

Direct Health (UK) Limited

Direct Health (Tyneside)

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

We carried out an announced comprehensive inspection of this service on 4 and 5 August 2015. Breaches of legal requirements were found. After the comprehensive inspection, the provider wrote to us to say what they would do to meet legal requirements in relation to safeguarding people's personal finances and medicines management.

We undertook this focused inspection on 7 January 2016 to check that they had followed their plan and to confirm that they now met legal requirements. This report only covers our findings in relation to these requirements. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Direct Health (Tyneside) on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Direct Health (Tyneside) is a domiciliary care agency that provides home care services to people in North Tyneside and Gateshead. At the time of our inspection services were provided to 144 people who were predominantly older people, people with dementia-related conditions and other mental health needs, and people with physical and learning disabilities.

The service had 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.

We found the provider had met the assurances they had given in their action plan and were no longer in breach of the regulations.

Improved systems were in place to ensure that people's personal finances were handled safely.

The recording of medicines administered to people had improved and regular audits were carried out to check that people's medicines were being managed appropriately.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was safe.

There was now a more robust process to safeguard people using the service who were supported with their personal finances.

Records of medicines administration had improved. An auditing system had been established to ensure people received their medicines safely.

We could not improve the rating for 'Is the service safe?' from 'requires improvement' because to do so requires consistent good practice over time. We will check this during our next planned comprehensive inspection.

Requires Improvement 

Direct Health (Tyneside)

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We undertook an unannounced focused inspection of Direct Health (Tyneside) on 7 January 2016.

This inspection was done to check that improvements to meet legal requirements planned by the provider had been made after our comprehensive inspection on 4 and 5 August 2015.

We inspected the service against one of the five questions we ask about services: 'Is the service safe?' This was because the service was not meeting some legal requirements at the time of our comprehensive inspection.

This inspection was undertaken by one adult social care inspector. During the inspection we met and talked with the registered manager, a care co-ordinator and a company trainer. We reviewed four people's care records, five people's medicines records and audits and training records relating to medicines management.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

At our comprehensive inspection in August 2015 we found breaches of legal requirements in relation to safeguarding people's finances and the management of medicines. The provider sent us an action plan following our comprehensive inspection that gave us assurances about the action they were taking to make improvements. This included a review of the arrangements where staff handled people's money; additional training for staff in medicines recording; and embedding auditing processes.

During this inspection we found that care plans were in place which addressed the support that staff must provide when handling people's personal finances. For example, where a person was subject to court of protection arrangements in relation to the local authority managing their finances, appropriate documentation was held. A risk assessment had been completed and the person had a care plan they had agreed to which described the practical elements of staff collecting and spending money on their behalf. The care plan emphasised the importance of documenting all financial transactions and keeping a clear audit trail with receipts.

Staff handled money for a minority of the people using the service. Each person now had a daily log book that incorporated financial records for staff to log any transactions, such as occasional shopping. Wherever possible people were asked to sign these records to witness transactions carried out by staff. We observed that entries were suitably recorded and backed by receipts for purchases. The care co-ordinators routinely reviewed the financial records to ensure people's money was being handled safely.

Medicine Administration Records (MARs) were now included within the daily log books and those we examined were accurately completed. Audits of the MARs were carried out and we saw action had been taken in response to any discrepancies. We noted there was no set frequency for returning the log books from people's homes to the office and the registered manager agreed to review this matter.

The registered manager showed us evidence that they had reinforced standards of record keeping with staff following our last inspection. This had included a memorandum and further training being given. Where necessary, staff had been supervised and had their competency checked to ensure their practice had improved. The company trainer confirmed that staff had undertaken medicines training again when they had not complied with the standards required by the service.

We concluded that the management of personal finances and medicines arrangements had improved and the provider was no longer in breach of the relevant regulation. We will check whether the improvements have been sustained at our next inspection.