

Supported Lives Services Ltd

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Inspection report

1st Floor Management Suite 1
Bizspace Business Centre, Knowles Lane
Bradford
BD4 9SW

Tel: 01274377104
Website: www.supportedlives.co.uk

Date of inspection visit:
02 March 2021

Date of publication:
25 March 2021

Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Inspected but not rated
Is the service safe?	Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Supported Lives Services manages a supported living service providing personal care for people with a learning disability and / or autism. People lived in small domestic style properties to enable them to have the opportunity of living a full life. People had their own bedroom and shared lounge and kitchens. Where required staff slept in the house to be available in the event of an emergency.

In addition, Supported Lives Services provides a domiciliary care service, providing support to people in their own homes.

Not everyone who used the service received personal care. CQC only inspects where people receive personal care. This is help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do, we also consider any wider social care provided.

People's experience of using this service and what we found

Systems were in place to protect people from the risk of financial abuse. Where staff supported people to manage their finances, records were kept and audited.

Staff and people wore Personal Protective Equipment appropriately. Policies, procedures and risk assessments for COVID-19 were in place. Additional checks and staff supervisions had been introduced following a complaint at the Supported Lives Services offices.

One person accessed the office as part of their support during the pandemic, especially in bad weather, as their usual activities were closed.

We expect health and social care providers to guarantee autistic people and people with a learning disability the choices, dignity, independence and good access to local communities that most people take for granted. Right support, right care, right culture is the guidance CQC follows to make assessments and judgements about services providing support to people with a learning disability and/or autistic people.

The service was able to demonstrate how they were meeting the underpinning principles of Right support, right care, right culture.

Right support:

People lived in small houses in their community and were involved in their day to day choices and activities. People were supported to gain skills be as independent as possible.

Right care:

Support was person-centred and promoted people's dignity and privacy.

Right culture:

The service promoted people's independence and choices and supported people to be part of their community and participate in the activities they wanted to do.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was good (published 24 October 2019).

Why we inspected

We undertook this targeted inspection to check on a specific concern we had about the use of personal protection equipment, following national guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic and the management of people's finances where they required support to do this. The overall rating for the service has not changed following this targeted inspection and remains good.

CQC have introduced targeted inspections to follow up on Warning Notices or to check specific concerns. They do not look at an entire key question, only the part of the key question we are specifically concerned about. Targeted inspections do not change the rating from the previous inspection. This is because they do not assess all areas of a key question.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If we receive any concerning information we may inspect sooner.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question we had specific concerns about.

Inspected but not rated

Supported Lives Services Ltd

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

This was a targeted inspection to check on a specific concern we had about the use of personal protection equipment, following national guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic and the management of people's finances where they required support to do this.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by one inspector.

Service and service type

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses. They also provide care and support to people living in three '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 used for supported living; this inspection looked at people's personal care and support.

The service did not have a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission at the time of this inspection. A new manager had been appointed and was due to start work at Supported Lives Services shortly after our inspection. The deputy manager and the provider's area manager were overseeing the service until the new manager started work.

A registered manager 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 inspection was unannounced. Inspection activity started and ended on 2 March 2021. We visited the office location on 2 March 2021.

What we did before inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We sought feedback from the local authority and safeguarding teams. The provider was not asked to complete a provider information return prior to this inspection. This is information we require providers to send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We took this into account when we inspected the service and made the judgements in this report. We reviewed infection control risk assessments in relation to COVID-19. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with three people who used the service about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with two members of staff including the deputy manager and a team leader.

We reviewed a range of records including people's financial management records, daily records, staff risk assessments and competency checks in relation to COVID-19 and infection control.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At the last inspection this key question was rated as good. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question we had specific concerns about.

The purpose of this inspection was to check a specific concern we had about the use of personal protection equipment, following national guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic and the management of people's finances where they required support to do this. We will assess all of the key question at the next comprehensive inspection of the service.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- Finance management plans were used to identify the support each person needed to manage their money. From the plans we saw the staff team did not have access to people's bank PIN numbers.
- People made choices about how they spent their money and were supported in these decisions by members of staff. People's families were also involved in managing their relative's finances where appropriate.
- All money spent was recorded and receipts kept. These were checked by the team leaders and audited by the deputy or area manager at the end of each month. This meant there were systems in place to prevent financial abuse.

Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff we spoke with said there was a plentiful supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). People confirmed the members of staff wore their PPE when going out and when in the property. People were supported to also wear masks when they went out into the community, for example shopping.
- People's activities had changed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with more walking trips to local beauty spots and indoor games and hobbies, for example music, being encouraged. When in the community, people were reminded of the government guidelines for social distancing.
- Where required, one person accessed the Supported Living Services offices, especially during periods of bad weather. Access to the office for other members of staff and people being supported had been reduced during the pandemic.
- Following a complaint at the Supported Living Services offices, additional spot checks were being made to ensure members of staff were following the service's PPE policy. Additional staff supervisions had also been held to ensure all staff knew the company's infection control policies and procedures.
- All staff regularly completed COVID-19 tests. People using the service were also supported to have COVID-19 tests.
- Policies, procedures and risk assessments had been updated to include national COVID-19 guidance. Each supported living property had a file for all COVID-19 related information. Staff risk assessments were in place for all staff, including those considered as at 'high risk' of contracting COVID-19. Staff had completed training in infection control and COVID-19.

- We observed one staff member was wearing a cloth mask. Fluid repellent surgical masks are recommended for all members of staff. The deputy manager's mask also regularly slipped below their nose. We discussed this with the deputy manager, who said they would address the issue with the staff teams.