

Prestige Nursing Limited

Prestige Nursing - Plymouth

Inspection report

54a Morshead Road
Plymouth
Devon
PL6 5AQ

Tel: 01752213213

Website: www.prestige-nursing.co.uk

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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?

Outstanding 

Is the service responsive?

Good 

Is the service well-led?

Outstanding 

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Prestige Nursing Plymouth is a service that provides both nursing and care staff to people in the independent, hospital and community sectors. This inspection only covered the regulated activity provided to people in their own homes by care staff. The service provides care and support to people of all ages, in their own homes. Prestige Nursing Plymouth provides support with people's social, domestic and personal care needs in Plymouth and the surrounding area.

The service mainly provides care and support for people in visits at key times of the day to help people get up in the morning, go to bed at night and give support with meals. Prestige Nursing Plymouth also provides social support to enable people to access the community and their interests. This includes supporting people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and dementia care needs. The service only provides care visits of one hour or longer. Many visits are for a few hours each day. The service also provided effective flexible urgent care which was often arranged at short notice to cover a person's usual carer's absence, for example when they were unwell.

At the time of our inspection 30 people were receiving a service. These services were funded either privately, through Plymouth City Council or NHS funding.

We carried out this announced inspection on 17 January 2019. We told the provider one day before that we would be coming. This is in line with our methodology for inspecting domiciliary care providers and ensures that someone will be present in the office when we visit.

The service was last inspected on the 2 September 2016. Prestige was found to be meeting the regulations and was rated overall Good at that time.

There was a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

Everyone we spoke with, without exception, told us that the service provided by staff and management at Prestige Nursing Plymouth was outstanding. External healthcare professionals told us, "They go out of their way to facilitate what is needed for the person," and "They were always my first choice if we needed agency cover as they always sent well trained, hardworking, thoughtful staff."

Staff were extremely well supported by the registered manager. We noted many appreciative emails sent out to care staff by the registered manager thanking them for their valued work. Staff were very happy working for the service and told us, "Prestige is the best company I have ever worked for. [The registered manager] is always there for us 100%. I would recommend Prestige to anyone to work for," "The one thing I love about working for Prestige is that you don't limit me to what I can do, you have full support for me to

achieve more. You've never doubted me for a minute, or what I am capable of and that means a lot"

The service had very happy and motivated staff who were regularly recognised for their long service, hard work and specific achievements. Care staff felt valued. They went above and beyond their day to day support and care tasks, often checking on the more vulnerable people they supported as they travelled around the local area, even when off duty. If they saw something that was not as expected, such as lights off or curtains closed inappropriately, they would take action to ensure the person was safe and well. This had often led to a person being found requiring assistance which would not have been provided had the caring Prestige staff not noticed something may be amiss.

Staff were clear about how to report any safeguarding concerns and were confident that any allegations made would be fully investigated to help ensure people were protected. There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of people who used the service. The service was very flexible and responded effectively to people's changing needs. The service was fully staffed at the time of this inspection. Staff had received training to enable them to carry out their role effectively and safely.

Care records detailed whether people needed assistance with their medicines or the arrangements for them to take responsibility for any medicines they were prescribed.

Care plans were very personalised to the individual and recorded details about each person's specific needs and how they liked to be supported. Care plans gave staff clear guidance and direction about how to provide care and support that met people's needs and wishes.

Assessments were carried out to identify any risks to the person using the service and to the staff supporting them. This included environmental risks and any risks in relation to the health and support needs of the person.

Staff provided care and support to the same people consistently each day/week. This meant people received care from staff who knew them well, and had the knowledge and skills to meet their needs. People and their relatives spoke well of staff, comments included, "They're very well trained. I can't fault them," "The staff tell me they are always having training" and "They have good training and there is good coordination of care." The service was flexible. One relative told us, "They came at short notice at Christmas, they're very helpful."

Staff were knowledgeable about the people they cared for and knew how to recognise if people's needs changed. Staff were aware of people's preferences and interests, as well as their health and support needs, which enabled them to provide a personalised service. The staff and registered manager supported people to reach their personal goals and objectives. Prestige Nursing Plymouth provided extremely person-centred care. This meant that people did not just have their care and support needs met but their quality of life was improved by the support they received from the service.

Staff were kind and compassionate and treated people with dignity and respect. Comments included, "They are as good as they could possibly be. They are very conscientious," "They have a very flexible attitude," "The carers are second to none," "They know me, they are very friendly and kind," "You couldn't wish for anybody kinder."

The registered manager and staff had a clear understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and how to make sure people who did not have the mental capacity to make decisions for themselves had their legal rights protected. Records were kept of people who had appointed Lasting Powers of Attorney.

There were very effective quality assurance systems in place to make sure that any areas for improvement were identified and addressed. The registered manager was constantly checking with both people, families and the staff to see if there were any areas that required improvement. If anything was identified action had been promptly taken to improve the quality of the service provided even further.

The registered manager recognised that Prestige Nursing Plymouth should have good links with the local community. This raised the service profile and assisted with recruitment. The service was part of Plymouth Dementia Action Alliance (PDAA) and staff have trained to become 'Dementia Friends'. The service was a certificated member of Dementia Friendly Plymouth. A member of staff was being trained to become a dementia champion for the service. The service has assisted in the local area businesses becoming more dementia friendly. We noted many local shops and businesses had signs in their windows indicating that their staff were specially trained to support people with dementia.

There were very effective quality assurance systems in place to make sure that any areas for improvement were identified and addressed. The provider sent people a survey, the responses to which were very positive.

Staff told us they were very happy and well supported at the service. Comments included, "This is the best place I have worked, and I have worked for a few other agencies in the past. They [management] really make me feel I am valued and appreciated. That has not happened to me before in other jobs," "I got a certificate recently for having worked for the service for nine years. I got a bouquet of flowers, I was so lovely. Really makes you feel good about yourself and the job we do" and "You never feel like you are taken for granted at Prestige. I am very happy working for them and have been with them many years. I have told them they have got me for the long haul!"

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. People told us they felt safe using the service.

Staff knew how to recognise and report the signs of abuse. They knew the correct procedures to follow if they thought someone was being abused.

There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of people who used the service.

People were supported safely with their medicines.

Good 

Is the service effective?

The service was effective. People received care from staff who knew people well, and had the knowledge and skills to meet their needs.

Staff supported people to attend healthcare appointments and liaised with other healthcare professionals as required if they had concerns about a person's health.

The management had a clear understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and how to make sure people who did not have the mental capacity to make decisions for themselves had their legal rights protected.

Good 

Is the service caring?

The service was exceptionally caring. People who used the service, relatives and healthcare professionals were extremely positive about the staff and registered manager.

People were supported to have an improved quality of life. The registered manager and staff went 'above and beyond' just providing for their care and support needs.

Staff were kind and compassionate and treated people with dignity and respect.

Staff respected people's wishes and provided care and support

Outstanding 

in line with those wishes. People were supported to obtain their goals and aspirations.

Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive. People received personalised care and support which was responsive to their changing needs.

People were able to make choices and have control over the care and support they received.

People knew how to make a complaint and were confident if they raised any concerns these would be listened to.

People were consulted about the service they received, their views were sought and acted upon.

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

The service was exceptionally well-led. Staff were greatly valued and very well supported to provide the best service possible. Staff were regularly formally acknowledged for their work.

The registered manager regularly asked people and staff to ensure that any areas for improvement were identified and addressed.

The service had good links with the local community, healthcare professionals and local businesses.

The registered manager had an extremely open culture and was constantly striving to make the service provided ever better.

Outstanding ☆

Prestige Nursing - Plymouth

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection checked whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

The inspection took place on 17 January 2019. The inspection was carried out by an adult social care inspector and an expert by experience. An expert by experience is a person who has experience, or has cared for a person who has used this type of service. We told the provider one day before that we would be coming. This was to ensure the registered manager and key staff were available when we visited the agency's office.

Before the inspection the provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We reviewed the PIR and other information we held about the service. This included past reports and notifications. A notification is information about important events which the service is required to send us by law.

During the inspection we went to the provider's office and spoke with the registered manager, the deputy manager, a care worker and administrative staff. We looked at five records relating to the care of individuals, staff recruitment files, staff duty rosters, staff training records and records relating to the running of the service. We visited a person in their home and observed support being provided to them. Prior to the inspection we spoke with 11 people who used the service, seven relatives and three healthcare professionals who had experience of working with the staff from the service. Following the inspection we spoke with four staff on the telephone.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People, their families and external healthcare professionals told us they felt a safe service was provided by Prestige Nursing Plymouth. Comments from people included; "I feel safe with them, oh yes, definitely," "I feel 100% safe and their punctuality is exceptional," "They always dress appropriately and use safety wear, and body fluids and other waste is disposed of properly" and "She [Carer] has the key to the gate and always locks up and leaves me safe." A relative told us, "I feel [Person's name] is safe with the carers who visit and they're always on time."

The service held an appropriate safeguarding adults policy and procedure. Staff were confident of the action to take within the service, if they had any concerns or suspected abuse was taking place. Staff had received training and regular updates on safeguarding adults.

Assessments were carried out to identify any risks to the person using the service and to the staff supporting them. This included environmental risks and any risks in relation to the health and support needs of the person. People's individual care records detailed the action staff should take to minimise the chance of harm occurring to people or staff. For example, staff were given guidance about using moving and handling equipment, directions of how to find people's homes and entry instructions. Staff were always informed of any potential risks prior to them going to someone's home for the first time, such as animals present. The registered manager had arranged for the fire service to offer home safety checks where staff had identified potential risks in some homes.

Staff were aware of the reporting process for any accidents or incidents that occurred. Records showed that appropriate action had been taken and where necessary changes had been made to reduce the risk of a re-occurrence of the incident. For example, referrals made to external healthcare professionals or equipment provided.

There were sufficient numbers of staff available to keep people safe. Staffing levels were determined by the number of people using the service and their needs. The service recruited staff to match the needs of people using the service and new care packages were only accepted if suitable staff were available. At the time of the inspection the service was fully staffed.

Prestige Nursing Plymouth produced an electronic staff roster three weeks in advance which could be viewed each week by staff. This supported staff and the service to plan workloads. It clearly recorded details of the times people required their visits and what staff were allocated to go to each visit. People were sent a copy of the roster so that they could see who was visiting them. We saw and staff confirmed that they were given plenty of time to support people and then travel to the next person.

People told us they had the same carer most of the time who always arrived at the expected time and provided for all their needs in line with their care plan. No one reported being rushed or having their visit cut short.

A member of the management team was on call outside of office hours and carried details of the roster, telephone numbers of people using the service and staff with them. This meant they could answer any queries if people phoned to check details of their visits or if duties needed to be re-arranged due to staff sickness. People had telephone numbers for the service so they could ring at any time should they have a query. People told us phones were always answered, inside and outside of office hours.

Recruitment systems were robust and new employees underwent the relevant pre-employment checks before starting work. This included Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) checks and the provision of references. The DBS checks people's criminal history and their suitability to work with vulnerable people.

Care records detailed whether people needed assistance with their medicines or the arrangements for them to take responsibility for any medicines they were prescribed. The service had a medicine policy which gave staff clear instructions about how to assist people who needed help with their medicines. Daily records completed by staff detailed exactly what assistance had been given with people's medicines. Staff were given additional training by the service to complete specific tasks such as required by specific healthcare conditions suffered by people who received a service. All staff had received training in the administration of medicines.

One person who self medicated told us, "They always remind me to make sure I take them." Another person told us, "They always check on me. In fact, one carer takes me to the pharmacy and they know her there which is good". Some people needed to have creams applied and people were happy with the way care staff managed this.

Some people were supported to go shopping with care staff. People managed their own money but sometimes staff purchased small items on their behalf at their request. One person told us, "She [Carer] gives me the shopping and the receipts for the payments."

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People received care from staff who knew them well, and had the knowledge and skills to meet their needs. People and their relatives spoke very well of staff. Comments included, "They're very well trained. I can't fault them," "The staff tell me they are always having training" and "They have good training and there is good coordination of care." Relatives told us, "The staff are well trained and can help with my wife's stoma care," "They're hot on training, they're always having refresher courses."

Staff completed an induction when they commenced employment. The service had an induction programme which was in line with the Care Certificate. New employees were required to go through training identified as necessary by the service, and familiarisation with the organisation's policies and procedures. There was also a period of working alongside more experienced staff until such a time as the care worker felt confident to work alone. Staff told us there were good opportunities for on-going training and for obtaining additional qualifications. We noted that staff were encouraged to take on additional qualifications and praised for doing so. Staff were very positive about the training support they received.

External healthcare professionals told us, "Prestige work with individuals with very complex health needs and need to be trained in complex manual handling techniques, dysphagia and managing diabetes. The staff appear to always have regular updates and have been happy to share certificates and proof of training with me. They also have a training manager and provide a very person centred training regime." This meant that staff were provided with specific training when a person's needs required this.

There was an electronic training record held by the registered manager and overseen by head office. This helped ensure staff received relevant training and refresher training was kept up to date.

There was a training room in the same premises as the office which had appropriate equipment to deliver training such as manual handling and first aid. This enabled the service to be responsive to staff training needs and arrange training at short notice for individual training of staff. If more specialist training was needed this was sourced from appropriate healthcare professionals.

Staff received regular supervision and appraisal from the registered manager. This gave staff an opportunity to discuss their performance and identify any further training they required.

Some people who used the service made their own healthcare appointments and their health needs were co-ordinated by themselves or their relatives. However, staff were available to support people to access healthcare appointments if needed and liaised with health and social care professionals involved in their care if their health or support needs changed. People told us about occasions when staff had taken them to hospital appointments or made phone calls to their doctor on their behalf. Prestige Nursing Plymouth care staff and management team regularly advocated on behalf of the people they supported to obtain appropriate equipment and support, such as hospital beds, outside mobility aids and counselling.

Staff supported some people at mealtimes to have food and drink of their choice. Staff had received training

in food safety and were aware of safe food handling practices. For most people food had been prepared in advance and staff re-heated meals and made simple snacks as requested. One person told us, "The carer prepares food, cleans, makes tea, she's so good. She does anything I want her to do."

Staff told us they asked people for their consent before delivering care or treatment and they respected people's choice to refuse treatment. People we spoke with confirmed staff asked for their agreement before they provided any care or support and respected their wishes to sometimes decline certain care. Care records showed that people signed to give their consent to the care and support provided.

The management had a clear understanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) and how to make sure people who did not have the mental capacity to make decisions for themselves had their legal rights protected. The MCA provides a legal framework for acting, and making decisions, on behalf of individuals who lack mental capacity to make particular decisions for themselves. Care records showed the service recorded whether people had the capacity to make decisions about their care. Prestige Nursing Plymouth held records of any Lasting Powers of Attorney appointed by people so that they could be contacted when necessary. One person was having the Court of Protection support them at the time of this inspection.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

We saw many examples of where the registered manager and care staff had been exceptionally caring and often went out of their way to go above and beyond just providing for people's care needs.

Staff took time to ensure people were cared for holistically and had the best quality of life possible. For example, one person, who was a wheelchair user, had assistive technology in their home which linked their door entry, telephone system, lights and heating to a web based programme which enabled them, via wi-fi, to operate them all from their wheelchair. However, when the broadband router in the person's home ceased to provide a signal to these devices the person was stranded with no means of opening their door or seeking support via the phone. The staff had quickly identified this risk and discussed with the person how they would obtain access to help them in such circumstances. A key safe was fitted outside the person's door and staff mastered how to re-set the router to restore the wi-fi signal to the house whenever necessary. This person had also expressed their distaste of their hospital bed, which they needed in order for the staff to be able to support them at a safe working height. The staff and management recognised how important it was to the person to live independently and have their home look 'normal' and not medicalised. So they advocated on the person's behalf to obtain a bed which had all the functionality of a hospital bed but closely resembled a standard bed. This thoughtful person-centred support had been greatly appreciated by the person whose independence and quality of life had been supported.

One person who had been involved in two road traffic incidents was fearful of leaving their house. Care staff had recognised this was isolating the person and it was arranged for them to have one to one sessions with a psychologist. Staff then started supporting the person to reach specific outcomes. These were gradually increased and feedback was provided to the psychologist as they progressed. This had led to the person now feeling able to go out into the community each week, whereas beforehand they were not going out unless absolutely necessary, as this caused great anxiety. The person's quality of life had been improved greatly.

A relative of a person who used the service, had witnessed their sudden death. Some time after this event staff became aware that the relative was still deeply troubled by their experience. The registered manager arranged for them to have bereavement counselling to support them. The staff and registered manager have continued to support this person's relative even though they are no longer providing a service to their family. This demonstrated the caring pastoral care provided by Prestige Nursing Plymouth.

Care staff knew the people they supported very well. One care worker knew how important one person's faith was to them. When this person had needed to go in to hospital, the carer arranged for their own priest to visit them. This meant a lot to the person and provided great comfort to them at the end of their life.

Care staff and management took it upon themselves to 'keep an eye' on some of the more vulnerable people they supported as they went about their work in the local area. For example, one person was known to go to a pub each day at a certain time. Care staff became aware that the person had not arrived as usual one day so went to their home to check if they were alright. Care staff took it upon themselves to notice,

even outside of their working hours, for anything that did not 'look right' such as a light on or curtains not opened at appropriate times. Staff would often contact the family or neighbours of the person, to ask for assurances that all was well. This had often led to the person being found requiring assistance which would not have been provided in such a timely manner had the caring Prestige staff not noticed something may be amiss.

People did not just have their care and support needs met but their quality of life was improved by the support they received from the service. One person, who received a service from the staff at Prestige, had become less mobile and unable to continue to visit their local library to carry out research, which they missed greatly. The registered manager identified that this was affecting the person's quality of life at a review. The service had links with the local Age Concern and so the service arranged for them to support the person to obtain a tablet computer and have training in how to use it. This had greatly improved this person's quality of life, widened their circle of friends, increased contact with the local community and enabled them to continue their research which they enjoyed greatly.

Care staff had recognised that a person who they supported had reduced the occasions when they were going out in public, due to feeling anxious about their appearance. Staff had spent time with the person to identify what it was specifically that was concerning them. It was identified that the person felt that if they had something attractive to cover their head they might feel more confident. Care staff obtained pretty head scarves. When care staff accompanied the person out in public, they also wore one of the pretty headscarves, so that the person did not feel they stood out in any way. This greatly enhanced the person's confidence and led to them going out more.

One carer enjoyed crafts, woodworking and floristry and used their skills to empower other people with similar interests to enjoy their hobbies in their own homes. This carer had also spent a considerable amount of their own time sourcing a specific cigar for one person which they particularly enjoyed. This showed that staff went above and beyond just providing for people's care needs but cared for the whole person.

Staff and management were outstandingly caring, not only to the people they supported but also to their carers and families. People received care, as much as possible, from the same care worker or team of care workers. People and their relatives told us they were very happy with all of the staff and got on well with them. People told us, "They are as good as they could possibly be. They are very conscientious," "They have a very flexible attitude," "The carers are second to none," "They know me, they are very friendly and kind," "You couldn't wish for anybody kinder." Relatives told us, "Staff are friendly, interactive, it's not like they are doing a job. They're constantly watching out for him. They encourage him," "They become part of the family, more like friends" and "They honour our requests for regular carers."

People told us staff always treated them respectfully and asked them how they wanted their care and support to be provided. One person told us "They're caring and chatty and very respectful" and "The carer covers me up and respects my privacy." Staff were aware of people's preferences and interests, as well as their health and support needs, which enabled them to provide a personalised service. One person had a specific preference to be supported by people their own age. This was respected by the service and the person told us they were very comforted by this.

People knew about their care plans and the registered manager regularly asked about their care and support needs so their care plan could be updated as needs changed. People told us, "I know my care plan and I signed it off" and "I had a six-monthly review only yesterday." One person had been supported to write their own care plan. This ensured they received exactly the care and support they required in a way that they wished. A relative said "They are pretty thorough in their assessment," "I am familiar with his plan and it is

reviewed regularly" and "They review my husband's care plan six monthly."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Before people started using Prestige Nursing Plymouth the registered manager visited them to assess their needs and discuss how the service could meet their wishes and expectations. From these assessments care plans were developed with the person, who was asked for their views and preferences on how they would like their care and support to be provided.

Care plans were very personalised to the individual and recorded details about each person's specific needs and how they liked to be supported. Care plans gave staff clear guidance and direction about how to provide care and support that met people's needs and wishes. Details of people's daily routines were recorded in relation to each individual visit they received. This meant staff could read the section of people's care plan that related to the visit they were completing. People's care plans also included information about their hobbies and interest and their life histories. This gave staff useful information about people's backgrounds and interests to help them understand the individual's current care needs and provide a very person-centred service.

Staff told us care plans were kept up to date and contained all the information they needed to provide the right care and support for people. People were invited to be involved in the care plan reviews and signed to agree with their content.

The service was flexible and responded to people's needs. People told us, "They call the doctor when I need them." "They encourage activity and interest in the day." Staff had time to spend chatting and supporting people's interests.

The service worked closely with other agencies to make sure people's needs were met. External healthcare professionals told us, "I have found Prestige to be very forward thinking with their approach to clients I support. They are always willing to take on ideas and work closely with our care management team both with long term clients they support or if we are approaching them to create a new care package," "The team at Prestige are excellent at communicating. They will always inform me if any problems or concerns that have been raised. They will always send representatives for annual reviews or meetings. They will also send me regular update by emails or telephone calls in between meetings with a general update" and "They have rung and asked questions about contracts care plans and risk assessments, which is always encouraging and comforting because I then know that these things have been read and respected."

Prestige Nursing Plymouth received a great deal of 'thank you' cards and compliments. Comments from grateful relatives included, "Team of angels," "Infinite gratitude" and "I know when I go away [Person's name] will be in good hands."

People said they would not hesitate in speaking with staff if they had any concerns. Details of how to make a complaint were in the care file in people's homes. People knew how to make a formal complaint if they needed to but told us any issues would usually be resolved informally. People told us that they had never experienced a missed visit.

When asked, none of the people or their families had any cause for serious complaint about the service. Comments included "I have no complaints," "I would recommend Prestige to anyone" and "If I have an issue the manager sorts it out instantly". Any issues were dealt with by the registered manager who was always readily available. People told us they were able to tell the service if they did not want a particular care worker. The service respected these requests and arranged permanent replacements without the person feeling uncomfortable about making the request. The service was flexible. One relative told us, "They came at short notice at Christmas, they're very helpful."

People told us they were able to contact the office easily when needed. Comments included, "They're easy to get hold of and they respond quickly," "I give them top marks." More than one told us that because of their particular needs to use the service for 'backstop' care since they used personal care assistants, it was vital that they could contact the office urgently when they needed assistance. They told us "They're really accommodating to my special needs, they bend over backwards" and "I think Prestige are exemplary. I value them so much."

The service held a policy on equality and diversity. Staff were provided with training on equality and diversity. This helped ensure that staff were aware of how to protect people from any type of discrimination. Staff ensured people were not disadvantaged in any way due to their beliefs, abilities, wishes or choices. For example, if people were poorly sighted staff would read things out to them or support them to access their interests and the local community. Examples of this can be seen throughout this report.

Since August 2016 all organisations that provide adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard. The standard sets out a specific, consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting the information and communication support needs of people who use services. The standard applies to people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss. Care plans documented the communication needs of people in a way that met the criteria of the standard. There was information on whether people required reading glasses and any support they might need to understand information. Assistive technology was in use in some people's homes to support their independence.

The service provided care to people at the end of their lives in their own homes. The registered manager was passionate about ensuring the staff provided outstanding care for people at the end of their lives. The service had been validated for the past six years with the St Luke's Hospice, 'Six steps to success' programme. The aim of the programme is to enhance end of life care through facilitating organisation change, embedding a philosophy of palliative care and supporting staff to develop their roles. The service attended regular forum meetings to ensure they kept up to date with best practice for end of life care.

The registered manager had arranged for the local funeral service to attend a staff meeting to support staff with end of life care and bereavement. The staff advocated for people with local GP practices to plan for their end of life requirements such as medicines which may be needed. Having obtained the person's wishes the staff had ensured that the necessary paperwork and notifications were in place so that when the time came the person would not be taken in to hospital against their wishes. People were supported to appoint Lasting Power of Attorneys where possible to advocate for the person when they no longer had the ability to make some decisions.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

There was a management structure in the service which provided clear lines of responsibility and accountability. The registered manager had overall responsibility for the day to day running of the service. They were supported by a dedicated office team including a care co-ordinator, a recruitment consultant, a trainer, an administrator and assistant manager. The registered manager had an extremely open culture and clear vision to provide excellent care and support. They were constantly striving to make the service provided ever better.

Everyone spoke with, without exception, we were extremely positive about either receiving a service from, working for, or working alongside staff from Prestige Nursing Plymouth. Very positive comments were made about both the staff and the management.

The registered manager was very supportive of her staff. We noted many appreciative emails sent out to care staff by the registered manager thanking them for their valued work. The service had a stable, happy staff team with many staff having worked for the service for several years. Long service awards had been given to staff who had worked for the service for up to 12 years. The registered manager herself had been with the agency for 18 years. They also formally recognised care staff monthly and awarded a specific care worker for their kind and caring actions 'above and beyond' what was expected. Staff told us this really motivated them and helped them to feel valued. One told us, "I went in for my regular supervision and I was presented with a certificate of thanks, a bottle of wine and some chocolates. It was amazing." The registered manager had also taken the time to contact specific staff who had taken on additional study, outside of their role, to achieve extra qualifications. The registered manager formally recognised their hard work and achievement saying, "You are an asset to Prestige and I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your hard work and for choosing us to be your employers." A new member of staff responded to being thanked for all their hard work with, "That is so sweet and really nice to hear, I am not used to all the compliments I have been getting recently because I never really got them where I used to work. I love working for Prestige and I am more than happy to help out whenever I can."

Following significant events that took place, such as the sudden death of a person for whom they had provided care and support, the registered manager wrote detailed reflective accounts of their experiences. These accounts described working with other services and supporting families and were used at meetings with staff to learn from and share experiences.

The registered manager saw herself as a person who 'fixed' things. They were very keen to help resolve any issue that was affecting the people they supported or their staff. The registered manager took steps to ensure that they supported all aspects of their staff's needs, not just those related to work. For example, they had introduced them to an Employee Assistance Programme. This offered staff support and assistance with health issues, debt management and child care.

The registered manager considered her staff. They became aware that due to recent changes in the administrative staff cover in the office there may have been some impact on the care staff. They decided to

survey all the staff individually to check if they were receiving the support they needed and if there was anything that could be done to improve their working day. Staff responded to this enquiry with very positive comments which included, "You guys are amazing! I am so glad you gave me the opportunity to work for you, I cannot fault you in any way," "Prestige is the best company I have ever worked for. [The registered manager] is always there for us 100%. I would recommend Prestige to anyone to work for," "The one thing I love about working for Prestige is that you don't limit me to what I can do, you have full support for me to achieve more. You've never doubted me for a minute, or what I am capable of and that means a lot" and "Training and support is amazing and your attention to detail."

We saw many examples of when assistance was provided by the registered manager to people, who received a service, which was outside of providing support for their basic care needs. For example, one person, who did not have a bank account was finding paying her service invoice in cash at the bank difficult. The registered manager arranged for the person to visit the office and pay their invoice in person with cash. The person was then provided with a receipt, which was photographed for the services records, and the registered manager then took the cash and paid it in to the service bank account on their behalf. This had been a great support to the person who had become very distressed over this matter.

The registered manager had become aware of a person, who received a service from Prestige Nursing Plymouth, who was having money worries. The service arranged for a social worker to support the person and a payment plan was set up. This had led to them being in a position to obtain a scooter to access the local area and widen their social circle and improve their quality of life.

The provider recognised care staff from across the national Prestige group who had gone 'above and beyond' their work role to support people and their families. A care worker at Prestige Nursing Plymouth had been nominated by the registered manager for this national annual award recently to show how much they were appreciated for all they did over many years of loyal service.

The provider supported the registered manager well. There was regular communication, weekly bulletins and visits to the office by the provider to monitor and support the service. This helped prevent the registered managers feeling isolated in their branches. A new IT based system implemented across the organisation had enabled registered managers to effectively monitor compliance with the regulations in recruitment, staff supervision and appraisal and training. The service has recently recruited an Admiral nurse who has been able to offer care staff advice and assistance with best practice provision. For example, staff had been asked to support a person with buying their own clothes which they were unable to do without assistance. Staff had been provided with the necessary knowledge required, by the Admiral nurse, to support the person effectively whilst helping them to become independent in the management of their own money and decision making when buying items.

The service had clear vision and values with a mission statement saying, "Compassion is at the heart of our service and our Care Assistants create trusting relationships which offer friendship and companionship. Our professional staff are trained to understand that our care plans are customised and flexible to meet the needs of all of our clients. We provide home care plans tailored not just to meet your loved ones everyday needs but to enhance everyday living with favourite recreational activities." We saw this was very much put in to practice at Prestige Nursing Plymouth.

Prestige Nursing Plymouth had exceptionally good relationships with external healthcare professionals. They told us, "They [The staff] go out of their way to facilitate what is needed for the person," and "They have rung and asked questions about contracts care plans and risk assessments, which is always encouraging and comforting because I then know that these things have been read and respected," "They

were always my first choice if we needed agency cover as they always sent well trained, hardworking, thoughtful staff" and "I have always found the management team very approachable and professional. They have been very supportive to both myself and clients families even when dealing with sensitive subjects."

Staff told us there was good communication with the management of the service. Staff said of management, "This is the best place I have worked, and I have worked for a few other agencies in the past. They [management] really make me feel I am valued and appreciated. That has not happened to me before in other jobs," "I got a certificate recently for having worked for the service for nine years. I got a bouquet of flowers, it was so lovely. Really makes you feel good about yourself and the job we do" and "You never feel like you are taken for granted at Prestige. I am very happy working for them and have been with them many years. I have told them they have got me for the long haul!."

Staff had a good knowledge and understanding of people. Staff spoke with passion and enthusiasm about their work. They told us, "Nothing is too much trouble, definitely the best service I have worked for," "The registered manager was very supportive when I was ill. I recommend people to come and work for Prestige" and "The office staff are fantastic and the support is very good. We have regular supervision and training all the time."

We saw outstandingly positive feedback from families of people who had received a good service from Prestige Nursing Plymouth over many years. One relative told us, "I felt they [staff] cared and they were not just there to make their money and move on to the next job," "Staff assessed Mum beforehand, advised me of the name of the carer, even enquired if Mum would prefer her to wear, or not to wear, a uniform. An excellent, well-managed company." Other comments included, "The manager and her staff are very easy to get hold of including out of hours," "The carers seem very well organised and I have never had a problem," "I can always get through and they often call me to check everything's OK with my wife" and "You [Prestige] give me peace of mind, you have proved so kind and helpful over the past 10 years and have made my life so much easier."

The registered manager recognised that becoming actively involved in the local business networking group and other groups locally would raise the service profile and assist with recruitment. They were also very keen to gain knowledge which helped the service to provide the best practice wherever possible. Prestige Nursing Plymouth had very good links with the local community. The service was part of Plymouth Dementia Action Alliance (PDAA) and staff had trained to become 'Dementia Friends'. This has meant the service can offer people support networks, memory café dates, information on sessions or tea dances for people with dementia.

The service was a certificated member of 'Dementia Friendly Plymouth.' A member of staff was being trained to become a dementia champion for the service. This provided a lead person for the organisation to share best practice and keep up to date with innovations. Prestige Nursing Plymouth had, with other local businesses, supported recent charity fund raising, in the village where the office is based, over Christmas. The service was supporting the local area to become more dementia friendly. We noted 'dementia friendly' notices in the windows of many local businesses.

The registered manager was always striving to ensure the service provided best practice and maintained high standards of care. Prestige Nursing Plymouth was a certified member of the United Kingdom Homecare Association (UKHCA) and adhered to their Code of Practice. The service was also accredited with the Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) having complied with and demonstrated sound management of current basic health and safety legislation. Prestige Nursing Plymouth had met the criteria of Customer Service Excellence in accordance with the requirements of the Cabinet Offices Customer

Service Standard. Furthermore the service had been certified as having committed to the Plymouth Council Charter for Older people which pledged to provide best practice in the care and support of older people.

There were many examples of where training and guidance provided to staff through collaborative working with other agencies had led to better outcomes for people who received a service. One person, living with a long term condition, had periods where they were unable to respond to staff and sometimes these episodes could appear concerning. There had been occasions where an ambulance has been called by family members or concerned friends and the person had experienced poor outcomes from being in hospital. Through positive work in collaboration with their GP and long term conditions team, following a period of time in hospital, the service managed to make the person's advanced directive clearer. Through team meetings and gathering information from healthcare professionals, the staff had managed to prevent unnecessary admissions by being empowered to be an advocate for the person's wishes. Staff shadowed experienced members first so they were aware of this and they had expressed a wish not to be taken into hospital when they were not responding.

Another example was when staff noticed that one person was receiving and responding to a number of letters asking them for money. Staff recognised the person lacked capacity to understand the risks associated with responding to such contacts and requested a formal capacity assessment and support from social services. This helped to protect the person from financial abuse.

The registered manager was passionate about people, who received a service, reaching their desired goals. One person who used a wheelchair wanted to do an abseil. The staff and management of Prestige Nursing Plymouth not only supported this person to do this but joined the person and abseiled with them raising money for a good cause. They also supported a person to take part in the 'Ice bucket challenge' despite risks to the person having been identified in doing this. The registered manager spent time with the person who recognised the person had capacity to make this decision for themselves and accept the potential risks. These activities had greatly improved people's confidence and enjoyment of life.

The service had effective systems to manage staff rosters, match staff skills with people's needs and identify what capacity they had to take on new care packages. This meant that the service only took on new work if they knew there were the right staff available to meet people's needs. At the time of the inspection the service was fully staffed.

Staff told us when they started to provide support and care for a new person, the registered manager would ask them to report back on how long it took them to meet all their needs and provide quality time with them. Then the registered manager would make the necessary arrangements to help ensure staff got the time they needed to spend with people.

There were very effective quality assurance systems in place to make sure that any areas for improvement were identified and addressed. The provider sent people a survey, the responses to which were very positive. People were asked for their views on the service by the staff and management and the open culture of the service meant people were comfortable sharing their views. People and their families were asked for their views on the service whenever a review of their care took place. We saw many thank you cards and emails which included comments such as, "Thank you all so much for your care, patience, professionalism and assistance over the past few years. You gave us peace of mind that [Person's name] was in good hands."