

Sylwia Care Limited

# Sylwia Care Limited t/a Home Instead Senior Care

## Inspection report

119 Neasden Lane  
London  
NW10 1PH

Date of inspection visit:  
23 August 2017

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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

We undertook an announced inspection on 23 August 2017 of Sylwia Care Limited t/a Home Instead Senior Care. Sylwia Care Limited t/a Home Instead Senior Care is registered to provide the regulated activity Personal Care.

At the time of the inspection, the service was providing care and support to nine people.

There was a registered manager in post. 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.

At the last inspection on 10 August 2015 the service was rated Good.

At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

Why the service is rated good.

People's health and social care needs had been appropriately assessed. Care plans were person-centred, and specific to each person and their needs. Care plans were reviewed and updated when people's needs changed.

Relatives and advocates informed us that they were satisfied with the care and services provided. They also told us that they were confident that people were safe.

Systems and processes were in place to help protect people from the risk of harm. Staff had received training in safeguarding adults and knew how to recognise and report any concerns or allegations of abuse.

Systems were in place to make sure people received their medicines safely.

Staff had been carefully recruited and provided with induction and training to enable them to support people effectively. They had the necessary support, supervision and appraisals from management.

Staff we spoke with had an understanding of the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA 2005). Capacity to make specific decisions was recorded in people's care plans.

There were suitable arrangements in place to ensure that people's dietary needs were met.

Staff were informed of changes through staff meetings. Staff told us that they received up to date information about the service and had an opportunity to share good practice and any concerns they had at

these meetings.

There was a management structure in place with a team of care workers, senior care workers, the care manager, registered manager and the provider. Staff spoke positively about working at the service. They told us management were approachable and the service had an open and transparent culture. There were systems in place to monitor and improve the quality of the service.

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

## The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

### Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

### Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remains Good.

# Sylwia Care Limited t/a Home Instead Senior Care

## **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 provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This inspection was carried out by one inspector and was supported by an expert by experience. An expert by experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service. The provider was given 48 hours' notice because the location provides a domiciliary care service. We wanted to make sure they would be available for our inspection.

Before we visited the service we checked the information that we held about the service and the provider including notifications and incidents affecting the safety and well-being of people. Some of the people being cared for were elderly people who had dementia or a specific medical condition and could not always communicate with us and tell us what they thought about the service. Because of this we spoke to family carers and asked for their views about the service and how they thought their relatives were being cared for.

We spoke with one person using the service, five relatives and three advocates. We also spoke with four staff, the care manager and registered manager. We reviewed five people's care plans, four staff files, training records and records relating to the management of the service such as audits, policies and procedures.

# Is the service safe?

## Our findings

People using the service and their relatives told us they felt safe with their care worker. One relative told us "I have been very impressed with the team that has been set up to look after [person]."

Records showed care workers had received training in how to safeguard adults and were aware of actions to take in response to a suspected abuse and had an understanding of whistleblowing procedures.

Comprehensive risk assessments were in place in relation to people's care. The risk assessments identified risks according to people's specific needs and measures were in place to manage the risks and keep people safe.

Feedback from people and their relatives indicated they received regular care workers and a high level of consistency in the level of care they received. One person using the service told us "There's a good team that come out to me – different levels of intellect but they all have a caring personality". Relatives and advocates told us "Having 2 or 3 who come regularly means that they can usually cover for each other and that means that [person] always has someone who knows them", "It's disappointing when someone leaves but the Agency always manage a smooth handover", "A consistent pool of carers that [person] has come to know" and "Consistency is good – I have been impressed and relieved."

Feedback also showed there were no issues with time keeping or missed calls and people and relatives told us they were notified of any changes or delays with their care workers. One person told us "The vagaries of London traffic cause problems but they always call me if there's a delay and they have never missed a call." Relatives and advocates told us "The office always phone if anyone is delayed but that's not often", "When you consider the traffic in London their time keeping is amazing" and "Good communication if a carer is going to be late, and no issues with any missed calls or there not being the two that are needed."

The service had an electronic call monitoring system in place to monitor calls and care workers timekeeping. The registered manager told us the electronic call monitoring system would flag up an alert if a care worker had not logged a call. This ensured any issues with calls were promptly identified and addressed and helped ensure minimal disruption to people's care.

One relative who previously had issues with morning visits told us "I rang and discussed it and now it is always within the time frame that we discussed. They try very hard to fit with your requests."

We spoke to care workers about staffing levels and they told us they received their rota on time and had regular clients. They told us "I have regular clients. The office explain everything to me about the people I will look after and my visits. There is no pressure" and "I have regular clients. They are very well planned visits."

Medicines were managed safely. Staff received training and their competency was assessed to ensure they administered medicines safely. Medicines records were fully completed which indicated people received their medicines at the prescribed time. Information about people's medicine were clearly detailed in

people's care plans including the support people needed with their medicines so care workers were aware of what to do.

People and relatives spoke positively about the support they received with their medicines. They told us "The carers have to ensure that [person] takes their tablets – [person] wouldn't if left to manage themselves and they do it in a way that makes [person] feel comfortable" and "Medicines are prompted and there is very good documentation."

There were effective recruitment and selection procedures in place to ensure people were safe and not at risk of being supported by people who were unsuitable. Appropriate background checks of staff had been completed before they were employed by the agency.

## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

Staff spoke positively about working for the service and told us that they felt supported by their colleagues and management. They told us "I really enjoy working here. I am really happy with the service", "It is fine working here, perfect!", "When you go into the work you feel like it's family. All my colleagues are wonderful" and "I work here with absolute pleasure. There have never been any issues."

Records showed care workers received on-going training to ensure they developed and maintained their skills and knowledge. The service also ran workshops on pressure sores and infection control. Training material included a guide for care workers on pressure sores, how they developed, what should be done, common pressure areas and the different grades of pressure sores so staff were aware of what to look for and knew the actions they needed to take if necessary. One care worker told us "Very excellent training. I got it when I started and we have refresher training every year."

Records showed and care workers told us they received regular supervision and appraisal to review and monitor their performance. Care workers competency was being assessed by spot checks and task observation. This involved care workers being observed by the care supervisor assessing how care workers carried out their duties. Records showed that if there were any areas of improvement, this was noted and followed up by the service.

There were policies in place and care workers had received training on the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). Where people had been assessed to lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, records showed decisions were made on their behalf in their best interests which involved person's next of kin, advocates and relevant healthcare professionals.

People were supported to maintain good health. People's care plans contained detailed information about people's medical history. The information detailed what the diagnosis was and how the condition affected the person's abilities in any way. One advocate for a person using the service told us "They are very proactive in liaising with other health professionals and also in dealing with any equipment issues."

People were supported with their nutritional and hydration needs. There was information about each person's dietary needs and requirements, personal likes and dislikes, allergies and where they liked to eat. One person using the service told us "They do me a light breakfast and a snack lunch. Dinner is a prepared meal; I always decide which one and they prepare and lay it out. I have no complaints at all."

Relatives and advocates also spoke positively about the support people received with their food and drink. They told us "[Care worker] is particularly good at helping [person] to eat. She takes time, going at [person's] pace – such patience. She always makes sure [person] is ready to eat, positioned and comfortable", "We supply ready meals that the carer prepares and serves – this also has to be cut up and [person] needs assistance to eat. [Person] needs lots of encouragement and the carers are all very good at this and they make the meal time a good time – it's never stressful" and "[Person] usually shows little interest in what food choices there are but the carers always try and help [person] to make a choice – they show them, they don't



just say it."

# Is the service caring?

## Our findings

People using the service and relatives spoke positively about the way they were supported. They told us "They manage my sense of humour and are always pleasant. Sometimes I don't think that they fully understand everything but it's enough and with their willingness, it's never an issue."

Relatives and advocates also spoke positively about the care received by their relatives. They told us "[Person] has deteriorated but they just adjust to their mood – very caring", "They have an excellent manner with [Person]" and "The agency matches people to [Person's] interests and I often hear laughter and singing."

People using the service and relatives told us their privacy and dignity was maintained and respected. One relative told us "They [care workers] talk and try to bring [person] out of themselves. [Person] never wants a shave but they are gentle and manage it and then [Person] tells me they feel better. They have more patience than me!"

Care workers were able to tell us how they maintained people's privacy and dignity and ensure people were comfortable when providing people with personal care in a caring manner. They told us "I always do what they want", "If [person doesn't want to do it, I won't do it. You can't force them. For example, sometimes [person] does not want to shave. I will leave it and give [person] space and then after a couple of minutes, I will explain to them that they need a shave and ask can I do it now for you, then [person] is happy for me to do it", "We always explain what we are doing and you care for them in a nice and friendly way" and "I always make sure bathroom doors are closed and I cover the private parts of their body. I always wear gloves and an apron. My clients are quite chatty, so we always chat away about something like the weather or what I will cook for them. This makes them feel comfortable."

Feedback from people using the service and family relatives indicated positive caring relationships had developed between people and care workers. They told us "'They have developed a lovely relationship with my [relative] who is only able to respond very minimally. Through us they know how [person] used to be fastidious about their appearance and they keep that up for them and for us. They have met our very high expectations – can I say outstanding.....", "Our [relative] was very resistant to care but they have brought [person] a long with them – it's been a journey for us all. Their lovely nature has helped us all" and "Some [care workers] treat [person] quite affectionately which helps [person] to accept them – it's a skill and they have been consistently good. They make anyone who visits [person] very welcome – it is their home."

Care plans set out how people should be supported to promote their independence and detailed what people could do for themselves and areas where they needed support. For example in one person's care plan, it stated 'We will assist [person] with getting into the bath but soon after they must be left alone, their wish is that they would like to do it themselves.' Care plans also contained information on how people communicated and how staff should communicate with them. One advocate told us "This [person] is very deaf and the carers have to take time and be patient to communicate with them and they mostly do. [Person] will sometimes just point and expect them to understand but they manage that."

There were meetings at least twice a year with people using the service, relatives and healthcare professionals in which people's care was discussed and reviewed to ensure people's needs were being met effectively.

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

Relatives spoke positively about the service and care people were receiving. They told us "We are very satisfied that the complex needs of [person] are being supported safely at home by this excellent agency."

People received personalised care that was responsive to their needs. Care plans were person-centred and comprehensively detailed the support people needed with all areas of their care. Corresponding risk assessments were also in place to ensure any risks were identified and measures put in place as part of their care to ensure people were kept safe.

Care plans clearly detailed what tasks needed to be done each day, time of visits, people's needs and how these needs were to be met. People's individual preferences, likes and dislikes were listed and background information about the person and what was important to them were documented. Daily communication records were in place which recorded information such as visit notes, meals eaten and medication support provided.

We noted the service took particular consideration to accommodating what people wanted and ensuring attention to detail which demonstrated a person centred approach to how people were supported. For example in one person's care plan, we noted a photograph which showed the layout of how this person liked their breakfast. The care plan even showed a photograph of a piece of toast showing exactly how the person wanted it to be as they had a particular preference as to how they liked their toast to be. In another person's care plan, who was bed bound, there was a photograph of their bedside trolley and the particular items they liked to have on there and ensure they were within easy reach.

There were arrangements in place for people's needs to be regularly assessed, reviewed and monitored. Care plans were reviewed six monthly by the registered manager and were also updated when people's needs changed. One advocate told us "Care plans are reviewed and updated regularly."

People using the service were aware of their care plans and were involved in expressing their views and planning of their care. "One person told us "The care plan was discussed and [there was] a very thorough initial assessment. ....I am able to think and speak for myself so there's nothing in there that I am not happy with."

Where appropriate, relatives were fully involved with ensuring people received the care that was appropriate to the person's needs. Feedback demonstrated the service was responsive to people's needs. They told us "Things got worse [the person's condition] about a year ago but they came and discussed what this meant in practical ways and increased the package so that [person] was safe and comfortable. They discuss it with me but they are the experts and I rely on them – they haven't let me down", "They couldn't make me feel more involved in how they are helping my [relative]" and "They are flexible and if anyone notices that something has changed then it's discussed between all of us and the plan is adjusted. The carers from this agency have worked so well and that approach, I think, is a reflection of the managers."

During this inspection, we found people were supported to engage and be involved in community activities and outings which meant helped minimise the risk of social isolation and promoted their well being. Relatives and advocates told us "[Person] isn't able to go out so much but they have arranged outings – [Person] went to the coast recently and they had extra help for that", "Little things they do that please [person] – they pick flowers from their beloved garden and arrange them for [person] and they helped to decorate at Christmas – they make things personal" and "They are adaptable and they included outings to the cafe so that [person] could see people. [Person] is very slow but that's OK – that's in their plan; to motivate [person] and they really do."

The registered manager told us they were also arranged surprise birthday parties and for one person who was invited to a tea party, their care worker took the person shopping to purchase an outfit for the event. The registered manager told us the two of them had a fantastic day selecting a dress that was just right and the person told the registered manager "It made me feel very young at heart."

One relative told us "[Person] is very socially active and has a lot of social engagements and appointments. The agency is very good and flexible with the schedule as we often have to change at short notice.'

There were procedures for receiving, handling and responding to comments and complaints which also made reference to contacting the Local Government Ombudsman and CQC if people felt their complaints had not been handled appropriately. There were no recorded complaints received about the service. Relatives we spoke with had no complaints or concerns about the service.

## Is the service well-led?

### Our findings

When speaking with people, relatives and advocates, they spoke positively about the service. They told us "They are always approachable and never mind me calling – a pleasure to deal with. I believe that they have a genuine interest in their clients and this shows through", "We are extremely happy with the level of organisation, management and with the actual delivery of care" and "They listen if you have a problem and it gives great peace of mind that things work well."

They also spoke positively about the management staff. They told us "They are totally approachable even at the weekend", "I see the manager regularly – they take a real interest", "They give a top down example of how things should be and that is reflected in the high standards of their employees and the care that they deliver" and "Excellent managers who work hard to build good relationships."

An advocate spoke positively about the hands on approach and an example of being well led demonstrated by the management staff. They told us "I was very impressed that the managers sometimes come out to clients themselves – it means that they get to know the people and are able to step in if a crisis. I really appreciate this personal feeling and like it that they do not keep themselves remote from the client."

The registered manager told us "We have a duty of care to people. We love our job and work well together [with the care manager] as we share the responsibilities."

During the inspection, a person who had used the service came in to see the management staff with homemade biscuits as a 'thank you' for the quality of service they received. The person spoke very highly of the service and told us "These people are angels. They know the job. It's not about the business; they make it about the people. They do their job and I come in to say thank you."

The service worked closely with health and social care professionals and other agencies to make sure people received the service they needed so they achieved positive care outcomes. For example, in one care plan, we noted a referral had been made by the service for an occupational therapist as there was a risks identified in relation to a person's mobility. This showed the registered manager effectively managed the service so that people received the support they needed.

The registered manager told us and documentation showed the service were involved with a number of community initiatives and arranged social events involving people using the service based on their needs and personal experiences.

For example the service is working with Camden Dementia Action Alliance to raise awareness and help improve understanding of Dementia. The registered manager told us this was at the heart of what the service does and working with the Alliance helps fuel that mission. She also told us they were planning to run further workshops with members of the Alliance and the broader community of Camden, and are hoping to encourage more organisations to join and contribute to the cause.

For people using the service, in December 2016, the service arranged a 'Santa for Seniors' for people who have limited or no family contact to deliver gifts and engage in the Christmas spirit by singing Christmas carols. The registered manager told us "At a special time of year it's important that everyone feels that they are a valued part of their community. Some of our clients don't have a family structure to provide support, care and festive love at this time of year, so 'Santa for Seniors' was greatly appreciated." We saw photographs of people receiving their gifts from management staff. The registered manager told us some of the feedback included "Home Instead keeps me alive", "I feel thrilled, and it gives me hope for humanity" and that being remembered and cared for was the only gift they wanted.

Photographs showed for two people using the service, the registered manager and care manager arranged and accompanied them to the seaside as they had been with the service for a number of years and the registered manager told us they wanted to give them a special day. One person had fond memories of going to the seaside and the other person had worked with ships all their life and had a particular love of the sea, which is why the seaside was chosen.

The service was recently awarded a "Top 10 Awards" accolade based exclusively on feedback from people using the service. The registered manager told us the excellent reviews were a testament to the tailored care they provide.

The registered manager told us "When we received the award we felt it was important to take a moment to thank all of our amazing caregivers. It's not an easy job, but they carry it out with skill, care and love, and receiving feedback like this makes it all worthwhile. We threw a small party for all the caregivers to thank them for their unending efforts, and to help support the strong sense of community amongst the team."

People and relatives were asked for their views about the service and their feedback was acted on to improve care provided. This was done through them providing people with the opportunity to complete feedback questionnaires and during quality assurance visits conducted by office staff to people's homes. Records showed feedback about the service was generally positive and any actions needed to taken were noted and acted upon.

People and relatives told us "There's a tick box questionnaire but they do invite comments as well. The office are also very open to a chat", "I have a good connection with [care manager] and he's always asking how things are. Any problem, he sorts straight away" and "I hope that they have passed on to (care worker) how wonderful she has been with [person] and how grateful we are to her. I get the impression that they support and value their staff. I certainly fed that back."

Comprehensive audits were completed by the provider which covered areas such as reviewing care plans, staff files, call monitoring and scheduling, complaints and policies and procedures. This ensured the quality of care was regularly monitored and evaluated and any areas of improvement were identified and addressed to influence best practice which had a positive impact on the quality of service received by people.

Care workers spoke positively about the registered manager and the open and transparent culture within the service. They told us "I can call them if I have any problems and they always help", "I can always speak with them and they always respond", "They try to work with you and find what is best for you", "[Management staff] are very good, very nice and very understanding", "I am very happy with the company. They are one of the best agencies, very person centred and they listen to their staff" and "Management are very understanding. They do listen. I have never had a situation where they can't meet me even for five minutes when I need them."

Records showed staff meetings were being held and minutes of these meetings showed aspects of people's care were discussed and staff had the opportunity to share good practice and any concerns they had. Care workers told us "We can speak openly and give our opinions and what we would like to do. They are good and always remind us about things" and "We discuss policies updates on any changes in the company and regulation."

Records also showed staff were also asked to provide feedback about the service, how it was managed, staff development, leadership and training and development. Results of the completed staff surveys showed positive feedback about the management of the service and felt valued.

Care documentation was up to date and comprehensive. The service had a range of policies and procedures to ensure that staff were provided with appropriate guidance to meet the needs of people. People's care records and staff personal records were stored securely which meant people could be assured that their personal information remained confidential.



