

Choices Nursing & Care (Lancaster) Ltd

Choices Nursing and Care Lancaster Limited

Inspection report

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Date of inspection visit:
21 December 2016

Date of publication:
19 January 2017

Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection of this service on 11 and 13 May 2016. At this inspection breaches of legal requirements were found. After the comprehensive inspection, the provider wrote to us to say what they would do to meet legal requirements in relation to the breach. We undertook this focused inspection to check that they had followed their plan and to confirm that they now met legal requirements. This report only covers our findings in relation to those requirements.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Choices Nursing and Care Lancaster Limited on our website at www.cqc.org.uk

This announced focused inspection took place on 21 December 2016. We gave the registered provider notice of our visit as the service is small and we wanted to be sure someone would be there to assist us.

Choices Nursing and Care Lancaster Ltd is a small domiciliary care agency which provides personal care to adults with a disability living in Lancaster, Morecambe and surrounding districts. At the time of inspection there were twenty people receiving a service from Choices Nursing and Care Lancaster Limited. Nine staff were employed.

There was a registered manager in place. 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 service was last inspected on 11 and 13 May 2016. At this comprehensive inspection we found the registered provider was not meeting all the fundamental standards. We identified a breach to Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2014. The registered provider had failed to ensure recruitment procedures were established and operated effectively to ensure that person's employed were of good character.

Following the comprehensive inspection in May 2016, we asked the registered provider to submit an action plan to show what changes they were going to make to become compliant with the appropriate Regulation. The registered provider returned the action plan to demonstrate the improvements they intended to make. We used this focused inspection to look to check if the actions set out within the action plan had been completed.

At this focused inspection carried out in December 2016, we found the required improvements had been made.

Systems had been implemented to ensure all checks were made prior to staff being offered employment. The registered manager had introduced a checklist to give direction as to what information was required before a staff member commenced work. The registered manager audited the staff records to ensure

processes were correctly followed.

From the records we viewed, we noted the registered manager had carried out suitable checks so they could be assured of the potential staff member's suitability for working with vulnerable people.

As well as implementing new processes, we found the registered provider had carried out an audit of all staff records related to staff recruited prior to the May 2016 inspection. A full audit had been carried out, all missing information was sought and files were reorganised.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

The service was sometimes safe.

We found that action had been taken ensure suitable checks were in place before staff members were employed. This allowed the registered manager to check the suitability of staff for working with vulnerable people.

We could not improve the rating for "Is the Service safe?" from requires improvement because to do so requires consistent good practice over time. We will check this during our next planned comprehensive inspection.

Choices Nursing and Care Lancaster 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.

This announced focused inspection visit of Choices Nursing and Care Lancaster Limited took place on 21 December 2016. This inspection visit was carried out to check that improvements to meet legal requirements planned by the provider after our May 2016 inspection visit had been made. We inspected the service against one the five questions' we ask about services: is the service safe? This is because the service was not meeting some legal requirements.

The inspection was carried out by an adult social care inspector.

Prior to the inspection taking place, information from a variety of sources was gathered and analysed. This included notifications submitted by the provider relating to incidents, accidents, health and safety and safeguarding concerns which affect the health and wellbeing of people.

At the inspection visit we spoke with the registered manager and looked at four staff records.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

At the comprehensive inspection carried out in May 2016, we identified a breach to Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008, (Regulated Activities) 2014. Systems were not in place to ensure suitable checks were made prior to a member of staff being employed. We found references were not routinely sought from previous employers. This meant satisfactory conduct in previous employment had not been reviewed and considered. Following the inspection visit we asked the registered manager to provide us with an action plan. The registered manager sent us an action plan to show what improvements they intended to make to ensure they became compliant with the required Regulation.

We carried out this focussed inspection on 21 December 2016 to check to see action had been taken. At this inspection visit we found the required improvements had been made.

As part of the inspection process we spoke with the registered manager. They told us the care manager was responsible for collecting all the required information for new employees. To assist them in their role, the registered manager had developed a recruitment checklist which was placed at the front of the employees file. The employment checklist detailed all the information required from a potential employee before an offer of employment could be given. This guided the care manager to take all the required action.

The registered manager provided us with a list of all employees. It was noted there had been three new staff recruited since the last inspection visit. We viewed the employment records for these three new starters and noted files were in an organised state and information was easy to locate. Each file had a checklist at the front and there was evidence the required checks had taken place.

Application forms required potential staff members to log their employment history and to state the reason they left the employment. We noted on one person's record there was not a full employment history for the staff member. The registered manager had explored this with the person and could provide an explanation to the gaps.

We noted the registered manager routinely requested two references, one of which was the staff member's last employer. On one occasion a member of staff had only been employed within one job role. The registered manager therefore sought a character reference from the person's tutor at College.

The registered manager also verified a potential staff member's identity by requesting to see official evidence of their identity. For example, they took copies of passports and driving licences or utility bills belonging to the person. This allowed the registered provider to check to see a person was who they said they were.

We saw evidence of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks being carried out prior to the potential staff member starting work. A valid DBS check is a statutory requirement for people providing a regulated activity within health and social care. We noted the registered provider maintained the letter verifying the check had been completed and the outcome. A written record was then inputted onto the checklist to evidence the

required information had been received. From the records viewed, we saw that staff were not allowed to start working with vulnerable people before the DBS check was in place.

The registered manager said they audited the work of the care manager to ensure all the required information was in place. At present the registered manager only gave verbal feedback to the care manager. They said they planned on keeping a written record of all findings so that information could be shown to relevant parties as required. They said this would help the care manager and would help them identify any trends or themes.

The registered manager said following the inspection visit in May 2016, they reviewed all staff files to ensure they were brought up to the required standard. We selected one of the staff files and noted the file followed the same format as the new starters and all necessary information was in place.