

Heroic Care Ltd

# Heroic Care Ltd

## Inspection report

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### Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good ●
Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service effective?	Good ●
Is the service caring?	Outstanding ☆
Is the service responsive?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

About the service: Heroic Care is a domiciliary care agency and supported living provider supporting people with a learning disability in their own homes. At the time of the inspection they were supporting 32 people in multiple locations around Hinckley.

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 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.

The outcomes for people using the service reflected the principles and values of Registering the Right Support by promoting choice and control, independence and inclusion. People's support focused on them having as many opportunities as possible for them to gain new skills and become more independent.

People's experience of using this service:

People consistently told us how they were treated with exceptional kindness and respect. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback about how staff were supportive and went the extra mile to get care just right for people.

People received highly personalised and flexible care and support, tailored to their specific needs and preferences. Each person was seen as an individual, with their own social and cultural diversity, values and beliefs. Staff invested time to get to know and appreciate the preferences and experiences of people who received a service.

People told us they felt safe when being supported with care. Relatives told us all the staff worked in a way that respected their family member's privacy and dignity. The providers had a culture of supporting people to live their own lives to the best of their ability. This ethos was infused throughout the service. Staff told us they felt valued by the organisation.

Staff and the management team described how care staff often went beyond their scheduled duties, supporting people outside their normal working hours, enabling them to go on holiday or take part in community based activities.

Safe recruitment practices were followed and appropriate checks had been undertaken, which made sure only suitable staff were employed to provide care for people.

People's needs were assessed before a service commenced and care was delivered in line with standards, guidance and the law.

Staff were highly motivated and well supported to provide care to people through the training and supervision they received. There was an induction, training and development programme, which supported staff to gain relevant knowledge and skills.

The service was well managed and people and their relatives consistently praised the passion and drive of the providers and their motivation to provide a high quality service. Relatives consistently told us they would positively recommend the service to other people.

More information about the service is contained in the full report.

Rating at last inspection: This is the first inspection following their registration on 24 May 2018.

Why we inspected: This was a planned inspection following their registration.

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](http://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?

The service was safe.

Details are in our Safe findings below.

Good ●

### Is the service effective?

The service was effective

Details are in our Effective findings below.

Good ●

### Is the service caring?

The service was exceptionally caring

Details are in our Caring findings below.

Outstanding ☆

### Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive

Details are in our Responsive findings below.

Good ●

### Is the service well-led?

The service was well-led

Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Good ●

# Heroic Care Ltd

## 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. Our inspection team consisted of one inspector.

Service and service type. Heroic Care Ltd is a supported living and domiciliary care service. It provides personal care to people living in their own houses and flats. It provides a service to younger disabled adults who have a learning disability.

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. We gave the provider 72 hours' notice because the location provides a domiciliary care service and we needed to be sure someone was available at the office.

What we did before the inspection, we reviewed the information we held about the service. This included notifications sent to us by the provider and other information we held on our database about the service. Statutory notifications include information about important events which the provider is required to send us by law. We used this information to plan the inspection.

During the inspection. We spoke with three people who used the service and visited one person in their own home. We spoke with relatives of six people. We spoke with the providers, the registered manager, a care manager and three care workers. We reviewed six people's care records, staff records, audits and other records about the management of the service. We requested additional evidence to be sent to us after our inspection. This was received, and the information was used as part of our inspection.

# Is the service safe?

## Our findings

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

This is the first time we have inspected the service. People were safe and protected from avoidable harm. Legal requirements were met.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- All the people we spoke with told us they felt safe. One person said, "I like all the staff. I feel safe." Another person told us, "I didn't feel safe before where I lived, but all the staff want to help me have a good life."
- All of the relatives we spoke with also told us that they felt their family member was safe with the care and support they received. One relative commented, "I feel if [person] had stayed with their previous carers they would be dead by now. Heroic Care were recommended to me. I rate them very highly they are excellent."
- Staff had a good understanding of what abuse meant and told us they had received training to guide them on what they should do in the event they suspected abuse taking place. One staff member told us, "I would speak with [provider]. They would deal with it I have absolutely no doubt."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Systems were in place to identify risks to people. Where appropriate, management plans had been put in place which were regularly reviewed.
- Heroic Care followed a system called 'What's the Message'. This identified where people's risks were and what potentially could trigger a person to become anxious and display behaviours. Staff told us they had received training in this system and understood how to support people in a proactive way to reduce the risk of behaviours being exhibited.
- Relatives told us their family members benefitted from being supported in this way and behaviours were managed extremely well.
- Risks which affected their daily lives, such as mobility, environmental, communication, skin integrity and nutrition were clearly documented. Each risk was reviewed regularly and staff were kept informed of any changes by team leaders.

Staffing and recruitment

- People and relatives told us they were supported by a consistent team of staff. Staff were available when they were needed.
- Staff were recruited following appropriate checks being carried out such as checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The DBS check ensure people barred from working with certain groups such as vulnerable adults would be identified.

Using medicines safely.

- People received their medicines as prescribed.
- Medicines administration records (MARs) were completed by staff and were audited at regular intervals to ensure all medicines were safely and correctly given.

- Staff confirmed they received training and were observed by a senior member of staff to ensure they were competent to administer medicines.
- Relatives confirmed staff supported their family members to take their medicines when they needed them. One relative told us, "[Person] has epilepsy and it is well controlled. Staff make sure [person] has it when they need it."
- Some people were prescribed medicines to be taken 'as required' (PRN). Protocols were in place and provided information for staff when people should be given them and how much in a 24 hour period.

#### Preventing and controlling infection

- Staff told us they received training in infection control and had access to protective personal equipment. A relative told us, "I know staff use gloves and aprons as I see them in [person's] flat."

#### Learning lessons when things go wrong

- There were systems in place to record accidents and incidents. We reviewed records and saw appropriate action had been taken where necessary.
- Staff told us if something had happened it was shared across the organisation through team meetings or other forms of communication. One staff member told us, "This is a learning organisation. If things go wrong we learn and go forward."

# 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.

This is the first time we have inspected the service. 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 had a comprehensive assessment of their needs carried out. The information included people's preferences, backgrounds and personal histories. This enabled staff to know people well and how they wanted to be cared for.
- Relatives told us the providers spoke with them prior to the person using the service and spent time getting to know the person.
- The registered manager and one of the providers told us they would often be the first staff to provide support to a person to ensure they knew their care needs when writing the support plan.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- People were supported by well trained staff.
- People and relatives spoke positively about the skills of the staff supporting them. The positive feedback demonstrated how staff applied their learning effectively which had led to good outcomes and supported people's quality of life. One relative told us, "[Person] didn't used to go outside but staff supported them and now they go into the garden and go shopping." Another relative commented, "I know they get lots of training as staff talk about upcoming training. They really know what they are doing."
- Staff completed a detailed induction based on the care certificate, which is an agreed set of standards that sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of specific job roles in the health and social care sector.
- Staff told us they also had 'classroom' based training which they found very useful in helping them understand their role.
- The providers told us they were developing a training manager's role to ensure they could deliver regular training to keep staff up to date.
- Staff told us they felt supported in their day to day work, and they received regular formal supervision. One staff member said, "I know if I have any concerns I can ask for an extra supervision. The management team are there if I need them"

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

- People told us they were supported well to eat and drink enough to maintain their health and wellbeing where this was part of their care package.
- Where people had special diets, support plans provided information for staff to ensure these needs were met. For example, where one person was on a restricted diet due to health issues, the support plan provided staff with information about what the person could and could not eat. The person's relative confirmed staff supported the person with their diet.



- Another relative told us prior to Heroic Care staff working with their family member they had not been able to do anything for themselves. They told us, "[Person] can now, with help, make a cup of tea."

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

- People were supported to maintain their health and well-being.
- People received care and support from other professionals, such as the community nursing service and GP's where needed. The healthcare input supported people to maintain good health and remain living in their own homes.
- Relatives told us their family member was supported to see healthcare professionals when they needed to. One relative told us, "If [person] needs to see a doctor, staff will always let me know. They are very good like that."

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.

Where people may need to be deprived of their liberty in order to receive care and treatment in their own homes, the DoLS cannot be used. Instead, an application can be made to the Court of Protection who can authorise deprivations of liberty.

- We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA.
- Staff understood how some decisions were made in people's best interests if they lacked the capacity to fully understand or consent.
- Where necessary the service had undertaken best interests reviews and decisions to ensure people received appropriate care and these had been recorded.
- Where people had restriction placed on them by the Court of Protection (CoP) the provider ensured they understood and followed any restrictions. (The CoP is a court established under the MCA and makes decisions on financial or welfare matters for people who can't make decisions at the time they need to be made, because they may lack capacity to do)

## 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

This is the first time we have inspected the service. People were truly respected and valued as individuals; and empowered as partners in their care in an exceptional service

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

- People received outstanding care and support from the providers and team of care staff who were dedicated to providing high standards of care.
- The providers promoted a strong person-centred culture and the team were committed to making a positive difference to people's lives wherever possible. For example, one person, who had been living in a challenging situation, was referred to Heroic Care by their social worker. However, a suitable flat and support team could not be found quickly to take the person out of the situation. One of the providers arranged for the person to move to alternative accommodation and was supported in the interim by the provider themselves until suitable care staff could be employed. This meant the person was safe and their quality of life improved significantly.
- They also ensured the person had a Christmas with presents and a meal with other people the service supported. The person told us, "I had a lovely Christmas [provider] made sure I had a sack of presents and a lovely meal. I had never celebrated Christmas before. I was made to feel special and that I deserved this."
- The providers were actively involved in the day to day support of people. They knew all the people the service supported. For example, the providers were able to give people's backgrounds and reasons for their referral to the service without the need to refer to care plans.
- People's comments included, "(Staff name) is lovely." "They are kind." And, "They want to help me have a good life."
- Relatives we spoke with were all positive in their praise of the service and the providers. One relative said, "Heroic Care were recommended to us when the previous carers were not meeting [person's] needs. We had several meetings with the providers to look at what support [person] needed. This is a very good fit. [Person] is much happier and doing more things. The staff are very caring. Staff share photos of things [person] has been doing. Communication is excellent."
- The providers used creative ways to ensure they provided an accessible service. For example, the providers supported one person to buy an easy to use mobile phone. They put Heroic Care's number on speed dial for the person to contact when they need to. The person finds this reassuring.
- People were at the heart of the service and staff were motivated to deliver exceptional care by the providers' values, commitment and the training staff received. A member of staff told us their training was focussed on the person they were supporting. "We get tailored training. There are managers available to support us every step of the way."
- A relative confirmed how important this specialist training was for their family member. "I know all the staff who work with [person] have had training to manage the stoma. (A stoma is an opening on the abdomen that can be connected to either your digestive or urinary system to allow waste to be diverted out of your body.) Staff understand what [person] can or cannot eat and this is really important."

- People were supported by staff who were passionate about their job roles and would go the 'extra mile', focussing on ensuring that the best possible care was delivered, including staying longer than the allocated time if necessary. One member of staff told us, "Compassion is promoted amongst staff by the management team. Staff are caring, we will stay late with people if they need us and work above what is expected. Management do recognise this as well. There is a 'staff of the month'. It makes us (staff) feel valued too."
- Staff were committed to building up meaningful relationships with people. Staff were dedicated to the provision of exceptional care and support. A relative told us, "I rate the organisation very highly. Their adaptability is excellent. The previous agency was poor quality and didn't give the right support. The care is now excellent. They have stuck through all the changes [person] has been through with their health. The providers are sensitive to [person's] feelings and make sure the rota reflects who [person] prefers."
- Health and social care professionals we contacted during the inspection confirmed they found the service very caring and supportive of people's needs. One comment we received was, "They are a very responsive company." Another comment was, "Heroic Care tend to pick up cases that are more challenging in nature and offer robust support to these individuals."
- The providers ensured staff respected people's diversity. Staff were supportive of people of all faiths. Where people expressed a faith, staff supported them to attend their chosen place of worship. The providers had systems in place to ensure people were protected against discrimination.

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

- People's feedback overwhelmingly demonstrated they were supported by a service which truly cared about them and went the extra mile to deliver personalised care. For example, when the providers take on a new support package to ensure the person's care plan truly reflected their needs the providers were the first to provide support. They then tailored the care plan and recruited staff according to the identified needs. This ensured people received care from a team who were fully committed to finding innovative ways to ensure they received person-centred care.
- The providers were exceptional at helping people to express their views so that staff understood their views, preferences, wishes and choices.
- The provider told us about a person who had limited verbal communication by choice. Through the work staff had done with the person, in building trust, they now communicated with staff and with people they felt comfortable with. The relative commented on the importance this breakthrough had been for them, "[Person] didn't used to speak but through the work the staff have done they will talk now. It is really excellent."
- Consistent staff teams were very important to people and the providers ensured people were fully involved in choosing their care team. For example, one person who had previously supported by another agency and had a very poor experience, now had full control over the team who supported them. This had lead to a reduction in their anxiety and ultimately a reduction in their medicines.
- People and their relatives or representatives were regularly asked for their views on their care plans and the delivery of their service. A relative told us, "I am very impressed by (provider). He knows what he is talking about. Another of the providers is my main contact and they are always quick to respond."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Relatives confirmed staff were respectful of people's privacy, dignity and independence. One relative told us, "I get feedback from friends who see [person] out shopping with staff. They always say staff are engaged with [person] and they look well." Another relative told us, "The staff are caring and the support is dignified. [Person] is so much happier."
- The provider shared with us their success stories of where the support they had provided to people had made positive impacts on people's lives.
- These described how people were now living fulfilled and active lives, in their own flats, making choices

and decisions about their lives.

- We were able to visit one person in their own home and observed the staff member supporting them. The person was relaxed with the staff member and the staff member was aware of how the person communicated and able to meet their needs in a dignified manner.
- Staff were responsible for keeping the person's home clean and tidy as well as meeting their personal care needs. Staff had also supported the person to decorate their home in the way they wanted. We noticed the care staff had bought fresh flowers for the person to brighten the flat up. We were told this was something staff did where it was safe to do so. This shows staff cared about small details in the person's life.

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

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

This is the first time we have inspected the service. People's needs were met through good organisation and delivery.

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

- People received personalised care and support specific to their needs and preferences. Each person was seen as an individual, with their own social and cultural diversity, values and beliefs. There was an assessment and support planning process involving the person and/or their representative. This resulted in a personalised care and support plan with agreed outcomes and goals. Care staff recorded daily care and observations and reported any concerns to the office.
- The service ensured people were given information in a way that they could understand. For example, people had easy read information or electronic aids were used to improve communication.
- Relatives all said they found communication with the office exceptional. One relative told us, "Staff are available and happy to discuss any changes or concerns we might have." Another relative told us, "This is such a responsive service. I can speak to anyone but the providers are always available if I need to speak to them. They have involved me through it all."
- Care plans took account of people's likes, dislikes and preferences. Care records and people's support was bespoke and delivered according to people's preferences and their needs. A relative told us, "[Person] prefers young staff as they like to go out and do different things. The staff team support [person] to go to museums, art galleries. They recently went to the space centre."
- People's communication needs were known so staff could adapt their support as necessary. A staff member told us, "We have an App on the iPad to aid communication with [person] this means they are better supported to make choices about what they want to do. For example, we support [person] to go to Zumba, swimming and play football. I am due to go on holiday with [person] we know what they want to do and everything has been arranged"
- One relative told us their family member had never been outside prior to Heroic Care providing support. They told us, "They encourage [person] to go out into the garden. With support they can now make a cup of tea. Each time I see [person] they are developing new skills."

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- A complaints policy and procedure was in place and people and relatives told us they were able to speak to the provider at any time. The provider told us they were aware of their duty to investigate and resolve any complaint following their procedures.
- Relatives we spoke with were aware they could complain if they needed to and felt very confident the provider would listen and take any necessary action. One relative told us, "I have never needed to complain but I know if I have mentioned anything it is dealt with. They respond so it doesn't become a complaint."

## End of life care and support

- The provider told us they had initially started supporting someone who had been diagnosed as end of life care. Staff had received the relevant training and suitable plans had been put in place. However, the person's needs had now changed and they were no longer considered to be end of life care.
- The provider had systems in place to ensure where people needed end of life support staff were able to provide suitable care. Staff were aware of good practice and guidance in end of life care, and respected people's religious beliefs and preferences.

# 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

This is the first time we have inspected the service. The service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted 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

- Without exception, all the people who gave us feedback spoke very highly about the exemplary care provided by Heroic Care. Relatives told us they would not hesitate to recommend the service to others.
- Staff we spoke with understood the values and vision the providers were aiming for and were committed to meeting this aim. One staff member told us, "We know we are here to improve people's lives. It's about respect, dignity and compassion." All the staff commented on how visible and accessible the providers were. One staff member told us, "I see at least one of them every time I call into the office."
- Relatives also told us the providers were easy to contact. One relative commented. "The head office is in town, I can pop in any time and speak to (provider) if I need to."
- All the staff we spoke with told us they felt valued and supported by the management team. Staff told us they received regular supervision and feedback about the work they did. One staff member told us. "Communication is excellent. We get feedback and praise when we do things right. I am new to care and I feel very valued." Staff told us the provider arranges a variety of team building activities for staff. For example, we were told the provider had arranged for staff to go to an 'escape room' event. This is where staff had to work together to solve problems to escape a locked room.
- Staff also told us the provider arranged for lots of different activities for people using the service to be involved in. For example, Halloween party, Easter egg hunt and Zumba. A staff member told us, "The providers arranged for a local Italian restaurant to open and people had pizza and lasagne making lessons."
- It was clear throughout the inspection that the management team and staff were passionate about delivering good quality care.
- Staff understood their role and what was expected of them. They were happy in their work, were motivated and had confidence in the way the service was managed.
- Relatives commented on how highly motivated staff were to provide care to their family member. One relative said, "Staff are very motivated to understand [person] and provide different experiences for them."
- The service had contingency plans for adverse weather conditions or if the other serious incidents occurred. A file contained details of each person receiving care for use in an emergency.
- Staff meetings took place at regular intervals and discussed people's needs and any important information or actions they needed to be aware of.
- All staff told us they were kept informed of all changes.
- The providers understood their responsibility to keep the relevant people informed should an incident occur.

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

#### regulatory requirements

- The providers had many years of experience of working with adults with learning difficulties and had a passion for high quality care and an aspiration to continuously drive improvements in the service for the benefit of people.
- Each staff member knew their responsibilities and there were clear lines of accountability across the service. One staff member told us, "We do lots of things well but I think one of the things the management team does really well is the 'on-call'. If we need to phone on-call we get a response quickly."
- The providers continually monitored the service provision through the use of spot checks with staff and feedback from people and their relatives. Relatives confirmed they were involved in providing feedback about the service.
- The provider was clear about their responsibility to notify us of incidents and important events in accordance with their statutory obligations.

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

- People's views about the quality of the service they received were highly important to the provider.
- The providers encouraged and promoted an open, inclusive and empowering culture throughout the service. Staff were encouraged to call into the offices as were people using the service. They told us they always felt welcome.
- The feedback we received showed the providers listened to and acted on people's views. There was a clear focus within the service on supporting people to be as independent as possible and involving them in the development of their care plans. Relatives also told us they felt involved and not excluded from their family member's life.
- The providers told us they were involved in local community events They described one in particular. People painted stones in memory of a local girl who died. "People supported by Heroic Care painted stones and the idea was they were hidden around Hinckley. It got people using the service involved in the community. It was a great success."

#### Continuous learning and improving care

- There was a strong emphasis on continuous improvement. Staff were encouraged with their personal and professional development. The providers had employed a training manager to ensure all staff were trained to the same high standard.
- The providers were involved in the day to day running of the service and frequently completed care visits, taking these as opportunities to gain feedback on staff and the service being provided.
- The providers also kept up to date with good practice through regular training and CQC updates,

#### Working in partnership with others

- Through the working relationship with health and social care professionals, any concerns about people's wellbeing were escalated quickly. The service contacted GP's on people's behalf to arrange visits or appointments.
- Health care professionals we contacted during the inspection spoke positively about the service.