

Agincare UK Limited

Agincare UK Weymouth

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Agincare UK Weymouth is a domiciliary care service providing a regulated activity of personal care to younger people and adults. At the time of our inspection there were 127 people using the service.

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

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 statutory guidance which supports CQC to make assessments and judgements about services providing support to people with a learning disability and/or autistic people. We considered this guidance as there were people using the service who have a learning disability and or who are autistic.

Right Support

People told us they felt safe. They were protected from avoidable harm as staff were trained to recognise signs of abuse and knew who to report this to if they had concerns.

People received safe care because staff had a good awareness of the specific risks people faced and how to manage these without being restrictive. People's risk assessments gave staff clear guidance on how to work alongside them to manage their health conditions.

There were enough staff to meet people's needs. It was recognised the service had faced the same challenges as other providers due to the national shortage of care workers. Recruitment was ongoing.

The service had a robust recruitment and selection process that helped ensure only prospective staff with the required skills and good character were employed to support people.

Right Care

Medicines were managed safely by staff who had received the relevant training and competency assessments. Medicines records were regularly audited and appropriate action taken where omissions had occurred.

Accidents and incidents were appropriately reported, investigated and analysed to determine any themes and trends. Lessons learnt were shared to help prevent a recurrence.

We were assured with the service's processes to prevent and control infection. People and relatives confirmed staff wore personal protective equipment (PPE) when appropriate.

The service had robust quality assurance procedures which included various audits, at branch and provider level, and regular staff competency checks. This helped ensure the quality of care was maintained and any issues were identified and resolved promptly.

Right Culture

People's, relative's and staff member's views were sought in annual surveys. The majority of feedback was positive. The provider used feedback to drive improvement in the service people received. This included actions to improve visit scheduling and communication from the office when people's visit schedules changed.

Staff told us they got on well with their colleagues and felt supported. Staff were supported with continuous professional development including apprenticeships and vocational qualifications. The registered manager and branch manager felt supported by the area manager and other provider staff.

People told us they would recommend the service to others.

The service had established and maintained positive working relationships with other agencies including occupational therapists, social work teams and GP surgeries.

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 23 January 2018).

Why we inspected

This inspection was prompted by a review of the information we held about this service.

For those key questions not inspected, we used the ratings awarded at the last inspection to calculate the overall rating. The overall rating for the service has remained good. This is based on the findings at this inspection.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Agincare UK Weymouth on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

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 was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Agincare UK Weymouth

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act) as part of our regulatory functions. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

Inspection team

The inspection was carried out by 1 inspector and 2 Experts 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.

Service and service type

This service is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats.

Registered Manager

This provider is required to have a registered manager to oversee the delivery of regulated activities at this location. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Registered managers and providers are legally responsible for how the service is run, for the quality and safety of the care provided and compliance with regulations.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in post.

Notice of inspection

We gave the service 48 hours' notice of the inspection. This was because it is a small service and we needed to be sure that the provider or registered manager would be in the office to support the inspection.

Inspection activity started on 11 May 2023 and ended on 19 May 2023. We visited the location's office/service on 11 May 2023.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We sought feedback from the local authority who carried out a positive quality monitoring visit in March 2023. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR). This is information providers are required to send us annually with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 16 people who use the service and 7 relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with and received written feedback from 10 members of staff including senior care workers, care workers, registered manager, branch manager, area manager, field care supervisors and a training and compliance officer.

We reviewed a range of records. This included 13 people's care records and multiple medication records. We looked at 5 staff files in relation to recruitment. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures were reviewed.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People told us staff helped them feel safe. People's comments included: "Absolutely I feel safe", "My 2 carers are fantastic", "I definitely feel safe and at ease. Staff are really kind." Two relatives said, "I trust [the care staff] totally" and "I would trust [named staff member] with my life."
- Staff had a good understanding of the signs and symptoms that could indicate they were experiencing abuse or harm. Staff knew how to raise concerns internally and to external agencies such as the local authority and CQC.
- Staff said they would feel comfortable to whistle blow should they witness poor or abusive practice. They were confident management staff would take appropriate action when required.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People had up to date risk assessments which included control measures required to help them minimise the risks in their lives without being restrictive. People's risks included: skin integrity, use of flammable creams, anxiety, self-neglect, and mobility. One person told us, "It's doing wonders for me Agincare coming, mentally and physically. They are compassionate and caring. I couldn't move quickly after an operation, but they were very patient, never making me feel rushed. If I am in too much pain, they'd give suggestions. "It's alright. Every day is a recovery day now. Pain won't be ongoing!"
- People were protected from unsafe or poor practice as staff competency was checked. Two staff told us, "Spot checks occur unannounced and regularly" and "I am spot checked on a regular basis." A person told us, "Everything they need to do, they're very good at."
- General environmental risks in people's homes were assessed such as home security, food hygiene and fire safety. The service told us, with consent, they had referred people to the local fire service if they identified fire risks in people's homes.
- Following discussion at the May 2023 team meeting improvements were being made to rotas to help ensure staff had sufficient travel time between visits.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were enough staff on duty to meet people's needs. The service had faced the same challenges as other providers due to the national shortage of care workers. Recruitment was ongoing. Wherever possible, people were supported to have regular staff who were familiar with their needs. Following feedback, the service was introducing new visit 'runs' to better accommodate where people needed specific times and to ensure rotas were more reflective of actual care delivery.
- People told us staff stayed for the designated amount of time on each visit although there were occasions where they arrived slightly early or late due to traffic or issues arising on a preceding visit. Comments included: "If they are running late, you don't feel rushed. They say, "I'm here for you"", "They are never in a

rush", "They always turn up. They can be put back but they make up that time", "They all ask me, 'Is there anything else we can do?', every time before they go" and, "Usually they're on the ball. They've only been late once or twice, because of unavoidable incidents."

- On occasion where there had been incompatibility issues between people and staff the office had resolved this to people's satisfaction by providing alternative care staff.
- The service had assessed people's dependency to enable them to prioritise visits in the event of emergencies or unplanned staff shortages.□
- The service had robust recruitment and selection procedures. Checks had been done to reduce the risk that staff were unsuitable to support vulnerable people. This included verified references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. These checks provide information including details about convictions and cautions held on the Police National Computer. The information helps employers make safer recruitment decisions.

Using medicines safely

- Medicines were managed safely by staff who had received the relevant training and competency assessments.
- People told us they received their medicines on time and as prescribed. Records confirmed this.
- People's electronic medicines administration records contained sufficient detail to support staff with this task.
- Medicines records were audited regularly. There was evidence of timely and appropriate follow up action where omissions or errors had occurred. This included staff refresher training.

Preventing and controlling infection

- We were assured that the provider was using PPE effectively and safely. Staff competency checks included this.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through good hand hygiene.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.
- Staff had received training in food hygiene.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Staff completed accident and incident reporting forms. These were reviewed and signed off by a field care supervisor. The registered manager then audited them. The process included reflection on what had happened, impacts for people and/or staff and what steps were required to prevent a recurrence.
- Lessons learnt were shared via direct messages to staff handsets, supervision and team meetings.

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.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. The rating for this key question has remained good. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- Staff told us they enjoyed their work and felt supported. Comments included: "All of the workers out delivering the care are supportive of each other and we do feel like a certain camaraderie exists between us", "I feel proud as I know I am doing good for the community in my role", "The best thing is the sense of team spirit within the care workers. I do feel proud to be part of a committed team trying to ensure the safe, long life of some very vulnerable people" and, "I like my job, the company, the people I work with and people I work for."
- Most staff told us they felt appreciated for the work they did. One staff member said, "Yes I do feel appreciated and the office team are there when we need them." Another told us, "I feel appreciated in my role, simple things like supporting us in our role and even just a sincere thank you for supporting with extra, there are also things like snack stations in the office for staff to use." Some staff had won 'care worker of the month' awards after being nominated by their colleagues.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements; How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

- The registered manager and staff had a good understanding of their roles. The registered manager said their role included: "Ensuring we deliver a safe service, provide best quality care, support care workers, send in notifications to CQC and the safeguarding team, complying with the Care Act, completing supervisions, appraisals and spot checks, maintaining good relationships with professionals, ensuring complaints are responded to in line with our policy and the auditing and monitoring of overall care delivery and performance of the team."
- The registered manager and branch manager felt supported by the provider. They commented: "We feel really supported. We have a whole network of support. There's such a structure and always someone to go to."
- Various audits took place at a branch and provider level which included reviews of people's care plans, accidents and incidents, daily notes, complaints, staff files and medicines records.
- The provider carried out a monthly quality assurance review of each of its locations, including Agincare UK Weymouth, which helped identify where structured support could be beneficial. This external support function helped identify training needs and promote staff learning. It also served to drive improvement for people using the service.
- The registered manager understood CQC requirements, in particular, to notify us, and where appropriate

the local safeguarding team, of incidents including potential safeguarding issues, disruption to the service and registered manager absence of more than 28 days. This is a legal requirement.

- Both the registered manager and branch manager had a good understanding of the duty of candour. They said, "It is about sharing information, being open and honest when an error may have occurred. Taking accountability, giving assurance to service users that we are taking action and we are learning from it."

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics; Continuous learning and improving care; Working in partnership with others

- People, relatives and staff were given opportunity to feedback about the service they received via annual surveys. The most recent people survey was done in Autumn 2022. 91% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the service they received. Areas identified for improvement were rotas being more reflective of actual visits and timely communication of changes to schedules. The last staff survey took place May 2023 with a positive feedback score of 96%. Of 2 issues raised both were actioned at that month's team meeting. The registered told us the provider is trialling e-bikes to support those care workers who currently walk.
- Team meetings were held quarterly and were well attended. The provider encouraged and facilitated attendance by offering 3 meeting times during a specified date. The May 2023 meeting had included an introduction from the branch manager, an invite for staff to participate in the recruitment process by making a video about 'what care looks like' and the winner of 'care worker of the month.'
- Staff were supported with continuous professional development including apprenticeships and vocational qualifications.
- People told us they would recommend the service to others. This matched feedback from the Autumn 2022 survey. Their comments included: "Ultimately, they're a good care company. The care solves a lot of problems", "Of course. I'm very pleased", "On the whole it's a pretty good company", "There is the odd snag, but yes I would" and, "My personal experience is, they are excellent."
- The service worked in partnership with others to provide good care, treatment and advice to people. This included developing and maintaining good working relationships with occupational therapists, GP surgeries and social work teams.