

Supportive SRC Ltd

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Inspection report

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27 October 2016

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

This inspection took place on 27 October 2016 and was announced. We gave the registered provider 24 hours notice of our inspection so that we would have staff available to show us records at the service's offices when we visited.

At our last inspection of Supportive SRC Limited, published on 6 July 2016, we reported that the registered provider was in breach of Regulation 19; Fit and proper persons employed. This was because the registered provider did not operate recruitment procedures which were robust enough to protect people using the service from unsuitable staff.

The provider had not undertaken thorough background checks for staff before they started working with vulnerable people. We issued a requirement notice to the registered manager to send us a report (action plan), within 28 days, on how they intended to mitigate and address the breach of Regulation 19.

The registered manager sent this report to us promptly and we were satisfied with how they intended to address the issues we found. At this inspection we found improvements had been made to meet this regulation.

Supportive SRC Limited is registered with the Care Quality Commission to provide personal care to people who wish to remain independent in their own homes. The agency provides services throughout areas of County Durham and provides a range of home care and support. At the time of our visit there were approximately 300 people using this service who were supported by 151 staff.

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.

The registered manager showed us how the recruitment procedure had been changed since the last inspection. This included checks to ensure people could demonstrate their previous employment history including other previous posts involving children or vulnerable people. The registered manager and other senior staff responsible for overseeing the recruitment of staff at the service demonstrated that they knew the importance of ensuring that recruiting checks were robust. Systems in place at the service ensured staff could not work with vulnerable people until full background checks had been carried out. We saw that people using the service were protected from applicants who were unsuitable to work with vulnerable people.

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 

Robust recruitment procedures ensured that only staff who were suitable to work with vulnerable people were employed by the service.

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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 was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (HCSA) and to review a breach of Regulation 19 in relation to staff recruitment that we found on our inspection of the service published on 6 July 2016.

This inspection took place on 27 October 2016 and was announced. The membership of the inspection team was one adult social care inspector. We reviewed all of the information we had received from the provider including action plans in response to the last inspection. We looked at any statutory notifications we had received from the service. Notifications are changes, events or incidents that the provider is legally obliged to send us. At our visit to the service we spoke with the registered manager and the head of home care of the organisation. We looked at the records of eight staff who had been employed at the service since the last inspection and we reviewed employment policies and other records in relation to recruitment.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

When we visited the service on 6 July 2016 we found the registered provider was in breach of Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 [Regulated Activities] Regulations 2014: Fit and proper persons employed. This was because the registered provider did not operate recruitment procedures which were robust enough to protect people using the service from unsuitable staff. We issued a requirement notice to the registered provider and asked them to send us a report (action plan), within 28 days, which set out how they intended to reduce risks to people and address this breach of the regulations. The registered provider sent this report to us promptly. At this inspection we checked that these measures had been sustained and people were not at risk.

We looked at a sample of eight staff recruitment files in detail. We saw that each of these had a full record of the recruitment process. We saw potential staff had completed a job application form where they were asked about their previous employment history and the reasons for any gaps in their employment. This meant the registered provider could see what experience applicants had before their interview. We saw an interview was held with each person. The registered provider maintained a record of the interview. We saw people were asked questions relevant to their specific role. This meant the registered provider ensured that staff had the right skills and knowledge and were physically and mentally fit before they were offered a job at the service.

We saw in all eight staff files the registered provider had sought two references for each person employed and made sure one of these was from the last place the person had worked. We also saw the registered provider had obtained a Disclosure and Barring Services [DBS] check for each person before they took up their position with the service. The DBS helps employers to make safer recruitment decisions by providing information about a person's criminal record and whether they are barred from working with vulnerable adults. This meant people who used the service were protected by people of good character employed by the registered provider.

The registered provider was also in the process of reviewing the oversight of the recruitment process as part of the services approach to assessing and reviewing the quality of the service so that progress could be measured and further improvements made if these were required.