

Mr Matthew James Hill

Hills Angels Homecare

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection of this service on 3 February 2016. After the inspection we received concerns in relation to how staff were recruited to ensure they were suitable to work with people. As a result we undertook a focused inspection to look into those concerns. This report only covers our findings in relation to this topic. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Hills Angels Homecare on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Hills Angel Homecare provides domiciliary care for people who live in their own home in Tamworth and Lichfield and the surrounding areas. At the time of our inspection, nine people were receiving personal care support from the provider.

The provider was also the 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.

The provider had not completed all the necessary recruitment checks to confirm new staff were of good character to work with people before they started to work. The necessary checks were only completed when staff began work, and the registered manager had not assessed any risk to people, although they initially worked in a supervised role.

People felt safe when being supported by staff who knew how to protect people if they suspected they were at risk of abuse or harm and how to report concerns. People had a copy of their support plan in their home and were happy with how their care was delivered. A copy of this plan was not easily accessible in the office where staff needed to gain further information or to record any review of care.

People were positive about the way staff treated them and said staff were kind and compassionate. People told us staff knew them well and were encouraged to be independent. People's privacy and dignity was upheld in their homes and they were supported to take their medicines to keep well.

We found a breach of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. You can see what action we told the provider to take at the back of the full version of the report.

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.

All recruitment checks to ensure staff were suitable to work with people had not been carried out. People felt safe when they received care and care records included information to inform staff of how to keep people safe. Care records maintained in the office were not easily accessible for staff. There were sufficient staff available to provide care and support for people.

Requires Improvement ●

Hills Angels Homecare

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.

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection of this service on 3 February 2016. After that inspection we received concerns in relation to how staff were recruited to ensure they were suitable to work with people. As a result we undertook a focused inspection to look into those concerns. This report only covers our findings in relation to this topic. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Hills Angels Homecare on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

This unannounced inspection visit took place on 1 November 2016 and was carried out by one inspector. On this occasion we did not ask the provider to send us 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. However we offered the provider the opportunity to share information they felt relevant with us.

We used a range of different methods to help us understand people's experience including speaking with one person and two relatives, four staff and the provider.

We looked at three people's 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 recruitment files.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

When new staff started working in the service all the required recruitment checks were not completed to ensure they were suitable to work with people who used the service. We saw the provider had not obtained references for the staff and explored their employment history or obtained police checks prior to being offered employment in the service. New staff completed an induction which included shadowing experienced staff but the provider had not carried out any risk assessments to ensure staff could work safely with people who used the service. One member of staff told us, "My references were checked before I started and I filled in a police check later." People had been informed that new staff may be waiting for their police checks to be completed but people were not aware that other checks including references and checking their identity had not been carried out. This meant the provider could not ensure that they were suitable to work with people who used the service.

This demonstrated a breach a breach in Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Staff had a good knowledge of each person's identified risks including how people were supported to move and walk and people told us they felt safe. One person told us, "The staff know what they are doing. They help me get about and when they are here I don't worry." One member of staff told us, "I was new to care work and the training I had was really good. I shadowed staff for a while and when I eventually worked on my own I felt confident that I knew what I was doing." Another member of staff told us, "We are a small team so are close. When anything changes we always get told about this from the manager, and we can look in the care records when we go on the visit. If we notice any changes we just tell the manager and he just makes the changes straight away." People had risk assessments in place to show how risks needed to be minimised and for them to remain safe and people and staff had access to these. One member of staff told us, "The first thing we do is check the care plan, if anything is wrong or if something changes we let the manager know so it can be changed." People had a copy of their care records in their home and one person told us, "I have a look through it and I'm happy it says what I need." A copy of the records was also available in the office, although systems had not been developed to ensure this was easily accessible to enable staff to review or read information.

People were protected from the risks of abuse because staff knew how to recognise the signs of abuse and what actions to take if they felt people were at risk. Staff were confident they would be taken seriously if they raised concerns with the provider and knew how to report concerns independently. One member of staff told us, "I had safeguarding training when I started here and if there are any problems or if I'm worried about anything, I go straight to the manager and it's sorted out." Another member of staff told us, "I have the number to call if I am worried about anything. We had training about what abuse was and how to recognise this and I'm confident I would know what to do if I saw anything."

Some people were responsible for taking their own medicines and were independent in this area and other people needed support or prompting. Where people received medicines to keep well, information was recorded in their care records to inform the staff when people needed to take their medicines to keep well.

One person told us, "I am responsible for my own medicines but the staff always ask me if I've taken them just to be sure, which is nice." A relative told us, "[Person who used the service] has a lot of creams and the staff know what to give and where to apply them. I'm really happy with what they do and what they know." Staff received training to safely administer medicines and one member of staff told us, "For most people we have to just prompt them to take them. There are two charts where medicines and creams are recorded. We know what they are taking because it's recorded on the medicines review form. We need to know what they are used for and how these help people."

There were sufficient staff to provide people with the agreed level of support and people were able to choose at what time they wanted their support. One relative told us, "They are very adaptable and we changed the time to suit us and our routine. There was no problem doing this." The provider was clear about the future of the service and how care should be provided. They told us, "We recognised we were growing too large as an organisation so we have looked at what care we can provide and are now operating again as a small service. This is better for people and we can concentrate on getting the quality right."

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Personal care	Regulation 19 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Fit and proper persons employed Recruitment procedures were not operated effectively to ensure that persons employed were suitable to work with people who used the service.