their medicines delivered each month in a pack and they can see what days they need to take these. They tell us when they take these so we can check people are taking them. It's lovely to see them taking responsibility."

Is the service effective?

Our findings

On our previous inspection we saw that capacity assessments had not been completed to ensure decisions were only being made in people's best interests when they lacked capacity. This meant that there was a breach of Regulation 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. On this inspection we found that improvements had been made.

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 that 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. People can only be deprived of their liberty to receive care and treatment when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA.

We checked whether the provider was working within the principles of the MCA. People confirmed that their PAs sought their consent before they provided support and they had the ability to make everyday decisions about their care. Where it had been identified that people may lack capacity to make specific decisions, capacity assessments had been completed. For example, having the medicines they took and how to remain safe when going out and needing support. One relative told us, "We are so impressed with how Brighter Days manages their needs and keeps us involved with decisions about everything, including the Mental Capacity Assessments, which are so detailed." One PA told us, "It's been really interesting being involved with these assessments and supporting people to understand how we can help them make their own decisions. People here are supported to be in control of their own decisions and we act as a guide where they may need help."

When new PAs started they completed an induction which included spending time with people to start to get to know them. One PA told us, "This is people's home and I'm here to support them. I feel very lucky to be given this opportunity and it's a pleasure to support them." New PAs completed the care certificate when they did not have any care qualification. One PA told us, "I have completed the assessor's course for the care certificate so we will be able to assess how PAs are working. This will be better as it will be less intrusive on people as they know me."

There was a flexible and relaxed approach to meal times and people chose what they wanted to eat. People shared the finances for money and bills and one PA told us, "This works better as people get more for their money and as this is their home, it's what people would do. Bills get paid by direct debit and there is a house account. A standing order has been set up so people take an equal financial responsibility for living in their home." People were able to have food and drinks at any time and accessed the kitchen independently. The PAs understood the dietary needs of people who used the service and how to support people to prepare meals accordingly.

People were responsible for managing their own health care and continued to receive support from their family. One person told us, "I go to the doctors and hospital for check-ups. I know what I have to do so I'm

not poorly." The PAs understood where people had specific health concerns and could describe to us the support they provided to keep people well. The care records included information about any health care and people had a diary which they took with them when they went to work or day care provision. One person told us, "They write down what I've been doing and I tell my PA." When reading about the day's events, people smiled and enthusiastically gave further information about their day and what they enjoyed doing.

People had received support from a speech and language therapist and developed a communication passport to help others to understand their personal form of communication. One PA told us, "This helped us to support them as we understood that we needed to break everything down and just give individual phrases and instructions so they have time to understand." Another PA told us, "They are amazing and if they are having difficulty with explaining something, they will look for alternative ways to communicate. They will spell something out, or show us something that sounds like what they want to tell us. It's ingenious how they problem solve and look at different ways to tell us something." We saw when the PAs spoke with people they had a clear understanding of their communication style.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People were happy and liked living in their home and receiving support from their PAs. They told us their PAs were kind and caring and were always happy to help. People were recognised and valued as adults and the PAs showed a passionate commitment to enabling people. One relative told us, "They are treated as adults. The PA's never refer to people as boys and girls. They recognise they are adults and it's lovely to hear." We heard the PA's used adult language when speaking with people and recognised their achievements. For example, when people returned from work, they spoke about their day, asking how they spent their time and recognised the work they had completed.

People maintained relationships with family and friends. One person told us, "My family can come and visit me here any time or I stay with them." Relatives told us they continued to be involved with the support people received and were happy with how they were supported. One relative told us, "[Person who used the service] stays with us at our home and the PA's always make sure they have everything they need. When they are ready to leave, they tell me they want to go 'home'. It's lovely to hear that they know this is their home."

People's privacy and dignity was respected and people understood that the PAs were employed to support them and they retained control in their life. One relative told us, "They get respect here and people are reminded that they are in control. Doors are locked and people know they have the right to invite people in or refuse them. It's very clear that this is their home and they have a right to say what happens." A PA told us, "We know our role here is to support people in their home. If a door is locked we ask if we can come in. People choose who they want to let in their home and answer the door. When people want time alone, they have this. We are very respectful of people's wishes and it's been wonderful to see them grow in confidence and with their independence."

People chose how to spend their time and were given time to consider their options before making a decision. The PAs understood how to speak with people so they understood what was being said and could make choices. One PA told us, "[Person who used the service] likes to plan and prepare; [Person who used the service] uses sign language and pictures. We look at all the different ways we can help people to understand. It's only when they have all the information they can make a real choice about what they want, so we support them to understand." One relative told us, "[Person who used the service] is still developing socially and emotionally and often surprises us with the mature choices they make about their care and how they wants their life to be." We heard people choosing where to go later in the week, what activities to be involved in and what they wanted to eat for dinner." The PA's respected people's decisions and supported them to do the things they wanted to do.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People chose where to go and how to spend their time and we saw people were asked what they wanted to do that day. The support people received was organised around their planned activities. We saw the PAs were available to provide support throughout the day and spent time with people to meet all their support needs, and keep them safe. People were able to work, gain further education and be involved in group activities and follow their interests. People spoke enthusiastically about how they spent their time and one person told us, "I like going to my groups and I'm really busy. I go to the gym, trampolining, drama and street dancing. I go with my PA who helps me to get there." A PA told us, "Some days people are out more than they are at home. They enjoy being involved and we will help them to plan what they want to do and support them to arrange it." Some people worked voluntarily in a café which sold meals to people from local companies and one person helped to serve meals in a local nursing home. They told us, "I love working there and helping and I helped when they had their Christmas lunch." One PA told us, "It's fantastic work and they meet loads of people and they love it."

People had a support plan and discussed this with their PAs to ensure it met their current support needs. Support plan update meeting were carried out three monthly. One PA told us, "We don't have joint meetings as it's difficult for everyone to contribute in a group so we look at all issues individually. We ask people if they are happy and if they have any issues." If there's anything out of the ordinary, we have a significant event reporting form. This makes things easier for us to notice if there are any trends and changes. We look at this when we do the reviews with people." Family members felt involved with how care was reviewed and one relative told us, "The PAs are friendly and professional and liaise with us when necessary, keeping us in touch with their daily life."

People knew how to complain if they needed to and one person told us, "I tell the PAs if I'm not happy. They always help me." One relative told us, "If you talk about anything then it's sorted straight away and you always get feedback on any changes or developments." There had been no formal complaints.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

There were systems in place to monitor the quality of the service and audits were undertaken by the registered manager. The registered manager completed checks on support plans, medicines management and health and safety. Where concerns with quality were identified, action was taken to improve quality and the action plan and improvements were monitored and reviewed. The registered manager told us, "We want to provide a good service for people and we know we can do these to help identify where any improvements could be made."

People were asked about the quality of the service and where improvements could be made. Relatives could comment on whether they felt included in the management of the home and whether they were kept informed of any developments. One relative told us, "There isn't anything to worry about here. I filled in questionnaires about the service and I'm happy with how everything is and the support [Person who used the service] gets." There was an easy read quality check that people completed independently about whether they were happy with the service. One person told us, "The PA's ask me if I like it here and I tell them yes. I can tell them if I want to do anything or don't like anything."

The service had a registered manager. The PAs said that the registered manager provided leadership, guidance and the support they needed to provide good care to people who used the service. A PA told us, "The manager is always available. Even when they are not here, they call and check and are so committed to the service. We always feel supported and can approach them about anything." Meetings were organised monthly to give PAs the opportunity to meet and discuss the service.

The registered manager assessed and monitored the personal assistants learning and development needs through regular meetings and working alongside them. The registered manager told us, "This gives me the opportunity to see their working practices whilst we are working together." The meetings were arranged each month and one PA told us, "If we have any suggestions then we raise them. We can always suggest some different way of working and the manager is very supportive." The registered manager and PA's values were based on respect for each other and putting people at the heart of the service.

The registered manager understood the responsibilities of their registration with us. They reported significant events to us, such as safety incidents, in accordance with the requirements of their registration.