

1st Homecare Irvine Housing Support Service

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Unannounced

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
1st Home Care Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2005007703

Service no:
CS2015340104

About the service

The service is based in Irvine and is registered to provide a care at home and housing support service in a combined way to adults including older people living in their own homes.

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 16 September 2015.

The aims and objectives of the service state that their core services are to:

- Encourage Self Directed Support - enabling people to have a real choice, real voice, real lives.
- Enables vulnerable people to remain within their homes and live independently, leading fulfilling lives in their communities.
- Ensure that every service user is able to receive information, advice and support according to their individual needs.
- Our focus is to deliver innovative, responsive and sustainable services, working in partnership with NHS and local authority professionals to ensure the improvement of health, wellbeing and independence for service users and their families.

What people told us

To gather people's views, we spoke on the phone with eight people receiving support and three relatives/representatives. We also met with three people receiving support in their own homes.

People commented positively about the quality of the service they received from 1st Homecare.

People told us that the service was reliable and there was good continuity of the staff who provided support.

People spoke very highly of the staff who supported them. There were good examples of the positive relationships that had been established. They described staff as kind and friendly. One person said, "The staff are great, they turn up on time and are always cheerful".

Families appreciated that staff contacted them if there were any issues with their relatives health. One person said " I'm very happy with the service my relative gets. I can't always be there; the staff will call me if there are any changes to my relative's health. This gives me a lot of reassurance".

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

1.1. People experience compassion, dignity, and respect.

Feedback from service users and their families was positive. People said that they were treated with respect and compassion. One person said " I really appreciate how staff help me feel at ease during personal care. They respect my dignity."

Staff demonstrated good levels of knowledge about individuals care and support needs as well as their choices and preferences. This means that people were being supported in the way that they prefer.

People told us about the reliability of the service, that staff arrive on time and call ahead if they are going to be late. We saw that people were supported by regular care workers. This level of continuity gives people reassurance as they know which carers will be visiting them and when.

1.2. People get the most out of life.

There was information in individuals' personal plans about their abilities. This directed staff to support people to maintain those skills and their independence. People said that the visits were at the time that suited them. People described how the service had made a difference to their lives. One person said "The service is very good and has taken a lot of pressure off me. I couldn't do without them."

Changes for an individual that impacted on how the service supported them were recognised and responded to promptly. This helps make sure that people continue to receive the correct care to support their needs.

There were good systems in place to ensure that people's views about the service they want are gathered and acted on. People told us that the office keeps in touch asking about how things are and if anything could be done differently. This helps the service to develop and improve outcomes for people.

Staff demonstrated an understanding of their responsibilities to manage risk and protect people from harm.

1.3 People's health benefits from their care and support

1st Homecare has continued to develop the format of personal plans since the last inspection. The content of plans reflected the preferences and choices of the person. The individual, their family and appropriate healthcare professionals had been involved in writing the personal plan.

There was useful information about how best to support the person and what their abilities were. Plans were written in a person-centred outcome focused way. This helped to establish an approach, which ensured that people were treated as individuals with dignity and respect.

People's care and support was being reviewed regularly. People told us this was being carried out by telephone calls from the service seeking their views on the quality of the service they received. We saw that some personal plans were not fully updated following reviews. The provider should ensure that personal plans consistently reflect any changes in a person's circumstances and care. See area for improvement 1.

We noted that when care starts for new service users there could be delays in developing a full personal plan. To resolve this issue the service had developed an interim personal plan. This provides staff with information to guide them from the start of care visits and ensures continuity of care. The service has plans to trial this new document. We will review how effective this is at the next inspection.

People receiving support could be confident that staff monitored their health and wellbeing. We saw good details of the healthcare professionals involved in the person's care. There was evidence that when health issues arose the service took action to contact the appropriate health professional for support and advice. Families told us that if there were any health issues with their relative during a care visit the service contacted them promptly.

There were systems in place to ensure that people were supported with their medication safely and effectively. Staff had had training regarding medication management and were aware of their responsibilities regarding this aspect of support. This ensures people are supported to receive the correct medication at the right time to support their health needs.

Areas for improvement

1. The provider should ensure that service users' personal plans accurately reflect their current care and support. To achieve this the provider should ensure that outcomes of reviews are reflected into personal plans.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which states:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'(HSCS 1.15)

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

2.2. Quality assurance and improvement is led well.

It is important that care services have effective systems to assess and monitor the quality of service provision. This helps drive service development and improves outcomes for the people they support.

To monitor and assess standards of service provision the provider used a range of audit tools and directly observed staff practice. Any issues identified were addressed to improve the service. This helped to ensure that acceptable standards were maintained.

There was a need to formalise the systems to assess and monitor the quality of information held in personal plans. This will ensure that personal plans are accurate, and standards are being maintained. See area for improvement 1.

The views of service users and their relatives were gathered regularly and used to help service development. There was clear information in the service user's information handbook to inform people how to make a complaint. People, we spoke with told us that they knew who to speak with if they had concerns about the service. There was evidence that the service had used the outcomes of complaint activity to inform service improvements.

Staff commented that the management team were approachable offered good support on a day-to-day basis. However, some staff commented that the difficulty in recruiting staff for the service had resulted in staff working additional hours which impacted on their morale. The provider had recently circulated a survey to staff asking for feedback on how it feels to work for the organisation. We will assess the impact this has on service development at the next inspection.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure consistency of approach to assessment and monitoring of personal plans, the provider should develop and implement a quality audit tool to formally review the content of the personal plans.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (HSCS 4.19)

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

3.2. Staff have the right knowledge, competence, and development to care for and support people.

Staff demonstrated compassion and respect for the people they support. We found staff to have good values and a clear focus on improving people's lives.

We found that staff received regular support and supervision. This is key to promoting good practice and improving outcomes for people. Systems to monitor staff practice through 'spot checks' ensured that staff are competent to meet the needs of people and supporting them to do this.

We saw that the training schedule reflected that staff training was up to date. This ensured people are supported by staff who have knowledge on the issues that affect them. To further enhance the delivery of training the provider should introduce more face-to-face training on practical care issues. See area for improvement 1.

The provider could consider looking at ways to support staff to reflect on training they received. Reflecting about how learning has developed their practice would help staff improve outcomes for people they support.

Team meetings have recommenced, giving staff an opportunity to meet with their colleagues and helping to reduce stresses of working in isolation. The meetings will give the service an opportunity to share information that has previously been shared with staff via e-mail and text during the covid-19 pandemic.

We sampled recruitment files and found that best practice guidance was being followed, people were being safely recruited. People receiving support could be confident that the right staff are being employed to meet their needs.

Areas for improvement

1. To support staff learning and development the provider should review the training plan to include more face-to-face training on practical aspects of care.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'. (3.14)

How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

To protect people from harm and reduce the risk of infection the provider had ensured that all staff had received training and regular updates to ensure that they were aware of the latest guidance regarding Infection Protection and Control measures (IPC). Staff demonstrated a good understanding about the correct use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Staff understood the importance of good hand hygiene.

There was regular 'spot checks' carried out to ensure that staff were following guidance. This ensured that staff were competent regarding the correct use of PPE and maintaining good standards of hand hygiene.

Staff we spoke with commented that they had been supported during the pandemic and continued to receive regular updates about changes to IPC guidance.

People we spoke with confirmed that all staff wear PPE when they visit. One person told us that this makes her feel safer and helps to protect her health.

PPE was easily accessible from the office base or could be delivered to those living in outlying area.

Current guidance about IPC was being adhered to.

These measures contribute to ensuring people using the service are protected from the risk of infection.

The service had a contingency plan in place which detailed the services planned response if staffing levels were seriously impacted. This was based on a risk approach to service delivery ensuring that people received the care they required in accordance with their assessed risk.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The service should ensure that service users are adequately supported with their personal care and medication management. In order to achieve this service users' personal support plans should be updated following a review to reflect their current support needs.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 3.14: I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2022.

Action taken since then

There was a need for the provider to continue to ensure that outcomes of reviews were reflected into personal plans.

This area for improvement will continue and is detailed in Key Question 1 in the report. We will review progress with this issue at the next inspection.

Previous area for improvement 2

The service should ensure that staff adequately trained and supported to seek medical advice when service users with significant health problems become unwell.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 3.21: I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm.

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2022.

Action taken since then

There was evidence that staff promptly sought advice and support from healthcare professionals when service users were unwell. This was confirmed by service users and their family members.

This area for improvement has been implemented.

Previous area for improvement 3

The service should ensure that service users' care diaries are clearly written with dates and times of visits recorded following provision of support to service users by carers. This should facilitate good communication with service users/legal representatives and carers within the service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 3.14:
I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2022.

Action taken since then

We sampled several service users care diaries. They were up to date and reflected the care that had been delivered on specific days and times.

This area for improvement has been implemented.

Previous area for improvement 4

The service should ensure that legal representatives are informed of any concerns about service users' health and well-being. The service should ensure that it kept records of such contacts.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 4.23:
I use a service and organisation that are well led and managed.

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2022.

Action taken since then

There was evidence in service users' notes that their representatives had been contacted when any concerns arose. This was confirmed by the family members we spoke with.

This area for improvement has been implemented.

Previous area for improvement 5

The service should ensure that service users are provided with the care and support as agreed in their Personal Support Plan. The planned staff attendance should be met with service users, or their legal representatives being informed if staff are going to be late or early.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care 4 of 5 Standard 1.19:
My care and support meets my needs and is right for me.

This area for improvement was made on 1 February 2022.

Action taken since then

People we spoke with confirmed that staff called ahead if they were going to be late for their visit. The service's tracking system had an alert mechanism that informed the care coordinators if a visit was running late. This allowed office staff to check on the situation and if needed redirect other staff to attend.

This area for improvement has been implemented.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.2 Staff have the right knowledge, competence and development to care for and support people	4 - Good
How good is our care and support during the COVID-19 pandemic?	4 - Good
7.2 Infection prevention and control practices are safe for people experiencing care and staff	4 - Good

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