

Dependable Home Care Services Limited

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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

Dependable Home Care Services is a domiciliary care agency. The service provides personal care to younger and older adults living in their own homes.

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

Staff were recruited safely, and pre-employment checks had been carried out. Staff confirmed this and told us they were well looked after and felt supported. Staffing arrangements met people's needs. There were systems in place to keep people safe from abuse. Staff received safeguarding training and knew how to recognise and report any form of abuse. Risks associated with people's individual care needs, including the environment were assessed. Staff were knowledgeable about people and their individual known risks and understood how to support people safely. People were supported with their medicines by trained staff where required. Staff were trained in infection prevention and control and had access to supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE). Relatives confirmed appropriate PPE was worn by staff when provided with care and support. Any accidents and incidents were recorded, acted upon and action taken to learn and reduce them from happening again.

The registered manager had effective systems and processes in place that assessed, monitored and reviewed the quality and safety of the service to ensure people were provided with good, safe care. The registered manager also delivered care to people when required and managed the service effectively having good oversight and leadership. The service worked with other health and social care professionals to support people.

People who used the service, relatives and staff were provided with opportunities to share their experience of the service. The registered manager welcomed feedback and showed a commitment in providing high quality care and support, which was personalised and supported people to live independently in their own homes. People and relatives spoke highly about the care and support they received. This included how friendly and caring staff were, communication and responsiveness of the registered manager. One relative said, "[Registered manager's name] and staff have been the most reliable carers we as a family could have wished for. Always on time and staff provide the best possible care we could wish for. Above and beyond is the best way to describe it."

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

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.

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 13 April 2019).

Why we inspected

We received concerns in relation to staffing. As a result, we undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only.

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 based on the findings of this inspection.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Dependable Home Care Services 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.

Dependable Home Care Services 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. 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 4 inspectors. Two inspectors carried out the onsite inspection and 2 inspectors completed telephone calls to staff following our onsite inspection.

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

This inspection was unannounced.

Inspection activity started on 22 August 2023 and ended on 25 September 2023. We visited the location's

office on 23 August 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 work with the service. We also requested feedback from Healthwatch to obtain their views of the service. Healthwatch is an independent consumer champion that gathers and represents the views of the public about health and social care services in England. 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 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 1 person who used the service and 1 family member about their experience of the care provided. Additionally, we received feedback from a further person who used the service and 3 relatives via email. We spoke with 7 members of staff including senior care staff, 6 care staff, and the provider, who is also the registered manager.

We looked at a range of records. This included 7 people's care and medicine records. We looked at a 4 staff files in relation to recruitment and a variety of records relating to the management of the service. After the inspection visit, we requested further records in relation to the management of the service.

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. At this inspection the rating has remained good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Staffing and recruitment

- Staffing arrangements met people's needs.
- People and their relatives told us they had regular staff visiting them to ensure consistency of care and staff normally arrived on time and stayed for the duration. One relative said, "Staff are always on time with 2 carers as per schedule. It is safe to say they are never late or had to cancel." Another relative said, "During the 5 years I can only think of one occasion when a carer did not arrive. In these situations [registered manager's name] will pick up the call. Carers are generally very prompt on arrival according to the weekly rota."
- Staff confirmed the management team ensured there were enough staff employed to carry out people's care visits. The senior carer who was part of the management team organised people's care visits and staffs' rotas to ensure staff had sufficient time between care visits. Staff confirmed this was the case.
- Staff were recruited safely, and staff files contained appropriate pre-employment checks. This included references, right to work and a criminal record check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks provide information including details about convictions and cautions held on the Police National Computer. The information helps employers make safer recruitment decisions.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were protected from the risk of abuse.
- The provider had effective safeguarding systems and processes in place to help identify and report abuse to help keep people safe.
- Staff received safeguarding training which included refresher training, when needed. Staff spoken with were confident to report any concerns. One staff member said, "I would feel confident to raise any issues, there are lots of avenues to report (concerns) and in addition to the registered manager there are team leaders. They all have an open door and are approachable so I'm not afraid to speak up. There is always someone available for advice if needed."
- The provider had a safeguarding policy which was accessible for people, their relatives, and staff.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People's care plans contained risk assessments about their individual care, support and environmental needs. These were reviewed as necessary to ensure they were up to date.
- Staff understood people's needs and identified risks before supporting them. One staff member told us, "Staff meet people first, see care plans and do a shadow call so they know people's needs and any risks." Another staff member said, "I had the opportunity to do shadow shifts with more experienced staff to get to

know people."

- From 1 July 2022, all health and social care providers registered with CQC must ensure that their staff receive training in learning disability and autism. Staff had not received this training. The registered manager acted on this during our inspection. They booked staff onto the mandatory training to ensure staff continued to support people's needs safely.

Using medicines safely

- Not all people using the service required support with their medicines.
- People's care plans were detailed and documented their support needs in relation to the ordering, storage and administration of medicines.
- For people who required support they received this by staff who were trained and regularly had their competency assessed to ensure safe practice.
- The registered manager completed regular medication audits to ensure people had received their medicines as prescribed. This process enabled the registered manager to identify any errors and to take any action necessary to help reduce the risk of recurrence.

Preventing and controlling infection

- The provider had policies in place to support effective infection prevention and control.
- Staff received training in infection prevention and control and had access to supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- People and their relatives confirmed staff wore appropriate PPE while providing care. One relative told us, "Staff are always in their uniform and wear their gloves, aprons and masks."

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Systems were in place to record and monitor accidents and incidents if and when they occurred.
- Any learning from these were shared with the staff team through meetings and supervisions to prevent them from happening again.

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. At this inspection the rating 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

- People and relatives were complimentary about the quality of care, the registered manager, and the staff team. One person said, "I cannot speak highly enough of them and have recommended them to my friends. I want to say a big thank you to all of the staff for all they do, they make such a big difference and brighten my day." A family member said, "Dependable Care have been wonderful from the word go. [Registered manager's name] is a very responsive manager who genuinely cares for both staff and service users. [Registered manager name] is flexible and listens to any issues and adjusts care plan dependent on need at short notice. I cannot speak highly enough of them and if there were an award going for most caring, professional agency, they would win hands down."
- Another relative said, "As managers you are always approachable and any extra care requests are always filled in. As a family we could not wish for a better company/group of carers to look after [family member's name]. You are all worth your weight in gold."
- Staff told us they enjoyed their roles, had good relationships with people, felt well supported and could go to the registered manager for advice and support. One staff member told us, "The registered manager is lovely and so approachable." Another staff member said, "Lovely company to work for they are very helpful and treat you with respect."
- The registered manager promoted a culture which was open and inclusive. They knew the people they were supporting well and were passionate for wanting to deliver good quality person centred care.

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 understood their responsibilities under the duty of candour to be open and honest with people, and their relatives, if something went wrong.

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

- The registered manager was experienced and had the skills and knowledge to deliver a safe, compassionate service. They demonstrated a strong commitment to providing good care for people using the service, providing support to staff, and ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements was achieved.
- Staff were positive about working at the service and spoke highly of the registered manager and the support they received. Comments included, "Dependable Home Care is a really welcoming place to work",

"Management helps each other. They are good so far, very friendly, and helpful", "They are a really good company, we don't rush, we look after people", and "The registered manager is lovely and so approachable."

- The registered manager had effective quality assurance systems in place to monitor the quality of the service. This included audits and checks of records and spot checks of staff when supporting people. Any areas identified as needing improvement were promptly acted on and addressed.
- The registered manager had a vision for the service to grow and was constantly looking at ways to encourage staff recruitment, retention and therefore consistency of care for people. People and relatives consistently told us they valued the care and support provided by the staff team.

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

- People and relatives' feedback was sought. This was in the form of conversations, reviews, and surveys.
- Staff told us regular staff meetings took place where information was shared with them, and they were provided with the opportunity to discuss any topics relevant to their roles and express their views and opinions of the service.
- The registered manager was committed to the continuous improvement of the service and the care provided. They told us they used information from audits, feedback, care plan reviews and accidents and incidents to inform changes and improvements to the quality of care people received.
- The registered manager was responsive to our inspection feedback. This included taking action to ensure staff were provided with specific training to support people with learning disabilities.

Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager and staff understood the need to make referrals to and collaborate effectively with community health and social care professionals. This promoted people's individual needs and supported good outcomes for people.