

St Alex Support Limited

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Inspection report

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Date of inspection visit:
27 January 2017

Date of publication:
28 April 2017

Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection on 6 September 2016 and found there was a breach of regulations in relation to the safe management of medicine.

At the inspection on 6 September 2016 we found that medicines were not all stored safely as the temperature of medicines was not being recorded. This was of concern as the effectiveness of some medicines are affected if they are stored above 25 degrees Celsius. St Alex Support Limited is registered to provide personal care and support for people in their own homes. At the time of our inspection 17 people received care and support from this service across six supported living schemes managed by St Alex Support Limited. The majority of people living at the services had mental health needs, with each scheme offering a service to men or women.

St Alex Support Limited had a registered manager at 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.

We undertook an announced focused inspection on 27 January 2017 to check that the service was now meeting legal requirements in relation to the safe management of medicines. This report only covers our findings in relation to this requirement. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for St Alex Support Limited on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

At the inspection on 6 September 2016 people told us they were happy living at the services and staff were caring and kind.

At the inspection on 27 January 2017 people told us they enjoyed living at the services and felt well supported. We found medicines were now safely managed across all locations and the provider had effective systems in place to manage medicines safely.

As improvements have been made we are able to change the rating for the Safe domain from requires improvement to good.

We will review the overall ratings for the service at our next comprehensive inspection.

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. Storage of medicines temperatures was recorded and medicines were stored safely.

The provider audited the management and administration of medicines on a regular basis to minimise the risk of errors.

St Alex Support Limited

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.

The inspection took place on 27 January and was announced. The provider was given 72 hours' notice because the location provided a domiciliary care service and we needed to be sure that the registered manager would be available. The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

Before the inspection we looked at information CQC held about the service. This included previous inspection reports and notifications we had received. A notification is information about important events which the service is required to send us by law.

As part of the inspection process we visited five locations to check medicines management and spoke with five staff and the registered manager. We spoke briefly with five people living at the service to get their views of the service, and looked around the communal areas of the services.

We looked at six medicine administration audits for each service and checked the training records in relation to medicines management. We checked the stock of sixteen medicines against the medicine administration records across the five locations.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

At the inspection in September 2016 we checked medicine records against stocks. They tallied and were accurately recorded. However, there were no records of the temperature medicines were stored at. This was a concern as the efficacy of medicines can be affected by temperatures above 25 degrees Celsius.

At this inspection in January 2017 we found medicines were stored safely. There were secured storage boxes containing medicines at each location. Temperature records had been maintained since 16 September 2016.

We checked medicine administration records (MAR) against stocks for sixteen boxed medicines across the services and found they tallied at all locations. On two occasions the medicine administration record had not been completed correctly for one medicine. The registered manager told us the staff who made the errors on the MAR sheet would meet with the registered manager to discuss the error and their competence to provide medicines would be re-evaluated before they could resume duties. We saw following our inspection that the registered manager had met with the relevant staff.

Staff knew how to manage medicines safely. We could see that the temperature for storing medicines had on the odd occasion gone above 25 degrees Celsius. Where this had happened staff told us that remedial action had been taken, including opening the window or turning down the radiator to ensure that the temperature had dropped below the required level.

We could see that the registered manager audited the management of medicines on a weekly basis and we checked the last six audits for each location. The audits covered a wide range of areas including storage, administration and training. Following the inspection the registered manager told us he would refine the process further to include checking stocks and records of boxed tablets of medicines.

We could see that staff had been trained in managing and administering medicines. The provider required staff to be trained on an annual basis and training records showed staff were up to date with training.