

HH Community Care Limited

# Helping Hands - East Northumberland

## Inspection report

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Northumberland  
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Tel: 01670797946

Date of inspection visit:

28 January 2021

29 January 2021

01 February 2021

Date of publication:

04 March 2021

## Ratings

|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Overall rating for this service | Inspected but not rated        |
| Is the service safe?            | <b>Inspected but not rated</b> |

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

### About the service

Helping Hands – East Northumberland provides personal care to adults living in their own homes. At the time of the inspection 370 people were receiving support.

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

People were not always protected from the risk of infection as staff did not always follow government guidance in relation to infection prevention and control procedures.

Policies and procedures in relation to COVID-19 were in place and updated when government guidance changed. Systems were in place to communicate information to the whole staff team.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

### Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was requires improvement (published 5 July 2019).

### Why we inspected

We undertook this targeted inspection to check on a specific concern we had about the infection prevention and control practices at the service. The overall rating for the service has not changed following this targeted inspection and remains requires improvement.

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.

### Enforcement

We are mindful of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our regulatory function. This meant we took account of the exceptional circumstances arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic when considering what enforcement action was necessary and proportionate to keep people safe as a result of this inspection. We will continue to discharge our regulatory enforcement functions required to keep people safe and to hold providers to account where it is necessary for us to do so.

We have identified one breach in relation to safe care and treatment at this inspection.

Full information about CQC's regulatory response to the more serious concerns found during inspections is added to reports after any representations and appeals have been concluded.

#### Follow up

We will request an action plan for the provider to understand what they will do to improve the standards of quality and safety. We will work alongside the provider and local authority to monitor progress. We will 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?**

### **Inspected but not rated**

Inspected but not rated.

# Helping Hands - East Northumberland

## **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 Care Act 2014.

#### Inspection team

The inspection was conducted by one inspector and two experts by experience. An expert by experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who used this type of care service.

#### Service and service type

Helping Hands – East Northumberland is a domiciliary care agency. It provides personal care to people living in their own homes.

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 inspection was unannounced.

Inspection activity started on 28 January 2021 and ended on 1 February 2021. We visited the office location on 28 January 2021.

#### What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we held about the service, including the statutory notifications we had received from the provider. Statutory notifications are changes, events or incidents the provider is legally obliged to

send to us. We contacted the local authority commissioning and safeguarding teams and Healthwatch to request feedback. Healthwatch is an independent consumer champion that gathers and represents the views of the public about health and social care services in England.

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 used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 14 people who used the service and 21 relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with 12 members of staff including the registered manager.

We viewed a range of records including policies and procedures to review the infection prevention and control systems across the service.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found.

# Is the service safe?

## Our findings

S5 How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?

- Staff did not always follow government guidance in relation to donning (putting on) and doffing (taking off) Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). This is necessary as PPE is only effective if worn properly and put on and taken off safely.
- Some staff had not completed infection control refresher training at the frequency identified by the provider.
- There were gaps in the knowledge of some staff of how to safely dispose of used PPE in line with government guidance.
- Staff did not have access to all the necessary PPE for one person. The provider responded to this feedback immediately and implemented risk assessments while they addressed this issue.

The provider's failure to ensure infection control policies and procedures were followed by staff was a breach of Regulation 12 (Safe care and treatment) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

- Sufficient stocks of PPE were available for staff use.
- Policies and procedures were in place for Covid-19. These had been updated in line with changes to government guidance. This included the completion of risk assessments for people and staff.
- Staff were tested on a weekly basis for Covid-19. Staff followed government guidance in relation to self-isolation if they were symptomatic or had tested positive for COVID-19.
- People and their relatives spoke positively about staff. One person said, "I'm really pleased with all my carers and the care, I wouldn't swap them for the world."

This section is primarily information for the provider

## Enforcement actions

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have taken enforcement action.

| Regulated activity | Regulation  |
|--------------------|---|
| Personal care      | Regulation 12 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Safe care and treatment<br><br>Infections prevention and control procedures were not robust.<br>Regulation 12, (1)(2)(h) |

**The enforcement action we took:**

We issued a warning notice.