

Dedicated Care East Anglia Limited

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Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Outstanding 

Is the service safe?

Good 

Is the service effective?

Good 

Is the service caring?

Good 

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding 

Is the service well-led?

Outstanding 

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service: Dedicated Care East Anglia is registered to provide personal care to people in their own homes. Some people who used this service were living together in shared houses. On the day of our visit 25 people were using the service and in receipt of the regulated activity. The service provided care and support to people with learning disabilities and older people.

Not everyone using Dedicated Care East Anglia receives the regulated activity; CQC only inspects the service being received by people provided with 'personal care'; help with tasks related to personal hygiene and eating. Where they do we also take into account any wider social care provided.

The service has been developed and designed in line with the principles and values that underpin Registering the Right Support and other best practice guidance. This ensures that people who use the service can live as full a life as possible and achieve the best possible outcomes. The principles reflect the need for people with learning disabilities and/or autism to live meaningful lives that include control, choice, and independence. People using the service receive planned and co-ordinated person-centred support that is appropriate and inclusive for them.

People's experience of using this service:

People were fully involved and included in the planning and reviews of their care and support. Staff worked extremely closely with people to learn about and improve people's experiences.

People highly valued their relationships with staff and felt very well supported and cared for.

People felt that they mattered.

All feedback received was overwhelmingly positive about the support, guidance and care people received.

Relatives were full of commendation for the staff in terms of their kindness and skills.

People were supported by staff who were creative in their approach to supporting them and promoted their independence as much as possible.

People's care needs were very well known by the staff who were supporting them.

People received care in a manner which was in accordance with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The service was extremely well managed and people and their relatives consistently praised the passion and drive of the directors and their motivation to provide an exceptional service.

Rating at last inspection: The service was rated 'Good' at our last inspection on 19 October 2016. The report following that inspection was published on 11 November 2016.

Why we inspected: This was a planned inspection based on the rating at the last inspection.

Follow up: We will continue to monitor intelligence we receive about the service until we return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If any concerning information is received, we may inspect sooner.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

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 effective?

Good ●

The service was Effective

Details are in our Effective findings below.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was Caring

Details are in our Caring findings below.

Is the service responsive?

Outstanding ☆

The service was exceptionally Responsive

Details are in our Responsive findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Outstanding ☆

The service was exceptionally well-led

Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Dedicated Care East Anglia Limited

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. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Inspection team: The inspection team consisted an inspector and 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.

Service and service type: 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. The registered manager was also one of two directors of the provider company Dedicated Care East Anglia Limited. The directors and registered manager have been referred to as the directors throughout this report.

Notice of inspection: We gave the service 48 hours' notice of the inspection visit because we needed to arrange to meet with people who used the service and staff. Inspection site visit activity started on 14 May 2019 and ended on 17 May 2019. We visited the office location on 14 May 2019 to meet the directors, staff and also some people who used the service; and to review care records and policies and procedures.

What we did: Before the inspection we reviewed the information, we held about the service and the service provider. The registered provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is information that we request that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and any further developments they plan to make. We looked at the notifications we had received for this service. Notifications are information about important events the service is required to send us by law.

During our visit to the provider's office we met and spoke with six people who were using the service to gather their views about the care and support received. We made attempts to contact 12 people's relatives and of those, we were able to speak with eight. During the office site visit we looked at records, which included people's support plans, daily care records and medicines records. We checked staff training and supervision records. We also looked at a range of records about how the service was managed. We also spoke with both directors of the company, one of the service managers from a supported living service and four support staff.

During the inspection activity a further 13 staff contacted us to share their positive experiences of working for the service. We also received feedback about the service from seven healthcare professionals.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

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

People were safe and protected from avoidable harm. Legal requirements were met.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People continued to be supported by a staff team who were trained to understand how to recognise abuse and what to do if they suspected this had happened. One person told us, "I feel safe. The staff are nice and friendly, and they always turn up." Another person said, "Oh yes I feel safe. Didn't feel safe before [previous provider] but now I feel really really safe. Now I know they are there. They always turn up when supposed to."
- Staff were aware of the internal provider reporting system for safeguarding as well as how to contact the local authority safeguarding team.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Positive risk taking was promoted to empower people. Risk assessments considered the independence of the person and supported people's wishes and choices through positive risk-taking.
- Care and support plans included guidelines about how to minimise risks whilst respecting and promoting people's independence.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were enough staff employed to meet the needs of people and support was planned and provided based on the individual assessment for the person.
- Staff worked very flexibly to meet the needs of people using the service to give them choice and control in their lives. For example, if people wanted to attend a late night social event this was arranged and staff working hours adjusted.
- A healthcare professional told us, "I can confirm I have visited most of the supported living homes where services are provided and have always been impressed with the staffing ratios and the professionalism of staff."
- The provider continued to undertake checks on the suitability of potential staff to care for people using the service. Pre-employment checks included obtaining references and checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The DBS helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and help prevent unsuitable people from working in care services.

Using medicines safely

- There were safe and effective processes in place for the safe management of people's medicines.
- Staff who were responsible for the safe management of people's medicines had received appropriate training and annual checks of their competency to administer medicines had also been undertaken.
- People and their relatives told us they received their medicines safely and on time. One person said, "I get my medication when I need it. I have it in the morning and take it before breakfast." One person's relative

commented, "[Family member] is no doubt safe. Medicines are recorded, and I have seen the paperwork."

Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff were trained in infection prevention and control and had access to personal protective equipment like disposable gloves and aprons.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Details of any accidents or incidents occurring were recorded along with immediate actions taken by staff in response. The providers analysed all accident and incident forms in order to identify any patterns or trends and to determine whether there was any action that could be taken to prevent further occurrences.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence

People's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- People's needs were assessed before they started using the service. This ensured that staff would be able to meet people's needs effectively.
- Relatives praised staff for the care their family members received, and said staff understood and met those identified needs.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff received appropriate training and support to carry out their roles effectively and people's relatives told us this enabled their family member's needs to be met. One relative said, "The carers have had training in medicines and they understand the side effects and how the medicines interact with each other. They are so good, I couldn't wish for better."
- Staff were very positive about the training they received. One member of support staff told us, "I find my manager is very approachable, supportive and involved. I like having regular supervisions as this is a personal one to one time with managers and I like to see how I progress and where I can develop further. The supervisions are good because we each feel supported within our roles." One of the supported living managers told us, "[Directors] provide the training and if there is any training they knew they would not be able to deliver effectively they do not hesitate to bring in an external trainer. This has a hugely positive effect as it enables our staff to deliver the best care to meet individual needs especially if the training is put into practice specifically for the support of one individual."
- Newly employed support staff were supported by more experienced team members, so people and their relatives could be assured care was being delivered by competent staff, who knew people's care needs and preferences well. One member of support staff commented, "Nothing was left uncovered in my induction that I would need to know. The training was the longest I've ever had. A full two week course which was fantastic and comprehensive and carried out in a way that I felt I could ask questions. Even now if there is something I don't know, I can ask."

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People's relatives made positive comments about the support provided to their family members with any nutritional needs, whether this be support with meal preparation or support with gaining or losing weight. One relative commented, "[Family member] has a high calorie intake and has put weight on comfortably. The staff also watch [family member's] fluid intake."
- People who had requested help to lose weight were supported to attend slimming clubs within their local community. A relative told us, "[Family member] wanted to lose weight and has lost a stone with [slimming club]. The staff help [family member] write a specific shopping list for this."
- The directors worked with healthcare professionals to ensure people's specific nutritional needs were fully

identified and met. A relative told us, "[Family member] has a swallowing difficulty and the staff have had training in it. [Family member] needs 'finger foods' and they do an excellent job. They provide an alternative if [family member] doesn't like it. The staff help [family member] to eat and make sure they have enough fluids."

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care; Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- The service appropriately referred people to other healthcare professionals such as social workers, GP's and dieticians.
- Provision was in place to share information between services, as needed and as appropriate, for the benefit of people and the consistency of their support. For example, where needed, people had a 'hospital passport' in place whereby relevant health and communication information about them was always available should they be taken to hospital in an emergency.

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that, as far as possible, people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether any restrictions on people's liberty had been authorised and whether any conditions on such authorisations were being met.

- Staff had received training in the MCA and we observed people continually being offered choice throughout our visit. Staff understood the importance of supporting people in making their own decisions as much as possible and gained people's consent wherever possible before carrying out a task.
- Staff knew people well and where necessary, could recognise facial expressions and body language to determine whether people were happy to consent or not.
- Where people were unable to make a decision for themselves, the provider had completed a mental capacity assessment and/or best interests' decision and had involved the person as much as possible in making their own decisions.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect

People were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- People and their relatives spoke highly about the care they received from Dedicated Care East Anglia. One person told us, "They have changed my life. They are the best." One person's relative commented, "I couldn't wish for better. They treat [family member] as one of their own and they are so good with [family member]. They are more than carers to [family member] and me. It comes from the management too, they do support people as well."
- Healthcare professionals were similarly complementary about the care provided. One told us, "I always find the standard of the care provided to be very high." Another healthcare professional commented, "They are a very caring organisation."
- Staff spoke about their work with passion and spoke about people warmly. At the core of the service was a strong ethos of providing person centred care. One member of staff told us, "The individuals using our service I feel are included in absolutely every aspect of what Dedicated Care were set out to do. Dedicated Care work with a passion to empower all."
- We observed staff to be exceptionally kind, caring and thoughtful in their interactions with people. Staff told us there was a caring culture at the service.
- People's religious and cultural preference were respected and valued and people who followed a particular faith were actively supported to do so. A relative told us, "The staff even go to the extreme and bring [family member] 20 miles to the local chapel here." This supported the person to continue to attend their preferred place of worship which was known to them.
- One of the directors told us how they supported a person who used the service with their specific cultural needs. This included attending a local café of that culture which enabled the person to, "Remain part of that community as this has a positive impact in [person's] social inclusion." The person was also being supported to shop for their cultural foods.
- Inclusion, equality and diversity were encouraged. People were encouraged to make all of their own choices and to express themselves with the knowledge that staff would support them. Staff told us of a recent example where they had supported a person who was concerned about not conforming with socially recognised stereotypes and that they had offered support and encouragement for the person to make their own choices with confidence. This had resulted in the person having the confidence to express further areas of their support where they wished to make their specific choices.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- People were partners in making decisions about their support and the providers and staff were committed in ensuring the best possible outcomes were achieved with people.
- Information was available for people in accessible formats. For example, easy read documents had been produced for people who could not access or read written words.

- Staff had a superb understanding of people's individual communication needs and plans had been put in place to support people to express themselves. One person's relative commented, "The staff use single words and gestures. They also understand [family member's] responses and eye movements. They often take photos and create a memory folder of activities."
- Staff told us in detail about people's life histories, their support preferences and interests and how people contributed to make decisions about the support that was right for them. One person said, "They have changed my life. They are the best, the greatest. I'm a much happier person now. My [family] have noticed a massive difference in me now I'm getting the support I want. It's all about me now."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Relatives told us staff respected and championed people's ability and right to 'take control' of their own lives and support. A relative said, "Those [support staff] are brilliant. It gives us peace of mind and it's the best thing we have done. [Family member] has improved so much, [family member] is more independent and loves it."
- A health care professional said, "I always find the standard of the care provided to be very high. They are proactive in facilitating [people] to be as independent as possible." Another healthcare professional told us, "Communication on all levels through the Dedicated Care's team is good. Individuals within Dedicated Care's support are offered plenty of opportunity to access the community and develop life skills to aid their independence."
- Staff were extremely committed to supporting people to retain as much autonomy and independence as possible. One person began to receive support from Dedicated Care East Anglia following an extended time in hospital. They were unable to walk or weight bear and at that time it was not clear if the person would ever be able to walk again. The directors told us how with the person's hard work and the intensive support and encouragement from staff, the person was now walking between rooms with support.
- A staff member said, "We are continuously promoting re-enablement with encouraging and supporting people with making their own meals, doing their banking, cleaning their bedrooms, washing up their plates, making drinks, assisting to do their laundry etc."
- Staff recognised and celebrated people's successes in their independence. A relative said, "I think it's above and beyond this company, amazing compared to when [family member] was living at home. [Family member] has come on so well, socially and physically independence is encouraged and promoted. The staff are kind, caring and respectful. They talk to [family member] and [they] confide in carers, they care and are dedicated, we are pleased with [family member's] progress."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs

Services were tailored to meet the needs of individuals and delivered to ensure flexibility, choice and continuity of care.

Planning personalised care to meet people's needs, preferences, interests and give them choice and control

- People received exceptional personalised and individualised care and support that was highly responsive to their individual needs and preferences. The core value of the service was to deliver personalised care to enable people to maintain and promote their independence.
- The overwhelming feedback we received was that the service and support staff were highly passionate about providing an excellent service to people and improving people's lives to enable them to have autonomy and individualism.
- Relatives also spoke of the exceptionally responsive service provided. One relative said, "This company is fantastic. They did not give up on [family member] even during [family member's] 'challenges' they work with the family. The impact on [family member] has been they have learned new skills and they are encouraged to be them self. A person in their own right."
- Healthcare professionals we contacted were very positive about the impact the service had on people, with one saying, "I believe Dedicated [Care East Anglia] do go 'above and beyond' and see this as a positive." Another professional commented, "[Directors] are keen for the customers to have equal opportunities to access the community and also organises several events and activities for [people]. These include a local disco, pamper sessions, days out and holidays. It is my belief they maintain an excellent relationship with other stakeholders such as [people using the service], families, health professionals and housing." A third professional told us, "I have known [person] for a number of years and have seen the inevitable decline in [person's] condition. The support staff have made a significant improvement to [person's] quality of life, keeping [person] safe while enabling them to live as normal a life as possible, this includes helping them keep a good relationship with family by helping with visits."
- There was a warm and friendly atmosphere amongst people and support staff. We observed lots of fun, laughter and interactions that were well received with affection and banter when people and staff visited the provider office to take part in an arts and craft session and shared lunch.
- Support plans were highly personalised and detailed the care people needed and ensured the person was at the heart of the planning process. Plans provided a really detailed background to the person; a life story which covered their personal history and important milestones in the person's life. This meant that anyone unfamiliar with the person would be able to gain a clear understanding of the person, their needs and their choices.
- Support staff were innovative in supporting people to follow their interests. We met one person during our visit to the service office who told us of their dream to meet two television celebrities. As a result, support staff had arranged tickets for the person to watch a live recording of an episode of the television show featuring the celebrities. The person showed us their photograph album and memories book and told us, "They [staff] made my dream come true and made me feel magnificent and fantastic." Staff told us they were determined to fulfil the person's full dream and enable them to meet the celebrities in person.

- People's support was holistic and based on what was important to them as an individual. Staff were highly responsive in recognising and supporting this individuality. One person told us how they had been supported to attend a weight loss club and with staff support had managed to lose a substantial amount of weight, resulting in increased mobility. They told us, "I lost two stone at [weight loss club]. It means I have to take less medication for pain now, so I feel better. I can now actually climb the stairs. I went to the club every Monday with staff support." The directors told us of another person who, after two years of hard work, had lost over three stone in weight with staff support. We were told how the person's confidence and self-esteem had increased dramatically as a result."
- The directors and staff were continually looking for new opportunities to make people's lives interesting and enjoyable and to give people choice and control. We were told how one person found busy environments and socialising with others very challenging. Support staff slowly worked with the person to spend increasing amounts of time within social occasions, spending a short time with others and attending a different event each month. With perseverance and tireless support, the person was able to choose to stay and participate in a full activity, building up and progressing to a full week's holiday. One of the directors told us, "[Person's] family were absolutely amazed and over the moon that [person] had built up the courage and confidence to enjoy a wonderful holiday with others."
- The directors and staff had a strong ethos of involving the community to be part of the service, to reduce social isolation and to enrich people's lives. Every month the service hosted a community disco event where people and members of the community came together to have fun and socialise.
- Staff went the extra mile to promote community involvement further. Each year a 'fun day' was arranged by the directors and staff, which was held within the local community. We were told by one of the directors, "It was brilliant to see so many different people from the local community spending time together. We invited the fire service and police force. There were different food stalls, home baked cake stalls, stalls run by the individuals we support, inflatables and children's rides amongst many other things."
- The directors told us from the money raised at the first fun day, they had been able to fully fund a 'summer ball' for people and support staff. We saw photographs of the event and were told how a ball room had been hired along with an after dinner disco. The following years 'fun day' also raised a substantial amount of money and the directors told us how that year people and staff decided to donate all of the money to three charities close to everyone's heart and related to the support people required on a day to day basis.
- The directors continually explored ways in which technology could enhance the support provided to individuals and enable them to retain as much control as possible. For example, one person had seen an increase in the symptoms of a medical condition. As soon as this was identified by staff, the providers had immediately purchased a device, with the person's consent, that enabled them to be supported overnight and reduced the need for staff to check and potentially disturb them.
- The directors took an exceptionally responsive approach to matching staff to people depending on their shared interests telling us, "Some people are very active and love things like trampolining. We find support staff who can support them with that. Some people also like to go out late of an evening, to the pub or a nightclub for example so staff hours were changed to meet those specific requests and ensure that people did not have to leave an event because of support staff working hours." This meant people could be assured their needs and preferences would be met based on their specific requirements.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- Everyone we spoke with told us they knew who the directors were and that they could comfortably approach them with confidence should they have had a concern or something to complain about. One person's relative said, "I know the [directors] and they say, 'any worries just ring' and they reply quickly we have ongoing dialogue."
- 'Easy read' and pictorial versions of the complaint's guidance was available for anyone who may have found this more accessible than the written text version.

- People and their relatives were encouraged to discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity in order that they could be resolved speedily.
- The directors had received one complaint from a person in receipt of the service about another person. Both parties were being supported and the directors recognised the role of advocacy services in this.

End of life care and support

- The service was not currently supporting anyone with end of life care, however people and their relatives were given support when making decisions about their preferences for their end of life care.
- Advanced care planning referred to as people's 'living wish' had been sensitively and thoroughly explored with people. Evidence of people's wishes for their funeral plans was discussed in their care plans in great detail and we saw meticulous detail had been included including people's preferences in music, flower choices, choice of clothing and religious and cultural preferences, amongst others.

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

Service leadership was exceptional and distinctive. Leaders and the service culture they created drove and improved high-quality, person-centred care.

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support with openness; and how the provider understands and acts on their duty of candour responsibility

- The service was exceptionally well-led. We received overwhelmingly positive comments about the unquestionable standards of care provided by the service.
- The providers and the culture they created, promoted an exceptional person-centred service which was open, inclusive and empowering.
- Relatives of people who used the service were extremely complimentary about the management and leadership within the service. One person's relative said that they would recommend the service, "Hugely, hand on heart." Another relative commented, "Yes definitely, in fact I have done, and this person is now with the company too."
- External healthcare professionals were consistently positive and complimentary about the providers, care staff and the running of the service. One professional told us, "[Director] is a very kind and caring person, who works hard on recruiting dedicated staff who will focus on good outcomes for the [people] the agency support." Another healthcare professional said, "Dedicated Care are one of the best providers that I have worked with in Norfolk. In my experience the teams have been well led with all staff members knowing [people] and their needs well. They have been consistently committed to supporting engagement with the community learning disabilities teams and have been positive about acting on recommendations."
- Staff were incredibly enthusiastic and committed to supporting people and complimentary about the management and leadership which inspired them to deliver a high quality service. One member of staff said, "I would never hesitate to use Dedicated Care for a loved one and I couldn't possibly imagine a career in social care anywhere else as I feel Dedicated Care is outstanding in every way, shape and form." Another member of staff told us, "I feel that the experience has been very positive. I joined the company and before I was totally in a different line of work. I wish I left there and done this sooner. Such a lovely company to work for and I love the passion I have helping to promote independence for the individuals we support."
- The culture of the service was exceptionally caring and responsive and focused on ensuring people consistently received person-centred support. These values were promoted throughout the service and embraced by all staff regardless of what level they worked at. It was evident staff put these ethics at the heart of their practice.
- Staff told us they felt the service was so well run because the directors knew people very well. Staff described the open and inclusive culture within the service and said they would have no hesitation in talking to the management team and raising any concerns or new ideas they might have.
- Links within the local community were excellent and there were a number of ongoing initiatives taking place in the area to support people to maintain relationships with their local society. The directors had developed the 'sunshine club' and as part of this monthly discos and events were held in the local

community that were open to not only people being supported by Dedicated Care East Anglia but also by the wider community. This helped in reducing the risk of social isolation for people. One person told us, "The main thing for me is the socialising. Before, I used to feel a bit down but now I have so much going for me and I love it."

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- The directors were highly passionate about people using the service and inspired their team of managers and the wider staff. The management team was clearly providing very effective leadership and direction.
- There was noticeable leadership at the service. The directors were very 'hands on' and clearly knew people very well as they demonstrated an extensive up to date knowledge of all the people in receipt of personal care from the service. This was apparent as we observed how the directors engaged with people with ease and received positive reactions in return.
- The directors encouraged staff development and learning. Everyone who worked for Dedicated Care East Anglia had clearly defined roles where there was opportunity to learn, develop and progress.
- It was evident that the directors work ethic and style of leadership demonstrated a record of providing excellent care. Some staff including the directors had received awards for their high standards and commitment to supporting people. During 2018, at an award scheme held in the county where the service was based, Dedicated Care East Anglia won an award for delivering excellence through learning and development. At a county wide award scheme held this year one of the directors, who was also the registered manager, won a runner up award for motivational leadership.

Delivering excellence through learning and development

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- People, their relatives and the staff were empowered and encouraged to make suggestions to improve the service and raise concerns if necessary. One of the directors told us, "We held a family event at a local hotel and restaurant where we provided refreshments. This was for families to come and meet each other and to speak to other family members who have loved ones supported by Dedicated Care. We left questionnaires open and a box to post them in and made all families aware of these. We explained that this helps us to gain some feedback and that the questionnaires were anonymous."
- The directors had invested in a new electronic feedback system. They told us how this was completely anonymised and meant that responses could be sent electronically. We were told, "We had 47 responses back within 24 hours. People who have an email address use it too and we have easy read version for people."
- Employee recognition awards had been introduced which recognised care staff who had 'gone the extra mile' and were known internally as the 'employee of the month' awards. This was used by management to recognise the hard work and commitment of support staff and demonstrate their appreciation for their hard work.

Continuous learning and improving care

- The directors had exceptionally good oversight of the service and promoted effective monitoring and accountability.
- There were detailed and thorough systems in place to monitor and review the quality of the service. There was an emphasis on review, analysis and continually looking for ways to improve the service for the benefit of people. The directors led a structured audit programme which had recently been developed in electronic format. Actions were shared with staff for joint learning and further development of the service.
- The directors took responsibility for their own learning by keeping up to date and researching new initiatives and current thinking and the latest developments in health and social care.

Working in partnership with others

- The service worked in partnership with health and social care professionals who were involved in people`s care and used a multi-disciplinary and collaborative approach to achieve positive outcomes for people.
- External health and social care professionals were extremely complimentary of the service and the support provided to people. We were told by a healthcare professional, "I feel that most of the time this service goes 'over and above' to meet [people's] needs."