

Announced Follow up Finance Inspection Report 23 January 2018



Mainstay DRP - Rathdree

Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency
Address: 31 St Patrick's Drive, Downpatrick, BT30 6NE
Tel No: 02844839683
Inspectors: Joseph McRandle
Amanda Jackson

www.rqia.org.uk

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and areas for improvement that exist in the service. The findings reported on are those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not exempt the service provider from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with legislation, standards and best practice.

1.0 What we look for



2.0 Profile of service

Mainstay DRP, Rathdree Supported Living Service is a supported living type domiciliary care agency, located close to the centre of Downpatrick. The agency provides care and support to enable service users with a learning disability to live in their own home within the local community.

The agency provides care and support to 14 service users: the overall aim is to promote independence of the service users and enhance their quality of life.

3.0 Service details

Organisation/Registered Provider: Mainstay DRP Responsible Individual: Helen Owen	Registered Manager: Gareth Anthony Baker - acting
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Gareth Baker acting manager	Date manager registered: Acting- no application required

4.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection took place on 23 January 2018 from 10.15 to 16.45 hours. One hours' notice was given prior to the inspection.

This inspection was underpinned by The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the (DHSSPS) Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards, updated August 2011.

The inspection sought to assess progress with issues raised in the announced Follow up Finance Inspection of the agency on 25 September 2017, as outlined in section 6.2 below.

The following areas were examined during the inspection:

- Process for invoicing service users for shared costs e.g. utility bills
- Process for invoicing service users for transport costs
- Process for reimbursing service users for previous charges e.g. pest control service
- Process of informing service users of delay in charging for transport costs

The findings of this report will provide the agency with the necessary information to assist them to fulfil their responsibilities, enhance practice and service user experience.

4.1 Inspection outcome

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of areas for improvement	0	0

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Helen Owen, registered person, the acting manager and other Mainstay finance staff as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.

Enforcement action did not result from the findings of this inspection.

4.2 Action/enforcement taken following the most recent finance inspection dated 25 September 2017

Following the inspection on 25 September 2017 a meeting was held at RQIA's offices with the registered person and their representative on 04 October 2017. This meeting was held to discuss RQIA's intention to serve two Failure to Comply Notices, in respect of noncompliance with Regulations 14 (d) and 15 (9) of the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

At the meeting, the registered person and their representative provided a full account of the actions which had been taken following the inspection on 25 September 2017 and those which were proposed, to ensure the improvements necessary to achieve full compliance with the required regulations.

After consideration of documentation presented at the meeting and assurances provided by the registered person, RQIA took a decision not to serve two failure to comply notices.

However, it was agreed that the registered person would:

- Ensure that by mid - October 2017, invoices to service users for the period April – June 2017 would be finalised, issued and restitution due to service users for this period paid in full
- Ensure that by the end of November 2017, communication with service users and/or their representatives will have taken place regarding the delay in issuing charges for transport services (for the period July – September 2017)
- Ensure that by the end of November 2017, invoices to service users for the period July – September 2017 would be finalised and issued and
- Ensure that records are at all times available for inspection at the agency premises.

These areas are examined under section 6.2 of this report.

5.0 How we inspect

Prior to the inspection, a range of information relevant to the service was reviewed. This included the following records: the previous announced follow up finance inspection report and QIP, records of any notifiable events communicated to RQIA, records of any calls received to RQIA's duty call system and records of any other communication received by RQIA from or in respect of the agency.

During the inspection the inspectors met with Helen Owen, registered person, the external consultant and three members of staff. No discussions were held with service users during the inspection. No visiting professionals or other representatives were present during the inspection.

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- Two service users' files
- Two service users' written agreements
- A sample of invoices for shared costs e.g. utility bills
- A sample of invoices for transport costs

- A sample of bank statements and other financial statements for two service users
- A sample of records of the breakdown of shared costs apportioned to service users
- Copies of correspondence relating to transport charges for two service users
- A sample of records showing basis for refunds to service users for pest control and bank charges
- A sample of records showing refunds made to service users for pest control and bank charges
- A sample of records showing monies deposited into service users' bank accounts or credit union accounts

Three areas for improvement identified at the last finance inspection were reviewed and assessment of compliance recorded as met, partially met, or not met.

One area for improvement identified at the last finance inspection was not reviewed as part of this inspection and is carried forward to be validated at the next care inspection.

The findings of the inspection were provided to Helen Owen, registered person, the acting manager and other Mainstay finance staff at the conclusion of the inspection.

6.0 The inspection

6.1 Review of areas for improvement from the most recent inspection dated 25 September 2017

The most recent inspection of the agency was an announced follow up finance inspection. Four areas for improvement were identified. The completed QIP was returned and was yet to be approved by the finance inspector at the time of issuing this report.

6.2 Review of areas for improvement from the last finance inspection dated 25 September 2017

Areas for improvement from the last finance inspection		
Action required to ensure compliance with The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.		Validation of compliance
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 15 (9) Stated: First	The registered person shall ensure that a robust framework for recording service users' income and expenditure (including their individual portion of shared costs such as utility bills) is implemented to ensure that charges (or refunds) are levied to service users in a timely manner.	Met
	Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: Discussion with staff and review of records	

confirmed that invoices detailing the charges for shared costs e.g. utility bills were issued to service users on a quarterly basis. Records showed that the most recent invoices were issued to service users for the period ending 31 December 2017.

Review of a sample of invoices for two service users for the quarter ending 31 December 2017 showed that the income received on behalf of the service users i.e. social security benefits was recorded on the invoices. The invoices also detailed the amounts of the shared costs attributed to each service user.

As part of the invoicing process and in line with good practice, copies of statements showing the benefits received on behalf of the service users and copies of the invoices from providers for shared costs e.g. utility bills were provided to the service users or their representatives along with the quarterly invoices. A review of the documents confirmed that the amount of shared costs charged to the service users were in keeping with the invoices from the utility providers and the other providers of non-essential services.

It was noticed on one invoice that a slight variance existed between the amount charged to one service user for one of the shared costs and the actual amount paid to the outside provider. A review of records confirmed that the amount apportioned was from a payment made on behalf of service users living within a different dwelling from the service user named on the invoice. Following a discussion staff agreed to review the previous statements of payments for shared costs to ensure that the correct costs were apportioned to each service user.

Review of an invoice for one service user showed that the costs apportioned for cleaning services and telephone rental were not consistent with the amounts apportioned to other service users. Discussion with staff and review of records confirmed that this was due to a recording error i.e. the amounts were transposed for the two shared costs apportioned. The inspectors were satisfied that the recording error did not affect the amount charged to the service user for the

	<p>specified period.</p> <p>Discussion with staff confirmed that service users paid a monthly contribution towards their shared costs by standing order. The amount varied for each service user. Staff also confirmed that the amount paid by service users was deducted from their quarterly invoices. The balance outstanding following the deduction was either paid over to service user or owed to the agency by the service user depending on the difference between the actual costs incurred and the amount deducted for the standing order.</p> <p>Review of a sample of invoices for two service users confirmed that the amounts paid by standing order were deducted from the actual costs incurred by the service users for the period ending 31 December 2017. The invoice for one service user showed that a balance amount was owed to the service user. Records confirmed that the amount owed was paid into the service user's bank account in a timely manner.</p> <p>The invoice for the remaining service user showed that the balance of monies remaining following the deduction of the standing order was owed to the agency. Staff confirmed that the amount owed would be added to the service user's next quarterly invoice.</p> <p>A review of two service users' written agreements showed that a breakdown of the shared costs were included within the agreements. Discussion with staff confirmed that these costs were apportioned to each service user and the total amount apportioned was used to determine the amount of the monthly standing order paid by the service users.</p> <p>Discussion with staff also confirmed that the amount of shared costs detailed within the agreements was based on the bills received from the previous year.</p> <p>The inspectors highlighted to staff that as the service user agreements did not specify that the costs listed were average costs, confusion may be caused to service users or their representatives as the amounts included in the</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>invoices were the actual costs for the quarter and not the expected costs to be charged as per the written agreements. The registered person was advised by the inspectors to review the written agreements in order that service users and their representatives were aware that actual costs incurred will be invoiced.</p>	
<p>Area for improvement 2 Ref: Regulation 14 (d) Stated: Second time</p>	<p>The registered person shall ensure that by 15 October 2017, invoices to service users for the period April – June 2017 are finalised, issued and restitution due to service users for this period paid in full.</p> <p>The registered person shall ensure that by 30 November 2017, invoices for the period July – September 2017 would be finalised and issued.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</p> <p>Discussion with staff confirmed that the amounts previously charged to service users for pest control and bank charges were reimbursed to service users within the required timescale of 15 October 2017.</p> <p>A review of records for two service users showed that the amounts listed within three invoices from the pest control provider were refunded evenly between 11 of the 14 service users. The invoices were for the period from 21 May 2016 to 20 February 2017. Discussion with staff confirmed that no other invoices were received from the pest control provider. Staff also confirmed that the service users living within the dwelling during the period the pest control service was provided were refunded the amounts.</p> <p>Review of records also confirmed that previous bank charges refunded to service users were apportioned evenly among the service users living within the dwellings at the time the charges were incurred.</p> <p>A review of records for two service users showed that the refunds for pest control and bank charges were paid into the service users' bank accounts or credit union accounts prior to 15 October 2017.</p>	<p>Met</p>

	<p>Discussion with staff confirmed that service users were invoiced for the period July 2017 – September 2017 for their shared costs by the required timescale of 30 November 2017.</p> <p>As previously mentioned under this section of the report, at the time of the inspection on 23 January 2018 service users had been invoiced for their shared costs up to the period ending 31 December 2017.</p>	
<p>Area for improvement 3</p> <p>Ref: Regulation 23 (2) (3) (4)</p> <p>Stated: First time</p>	<p>The registered person shall ensure that there is a robust system in place to evaluate the quality of services provided by the agency and to address any areas for improvement identified.</p> <p>A report of the agency's quality monitoring activity should be forwarded to RQIA on a monthly basis until further notice.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</p> <p>Action required to ensure compliance with this regulation was not reviewed as part of this inspection. The registered person was informed that the area for improvement will be carried forward by the care inspector and validated at the next care inspection.</p>	<p>Carried forward to the next care inspection</p>
<p>Action required to ensure compliance with Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards, updated August 2011</p>		<p>Validation of compliance</p>
<p>Area for improvement 1</p> <p>Ref: Standard 1.7</p> <p>Stated: First time</p>	<p>The registered person shall ensure that by the date detailed, communication with service users and/or their representatives has taken place regarding the delay in issuing charges for transport services (for the period July – September 2017).</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</p> <p>Discussion with staff confirmed that correspondence apologising for the delay in issuing charges for transport services for the period July 2017- September 2017 was issued to service users and their representatives by the required timescale of 30 November 2017. Staff also confirmed that the invoices for transport costs were up to date.</p>	<p>Met</p>

	<p>A review of two service users' files showed that copies of the correspondence forwarded to service users and their representatives were retained within the service users' files. The letters were issued prior to the required date of 30 November 2017. It was noticed that the correspondence informed service users that there will be a delay in issuing transport invoices however from April 2018 the invoices will be issued on a monthly basis.</p> <p>A sample of invoices for transport costs was reviewed for two service users. The invoices showed that the transport costs incurred by the service users up to 31 December 2017 were included in the invoices.</p>	
--	--	--

During the course of the inspection it was noticed that service users were charged a weekly cost "management/ Admin charge". Two rates were charged which depended on whether staff at the agency acted as the service user's appointee. A lower rate was charged if staff did not act as an appointee. Discussion with staff confirmed that the charge was for work involved in managing service users' finances and other admin duties including; managing benefits, postage, the production of individual bills and paying creditors. A review of two service users' written agreements showed that a provision was included within the agreements for service users or their representatives to opt in or out of paying the additional charge. On both agreements the representatives had opted to pay the additional charge. A review of the agreements also confirmed that the service users' representatives from the Health and social Care Trust were aware of the additional charge.

7.0 Quality improvement plan

There were no areas for improvement identified during this inspection, and a QIP is not required or included, as part of this inspection report.



The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor
Riverside Tower
5 Lanyon Place
BELFAST
BT1 3BT

Tel 028 9051 7500
Email info@rqia.org.uk
Web www.rqia.org.uk
🐦 @RQIANews