

Extel Limited

# Attaining Independence

## Inspection report

The Cabin  
Alcester Road, Hollywood  
Birmingham  
B47 5NS

Tel: 01214335666

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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

About the service:

Attaining Independence is a domiciliary care and 'Supported Living Service' that provides personal care and support to people with a learning disability or a mental health condition in their own homes. At the time of our visit they were supporting six people who owned their own individual homes.

People's experience of using this service:

People supported by the service told us the registered manager and staff who supported them were polite, caring and promoted their independence. They also commented on how professional in their approach to their work was. One said, "I don't know where I would be without them. They are so kind and treat me so well."

People who used Attaining Independence had their support plan devised in partnership with them. People felt consulted and listened to about how they were supported.

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible. People we spoke with confirmed this.

The service worked in partnership with healthcare professionals and families to ensure people's health care needs were met. People were supported to attend healthcare appointments to ensure their health and wellbeing was maintained.

There had not been any safeguarding incidents or complaints since the last inspection. However, policies and procedures were in place and the registered manager understood the actions to take should there be any incidents.

During the inspection visit people told us staff were kind and attentive towards them. They said they were caring, patient and respectful. One person said, "I don't know where I would be without them. They are so kind and treat me so well."

People supported by the service told us they were treated with respect and by caring staff.

People told us and staff confirmed to us there were enough staff on duty to ensure people received care in a timely way. In addition, sufficient staff were deployed so that people had opportunity to access a wide range of activities including access to the local community settings.

Staff responsible for assisting people with their medicines had received training to ensure they had the competency and skills required.

Risk assessments had been developed to minimise the potential risk of harm to people. These had been

kept under review and were relevant to the care provided.

The registered provider and the registered manager used a variety of methods to assess and monitor the quality of the service. This enabled Attaining Independence to be monitored and improve systems and processes that were identified through their quality monitoring programme.

Rating at last inspection: Good (Report published 12 April 2016)

Why we inspected: This was a planned inspection based on the rating at the last inspection.

Follow up: The next scheduled inspection will be in keeping with the overall rating. We will continue to monitor information we receive from and about the service. We may inspect sooner if we receive concerning information about the service.

## 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 safe  
Details are in our Safe findings below.

Good ●

### Is the service effective?

The service was effective  
Details are in our Effective findings below.

Good ●

### Is the service caring?

The service was caring  
Details are in our Caring findings below.

Good ●

### Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive  
Details are in our Responsive findings below

Good ●

### Is the service well-led?

The service was well-led  
Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Good ●

# Attaining Independence

## Detailed findings

### Background to this inspection

**The 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 team** • Consisted of an adult social care inspector.

**Service and service type** • This domiciliary service provides personal care to people living in their own homes. In addition, they also can provide support for people living in supported living settings, so that they can live as independently as possible. People's care and housing are provided under separate contractual agreements. CQC does not regulate premises for supported living; this inspection looked at people's care and support.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

**Notice of inspection** • This comprehensive inspection visit took place on February 26th, 2019 and was announced. The provider was given 48 hours' notice because the location provided a domiciliary care service to people who lived in the community. We needed to be sure that we could access the office premises and speak with people.

**What we did preparing for and carrying out this inspection** • Before our inspection we completed our planning tool and reviewed the information we held on the service. This included notifications we had received from the provider, about incidents that affect the health, safety and welfare of people supported by the service and previous inspection reports.

We also checked to see if any information concerning the care and welfare of people supported by the service had been received. We contacted the local contracts commissioning department. This helped us to gain a balanced overview of what people experienced accessing the service.

As part of the inspection we used information the provider sent us in the Provider Information Return (PIR). This is information we require providers to send us at least once annually to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make.

During the inspection visit we spoke with a range of people about Attaining Independence, they included three people who used the service, the registered manager and four staff members.

We looked at records relating to the management of the service. We did this to ensure the management team had oversight of the service and they could respond to any concerns highlighted or lead the agency in ongoing improvements. We also looked at staffing levels, training records and recruitment procedures for staff.

# Is the service safe?

## Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm

People were safe and protected from avoidable harm. Legal requirements were met.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- The service had safe, effective safeguarding systems in place and staff members spoken with had a good understanding of what to do to make sure people were protected from harm.
- No safeguarding alerts had been received since the last inspection.
- We spoke with one person who received a service who said, "I feel safe with everyone here. Also, they visit quite a lot which makes me feel better."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Care plans we looked at contained explanations of the control measures for staff to follow to keep people safe and reduce risk of accidents and incidents.
- We found care records looked at included risk assessments that covered, health and safety, the environment, falls and medication. Information contained details comprised of the person's level of independence and action to support them.
- The management team continued to encourage people to be independent and had a positive outlook to risk taking. A person who used the service said, "They do encourage me to do things on my own but we talk about it first."

Staffing and recruitment

- We looked at how the service was staffed and found appropriate arrangements were in place.
- Staffing levels continued to match people's requirements. Sickness and staff leave was managed between the team to maintain continuity of care.
- Staff continued to be recruited safely with thorough checks in place to ensure suitability of potential personnel.

Using medicines safely

- We looked at medication records and found medicines to be managed safely. One staff member said, "Anyone responsible for medicines have had training and competency testing."
- Medicines were managed in line with The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) national guidance. This showed the service had systems to protect people from unsafe storage and administration of medicines.
- The registered manager regularly completed medication audits to check their procedures and processes were safe.

Preventing and controlling infection

- If required staff told us there was sufficient personal protective equipment, such as disposable gloves and

aprons to maintain good standards of infection control.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- There had been no incidents or accidents However if they occurred any accident or 'near miss' would be reviewed to see if lessons could be learnt and to reduce the risk of similar incidents.



# Is the service effective?

## Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence

People's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- Care plans we looked at showed expected outcomes were identified and ensured promoting people's independence would be a priority. This was demonstrated by documentation that contained individual daily programmes. These set out aims and goals to be achieved.
- Care and support plans were regularly reviewed, we confirmed this by viewing care records.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Training schedules looked at continued to demonstrate a comprehensive training programme for all staff. They had a programme of mandatory training. For example, they included, safeguarding, and medication.
- Staff told us training continued to be 'excellent'.

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People we spoke with told us they were happy with the support they received with their meal preparation and enjoyed shopping trips with staff to choose their own meals and food supplies. One person who used the service said, "I do my own shopping and choose the food and we cook together."
- Care plans seen confirmed people's dietary needs had been assessed and support and guidance recorded as required.

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care; Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- We found evidence the registered manager was referencing current legislation, standards and evidence based on guidance to achieve effective outcomes.
- People were supported to attend healthcare appointments and care records contained evidence of visits to healthcare professionals. These included, dentists, GP and opticians.

Adapting service, design, decoration to meet people's needs

- The agency had systems to identify record and meet communication and support needs of people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss. This was so they could adapt the service to ensure they received the best care and support. This was a domiciliary agency so people received care in their own homes.

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

We looked at how the service gained people's consent to care and treatment in line with the Mental Capacity Act (MCA). Processes were in place for people to give their consent to care and support.

- The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) do not currently apply in settings such as domiciliary care where people are resident in their own homes. However, the management team were aware of (DoLS). Staff

demonstrated a good awareness of related procedures.

# Is the service caring?

## Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect

People were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; equality and diversity

- We received positive comments from people who used the service about the support and how they were treated by staff and the management team. One person said, "I don't know where I would be without them. They are so kind and treat me so well."
- Staff spoken with had a good understanding of protecting and respecting people's human rights. They talked with us about the importance of supporting people's different and diverse needs. Care records seen had documented people's preferences and information about their backgrounds. Additionally, the service had carefully considered people's human rights and support to maintain their individuality. Documents for future service users included information of protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010, such as their religion, disability, cultural background and sexual orientation. The registered manager told us they had systems in place to ensure people's human rights were upheld.
- The service continued to work within the REACH standards. These are a set of voluntary standards for people. They are about ensuring how each person should live their life as they chose this is so they have the same choice, rights and responsibilities as other people. within those principles.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People who used the service told us staff respected their privacy and dignity. They told us staff encouraged them to be as independent as possible. For example, one person said, "We go shopping but I choose what we have and help out with the cleaning and cooking. It helps me be independent and boost my confidence."
- Care records we looked at contained information in relation to each person's dignity and privacy. It was evident care records and the attitude of staff was to ensure support planning was personalised.
- They focused on retaining and promoting people's independence as much as possible. This was evidenced by individual programmes people who used the service were engaged in. For example, voluntary employment, and attending community meetings.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- Care records we looked at contained evidence the person who received care had been involved with and were at the centre of making decisions about their care package and support planning.
- There was information available about access to advocacy services should people who received a service require their guidance and support. This ensured their interests would be represented and they could access appropriate services.

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs

People's needs were met through good organisation and delivery.

Planning personalised care to meet people's needs, preferences, interests and give them choice and control

- The service continued to provide a personalised care service that met their needs and promoted their wellbeing.
- The registered manager knew people who used the service well and what their preferences were. This was confirmed by talking with staff and those supported by Attaining Independence.
- Details in care records highlighted how people wanted to spend their time and what their interests were and choices they preferred. For example, one person was supported to undertake employment on a voluntary basis. We spoke with them and they said, "I love my job it helps my confidence." A staff member said, "We are all about supporting people to follow their preferences and that helps their independence."
- People we spoke with told us how they were supported by staff to express their views and wishes. This enabled people to make informed choices and decisions about how they were cared for and at what times suited their individual circumstances.

End of life care and support

- The service is a domiciliary care agency. The aim of the service is to make independent living a reality by working with the people to overcome the obstacles of day-to-day life. The registered manager told us the service at present does not support people with end of life care.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- We saw information was made available to people that described how to make a complaint if they wished and relevant steps to follow. The procedure was clear in explaining how a complaint should be made and reassured people these would be responded to appropriately. No complaints had been received since the previous inspection.

# Is the service well-led?

## Our findings

Well-Led – this means we looked for evidence that service leadership, management and governance assured high-quality, person-centred care; supported learning and innovation; and promoted an open, fair culture

The service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support; and how the provider understands and acts on duty of candour responsibility

- The registered manager talked with us about the care of individuals being supported by the service. They demonstrated a good understanding and awareness of people's needs, health issues and social choices.
- Comments we received about the management of Attaining Independence were positive, for instance, one person being supported said, "They are well organised and the manager is great."
- Another said, "I won't have anything bad said, absolutely a fantastic person [registered manager] is."
- A staff member said, "I have contacted [registered manager] when they were on leave. That was not a problem. A truly caring person."

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The service had clear lines of responsibility and accountability. The registered manager and staff were experienced, knowledgeable and familiar with the needs of people they supported.
- We found documentation demonstrated the registered manager had quality assurance systems that were effective and improved the service. For example, processes involved checks to the homes of people and meetings with them. In addition, the registered manager and senior staff held informal discussions with staff and relatives. This helped to ensure the service continued to evolve.
- The registered manager had notified CQC of any incidents in line with the regulations. Ratings from the previous inspection were displayed at the office base.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- People who were being supported and relatives were asked for their views of the service. These were achieved by discussion and surveys given out annually. Results from recent surveys were positive. The registered manager informed us any negative comments would be looked into and action taken to resolve any issues.
- Staff told us meetings were held with the registered manager on a regular basis and were useful to pass on their opinions and make effective changes when necessary. A staff member said, "We have good discussions and are always looking to improve."

Continuous learning and improving care

- The registered manager continued to complete a range of quality audits to ensure they provided an efficient service and constantly monitored Attaining Independence. This demonstrated improvements could

be made to continue to develop and provide a good service for people.

Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager at Attaining Independence worked in partnership with other organisations to make sure they followed current practice, providing a quality service and the people in their care were safe.