

Valor Care Services, Training and Consultancy Limited

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Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Requires Improvement ●
Is the service safe?	Requires Improvement ●
Is the service effective?	Requires Improvement ●
Is the service well-led?	Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

The last inspection of this service was carried out on 17 June 2015 when we found the provider was in breach of the regulations. This was because the provider had failed to undertake all the relevant recruitment checks on staff, ensure staff were always suitably trained to carry out all the duties they were employed to perform, and operate good governance systems.

After that inspection, the provider wrote to us to say what they would do to meet legal requirements in relation to these breaches. We undertook this announced inspection on 19 January 2016 to check the provider had followed their action plan and now met legal requirements. We told the provider two days before our visit that we would be coming to ensure they would be available.

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 'Valor & SFTK Care Services Ltd' on our website at www.cqc.org.uk

Valor & SFTK Care Services Ltd is a domiciliary care agency that provides personal care and support to people living in their own homes. The agency specialises in the care and support of older people who have been discharged from hospital. They work closely with NHS continuing care teams from the London Boroughs of Sutton and Merton. There were 10 people receiving a domiciliary care service from the agency when we inspected them.

The service had a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have a legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

During our focused inspection, we found that the registered provider had followed their action plan, which they had said would be implemented by October 2015. We saw legal requirements had been met because the provider had improved its arrangements for recruiting and training staff and good governance. This meant relevant employment checks were carried out on new staff, existing staff were appropriately trained, and the quality and safety of the care and support people using the service received was routinely monitored by the provider.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

We found that appropriate action had been taken by the provider to improve safety.

The provider ensured appropriate employment checks took place before staff started work for the agency. Specifically, the provider now obtained two written references from new staffs previous employers and carried out up to date criminal records checks on them. This mitigated the risk of people receiving personal care and support from staff who might not be 'fit' or 'proper' persons to perform care work. The provider was now meeting legal requirements.

However, while improvements had been made we have not revised the rating for this key question. To improve the rating to 'Good' would require a longer term track record of consistent good practice in relation to the safe recruitment of new staff.

We will review our rating for safe at the services next comprehensive inspection.

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service effective?

We found that appropriate action had been taken by the provider to improve the services effectiveness.

The provider ensured staff were appropriately trained to carry out the personal care duties they were employed to perform. Specifically, staff had received end of life care, food hygiene and mental capacity training. This meant staff had the right mix of knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the people they supported. The provider was now meeting legal requirements.

However, while improvements had been made we have not revised the rating for this key question. To improve the rating to 'Good' would require a longer term track record of consistent good practice in relation to the effective training of staff.

We will review our rating for effective at the services next comprehensive inspection.

Requires Improvement ●

Is the service well-led?

We found that appropriate action had been taken by the provider to ensure the home was well-led.

The provider operated effective good governance systems and regularly checked the quality of care provided to people. These on-going audits were used to drive improvement.

However, while improvements had been made we have not revised the rating for this key question. To improve the rating to 'Good' would require a longer term track record of consistent good practice in relation to the services quality monitoring and governance arrangements.

We will review our rating for well-led at the services next comprehensive inspection.

Requires Improvement 

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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 checked 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 was undertaken by a single inspector on 19 January 2016. We gave the provider 48 hours' notice of the inspection because the service is small and the manager is often out of the office supporting staff or providing care. We needed to be sure that they would be in.

This inspection was completed to check that improvements to meet legal requirements planned by the provider after our comprehensive inspection in June 2015 had been made. We inspected the service against three of the five questions we ask about services: Is the service safe? Is the service effective? Is the service well-led?

Before our inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service, this included the provider's improvement plan we asked them to send us, which set out the action they would take to meet legal requirements.

During our inspection we visited the service's office and spoke with the registered manager and a senior care coordinator. We also looked at various records that related to the overall management of the service, including 10 staff files, and numerous quality assurance audits.



Our findings

At our comprehensive inspection of this service in June 2015 we found the provider was in breach of the regulations. This was because they had failed to ensure the safe recruitment of staff. Specifically, the provider had not always obtained two written references from previous employers or completed criminal records checks on all new staff before they had started working for the agency. This had placed people using the service at unnecessary risk of receiving personal care and support from staff who might not be 'fit' or 'proper' persons to perform this type of work.

At this focused inspection we found the provider had taken appropriate steps to follow their written action plan and address the staff recruitment issues described above. We found the provider now managed staff recruitment safely.

Staff records we looked at, which included the agency's four most recently recruited members of staff, all contained up to date and satisfactory pre-employment checks. We saw these recruitment checks had been carried out before these staff had started working for the agency. These checks covered staff recruitment, including verifying a person's identity, obtaining references from their previous employers, checking their eligibility to work in the UK and undertaking criminal record checks. Other information these files held included completed application forms, which contained information about their previous health and social care experience and qualifications, and their full employment history. The files also contained interview questions and answers, as well as health declarations to confirm the applicants were fit to work in the roles they had applied for.



Our findings

At our comprehensive inspection of this service in June 2015 we found the provider was in breach of the regulations. This was because they had failed to ensure all staff were appropriately trained. Specifically, not all staff had received training on some key aspects of their role, such as end of life care, food hygiene and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. This meant people using the service might be at risk of not having their needs fully met by suitably knowledgeable and skilled staff.

At this focused inspection we found the provider had taken appropriate steps to follow their written action plan and address the staff training issues described above. We found the provider now managed staff training effectively.

People received care and support from staff who were appropriately trained. Records showed us that since our last inspection of the service most staff had received training in key aspects of their role. This included understanding their role as domiciliary care workers, dementia awareness, mental health and learning disability awareness, end of life care, food hygiene, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, safeguarding adults, moving and handling, nutrition, infection prevention and control, privacy and dignity, and equality and diversity. We saw a copy of the staff handbook, which staff confirmed they had been given as part of their induction. Staff spoke positively about the training they had received. One member of staff told us, "I think the training I've received since joining the agency has been excellent, especially my induction and the care certificate course they asked me to complete." The Care Certificate is a nationally recognised set of standards that gives staff an introduction to their roles and responsibilities within a care setting.

The provider told us they had now recruited a training manager to ensure the on-going training needs of the agency's staff team were met. The provider also told us they had recently attended an 'implementing the Care Certificate' workshop arranged by Skills for Care. Skills for Care is an independent body that helps providers of adult social care obtain the knowledge and skills they need to deliver good quality care to people receiving these services.



Our findings

At our comprehensive inspection of this service in June 2015 we found the provider was in breach of the regulations. This was because they did not always operate good governance systems to monitor the quality and safety of the service people received. Specifically, these governance systems had failed to pick up that not all staff files contained all the information they should regarding employment checks, which the provider should have carried out before new staff started working for the agency, and failed to review staff training requirements.

At this focused inspection we found the provider had taken appropriate steps to follow their written action plan and improve their quality monitoring arrangements.

The provider recognised the importance of regularly monitoring the quality of the service provided to people. Records indicated the agency had introduced a new electronic system to monitor staff recruitment checks and staff training achievements and needs. For example, we saw the system made it clear when staff's training would need to be refreshed, which the provider told us, helped the agency plan its staff training programme. The provider told us they and their senior care coordinator were responsible for routinely checking staff recruitment and training files, and ensuring they contained all the relevant information and documents they were required to include.