

Unannounced Care Inspection Report 4 December 2017



Triangle Housing Association

Type of Service: Domiciliary Care Agency

Address: Tower Court, 9 Warden Street, Ballymena, BT43 7DT

Tel No: 02825655335

Inspector: Kieran Murray

www.rgia.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 from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with legislation, standards and best practice.

1.0 What we look for



2.0 Profile of service

This is a domiciliary care agency supported living type which provides 24 hour personal care and housing support to 18 (two void tenancy's on the day of the inspection) people who have a learning disability and complex needs.

3.0 Service details

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| Organisation/Registered Provider: Northern Health and Social Care Trust Responsible Individual(s): Mr Christopher Harold Alexander | Registered Manager: Ms Stephanie Garrett |
| Person in charge at the time of inspection: Ms Stephanie Garrett | Date manager registered: 26/07/2017 |

4.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 4 December 2017 from 09:10 to 16:45 hours.

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

Evidence of good practice was found in relation to:

- staff recruitment
- care reviews
- training and development
- staff supervision and appraisals

The findings of this report will provide the agency with the necessary information to assist them to fulfil their responsibilities, enhance practice and service users' 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 Ms Stefanie Garrett, Registered Manager, 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 care inspection dated 6 September 2016

No further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 6 September 2016.

5.0 How we inspect

Prior to the inspection a range of information relevant to the service was reviewed. This included the following records:

- previous inspection report
- record of complaints
- correspondence with RQIA

During the inspection the inspector met with five service users and six staff; a telephone conversation with a representative of one of the service users and also one telephone conversation with a Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust professional.

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- a range of care and support plans
- HSC Trust assessments of needs and risk assessments
- care review records
- recording/evaluation of care used by the agency
- monthly quality monitoring reports
- staff meeting minutes
- staff training records
- records relating to staff supervision
- complaints records
- incident records
- records relating to safeguarding of adults
- induction records
- staff rota information
- recruitment policy
- a range of policies relating to the management of staff
- supervision policy
- induction policy
- safeguarding vulnerable adults policy
- restrictive practice policy
- risk management policy
- incident policy
- whistleblowing policy
- policy relating to management of data
- complaints policy
- statement of purpose
- service user guide

As part of the inspection and at the request of the inspector, questionnaires were distributed for completion by service users. A poster outlining how staff could complete their questionnaire via the survey monkey was given to the registered manager to display in the agency.

The findings of the inspection were provided to the person in charge at the conclusion of the inspection.

6.0 The inspection

6.1 Review of areas for improvement from the most recent inspection dated 6 September 2016

The most recent inspection of the agency was an unannounced care inspection.

6.2 Review of areas for improvement from the last care inspection dated 6 September 2016

There were no areas for improvement made as a result of the last care inspection.

6.3 Inspection findings

6.4 Is care safe?

Avoiding and preventing harm to service users from the care, treatment and support that is intended to help them.

The inspector reviewed staffing arrangements during the inspection. The agency has a recruitment policy and a mechanism in place to ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are completed and satisfactory. The inspector was satisfied that the agency's arrangements for obtaining all pre-employment information were satisfactory.

The agency has a structured induction programme lasting up to two weeks shadowing experienced staff, plus an additional five days training before the end of the six month probationary period. The agency maintains a record of the induction provided to staff, including details of the information provided during the induction period. Staff are provided with a handbook, and have access to policies, procedures and guidance which are available electronically. The inspector spoke to staff whose feedback supported the above information. Staff provided positive feedback to the inspector regarding how the induction prepared them for their roles and responsibilities and how they felt supported by staff, and the registered manager.

Staff rotas and feedback from staff and service users indicated that sufficient numbers of staff are available to meet the needs of service users at all times. The registered manager advised the inspector that vacant shifts are covered by the current staff team, the organisation's relief staff and a small pool of staff from another domiciliary care agency to meet the needs of service users.

The registered manager provided the inspector with a detailed list of the domiciliary care agency staff, their photographic evidence and evidence of their NISCC registration and the induction programme provided to them.

Service user comments:

- 'I feel safe living here.'
- 'I like my house, I have been here 32 years.'

Staff comments:

- 'The rota is flexible.'
- 'The manager aims to have the rota completed three to four weeks in advance.'

Examination of records indicated that a system to ensure that staff supervision and appraisals are planned and completed in accordance with policy has been maintained. It was noted that the agency maintains robust systems to assess the competency of staff, particularly in relation to administering medication and handling service users' finances. Staff who spoke to the inspector provided feedback that they had received supervision and appraisal in line with policy and procedure; records provided to the inspector confirmed this. A detailed matrix of completed supervision and appraisal was available in the office.

The registered manager informed the inspector that staff complete a Record of Discussion prior to their performance review.

Training records and staff feedback indicated that staff attend a range of training necessary to meet the needs of service users. There was evidence that staff have attended training additional to that stated in the Minimum Standards e.g. RESPECT, Ligature, Equality and Diversity training. The inspector reviewed the staff training matrix which indicated compliance with regulations and standards.

The registered manager informed the inspector that the agency was working with Trust professionals to devise a specialist training package in relation to 'understanding the needs of service users', to improve service delivery to their service users. The training will be delivered to all staff at the agency by the registered manager and Trust professionals.

Relative's comments:

- (Agency) 'I cannot say anything bad about any of them.'

The agency's provision for the welfare, care and protection of service users was examined by the inspector. The inspector viewed a policy maintained by the agency in relation to the safeguarding of adults (2016) in accordance with the regional guidance 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership' July 2015. The inspector received feedback from staff and examined documentation which indicated that safeguarding training provided by the agency includes details of the regional guidance. The training manager for Triangle Housing Association delivers safeguarding training and has been appointed as safeguarding champion. On the day of inspection staff were able to name the agency's safeguarding champion. A safeguarding alert flow chart outlining the procedure for raising concern was available in the agency office for staff.

The agency had made a number of safeguarding referrals to the HSC Trust since the last inspection of 6 September 2016. The referrals were made appropriately and management plans were developed in conjunction with the HSC Trust as evidenced by the inspector.

The inspector noted that staff were confident regarding their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding issues and clear about lines of accountability. The agency maintains a system of access at all times to a registered manager or senior manager who has knowledge of the needs of service users. The registered manager provided feedback that staff are able to access advice and guidance from a manager at all times.

The inspector received feedback from staff which indicated that they were aware of their obligations in relation to raising concerns about poor practice, and they were confident of an appropriate management response.

The inspector examined the safety of the agency's arrangements to identify and manage risk to service users. Documentary evidence and discussion with the registered manager indicated that referral information and risk assessments are completed by the HSC Trust. Care plans and 'Be Safe' plans reviewed by the inspector reflected risk assessments supplied by the HSC Trust.

Agency staff provided feedback which indicated that they had an understanding of the management of risk, and an ability to balance risk with the wishes and human rights of individual service users. It was noted that a number of restrictive practices in place were of the least restrictive nature considered necessary in conjunction with the HSC Trust and were reviewed regularly and evaluated.

The inspector found that care and support plans are formally reviewed by agency staff with service users on a six monthly basis or sooner if required.

On the day of the inspection the inspector reviewed reporting and management of incidents within the agency. It was noted that a number of incidents had taken place since the last inspection. The inspector examined these records and found that the agency had dealt with them in accordance with its procedure and policy. The inspector evidenced a detailed chart in the agency's office outlining notifiable events of which should be reported to RQIA.

The inspector noted that the agency had not received any complaints since the last inspection of 6 September 2016.

Of questionnaires returned by service users, four indicated they were 'very satisfied' that care was safe. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice throughout the inspection in relation to staff recruitment, professional registration records for staff, training, supervision and appraisal, adult safeguarding and restrictive practices.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

| | Regulations | Standards |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Total number of areas for improvement | 0 | 0 |

6.5 Is care effective?

The right care, at the right time in the right place with the best outcome.

The agency's arrangements for appropriately assessing and meeting the needs of people who use the service were examined during the inspection. The full nature and range of service provision is laid out in the Statement of Purpose (2014) and Service User Guide (2015).

The inspector reviewed three service users' care and support plans. The inspector was informed by the registered manager and staff that person centred care plans are developed with service users and/or their representatives in conjunction with relevant assessments provided by the HSC Trust multi-disciplinary team. Examination of a range of care and support plans indicated that information from HSC Trust assessments is incorporated accurately.

The registered manager provided the inspector with evidence of annual reviews completed with the HSC Trust. On the day of the inspection the inspector evidenced that a service user had contacted the Trust requesting an interim review, which was facilitated by a Trust professional.

Feedback received by the inspector from staff and service users indicated that service users have a genuine influence on the content of their care plans. The inspector had an opportunity to speak to one family member who confirmed their involvement in care and support plans.

The inspector was informed that care and support plans are reviewed on a six monthly basis or sooner if required. The inspector was informed that service users are involved prior to these reviews and saw 'Preparation for review' forms which recorded the views of service users. The registered manager advised the inspector that monthly reviews were carried out by each key worker in conjunction with individual service users and 'Discussion with Key Worker' forms were completed. The inspector viewed a number of the forms on the day of the inspection.

Service users' comments:

- 'Living here has helped me remain in the community.'
- (Agency) 'Staff are aware of my needs.'
- 'I would speak to XXXX if I had any concerns.'

Relative's comments:

- 'We think XXXX is doing well in Tower Court.'
- 'Delighted his house is looking well.'

Staff comments:

- 'We are a very good, strong team.'

The agency has developed and maintained a thorough quality monitoring system to oversee, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of care delivered to service users. Monthly quality monitoring is undertaken by managers who have a good working knowledge of the service.

The quality monitoring system provides an effective standard of monitoring in accordance with RQIA guidance. Quality monitoring reports included consultation with a range of service users, staff, relatives as appropriate and HSC Trust professionals, and details of progress on improvement matters.

The agency maintains communication systems to ensure that staff receive information relevant to the care and support of service users. The registered manager and staff described effective verbal and written communication systems within the staff team and with the registered manager, including the use of a diary and daily written and verbal handovers.

Review of team meeting records indicated that team meetings took place on a regular basis; the staff who spoke to the inspector verified that they could contribute items to the agenda for these meetings. The staff who spoke with the inspector indicated the staff team are supportive to each other and that communication is good.

Review of tenant meeting minutes by the inspector indicated the views of service users are taken into account in planning and making decisions. On the day of the inspection the inspector observed a service user typing the minutes of a recent tenant meeting on the agency tablet.

Examination of documentation and discussion with staff indicated that the agency promotes good working relationships with the HSC Trust and refers to or consults with a range of appropriate professionals when relevant.

Community key worker comments:

- (Agency) 'Staff proactively sourced different schemes and services XXXX can attend.'
- 'Number of incidents relating to XXXX has decreased since coming to Tower Court.'

The inspector noted and examined the following surveys/audits carried out by Triangle Housing Association: Triangle Safeguarding Report 2016/2017, Perception and Performance Report 2016/2017, Carer/Representative Survey Results September 2017, Contract Monthly Returns and Scorecards for staff, all with very positive results. The Annual Plan 2017/2018 was available in the office.

The registered manager informed the inspector that a number of staff have designated roles and work alongside service users in the following areas, Tenants' Advisory Group (TAG) and Choice Checkers.

The inspector was informed by the registered manager that every Friday updates are shared with staff through communication books and emails.

It was evident that the agency maintains a range of methods to communicate with and record the comments of service users, including speaking with service users on a daily basis and being available for discussion. In the course of the inspection it was noted that service users freely approached staff as they wished and appeared to enjoy good relationships with staff.

Advocacy services for service users to contact if necessary were recorded in the Statement of Purpose and on a poster displayed on a wall within the agency office.

The registered manager informed the inspector that a tablet and desktop computers were available for staff to use to access policies and on-line training.

Of questionnaires returned by service users, three indicated they were ‘very satisfied’ that care was effective and one indicated that they were ‘satisfied’ care was effective. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to care records, audits and reviews, communication between service users and agency staff and other key stakeholders.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

| | Regulations | Standards |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| Total number of areas for improvement | 0 | 0 |

6.6 Is care compassionate?

Service users are treated with dignity and respect and should be fully involved in decisions affecting their treatment, care and support.

The inspection sought to assess the agency’s ability to treat service users with dignity and respect, and to fully involve service users/their representatives in decisions affecting their care and support. On the day of inspection the inspector found that an ethos of dignity and respect, independence, rights, equality and diversity was reflected throughout staff attitudes and the delivery of the service.

Discussion with staff and observation of their interactions with service users during the inspection showed that they understood and respected the differing needs and wishes of service users. The inspector observed that the language and behaviour of staff sensitively promoted the independence and choice of service users throughout their interactions with service users.

The inspector was invited to visit service users in the communal areas of their homes. The inspector particularly noted displays of photographs which reflected service users participating in social activities. The inspector also noted a noticed board in the agency, again reflecting service users enjoying social activities. On the day of the inspection service users and staff were decorating the agency’s Christmas tree.

Feedback received and observation of service users indicated that staff have developed knowledge of individual service users through careful observation and interaction over time. The inspector noted that the agency had made particular efforts to facilitate service users to achieve goals and participate in activities of their choice.

It was evident that agency staff and HSC Trust professionals promote the independence, equality and diversity of service users. Service users are encouraged and facilitated to participate in activities in the local and wider community, with appropriate staff support. A service user described to the inspector their achievement of winning a pool competition in a local hotel.

During the course of the inspection service users and their representatives informed the inspector about recent holidays and day trips to various locations e.g. Dublin and Belfast. The inspector was advised that other service users were planning further trips and being supported by staff.

Service users advised the inspector of how staff were supportive in helping them plan a significant event in their lives.

The inspector noted that service users' care plans were very person centred and specific to the individual.

The inspector noted that service users are encouraged to develop their independence inside and outside of their own homes. On the day of the inspection the inspector was advised by a service user how they were supported by staff to return to studies at night class.

Discussion with service users and observations during the day of inspection indicated that service users are fully involved in day to day decisions and routines. The inspector observed staff using language and behaving in a manner which encouraged service users to make their own choices, whilst balancing their health and wellbeing needs. It was evident to the inspector that service users had individual plans and goals, which the agency staff were enabling them to progress. The inspector found that the agency has participated in liaison with a range of professionals and agencies to enable service users to make decisions, whilst providing appropriate safeguards. It was noted that the agency has a process for supporting service users to make individual choices about dietary intake i.e. weekly dietary planning.

During the inspection the inspector noted examples of how service user choice was being upheld by agency staff. Service users who wished to meet the inspector were provided with privacy as appropriate. The inspector noted that service users have choice regarding their daily routines and personal belongings.

The inspector noted that the agency actively promotes service user involvement across the wider organisation through the Triangle Housing Association Tenants' Advisory Group. The inspector was informed by the registered manager that service users are also invited to contribute to the Triangle Housing Association Tenants' Advisory Group, and to attend the Tenants' Conference, which is service user led.

The inspector was informed by the registered manager that service users and staff were purchasing 40 gifts and donating to two local charities. Service users and staff at the agency were also buying 40 food items to make up a food hamper for donation to the local food bank. These initiatives were agreed by both service users and staff as part of Triangle's 40th Birthday celebrations.

The registered manager advised the inspector that the agency had won a 'Participatory Budget Day' competition for 2017. The agency had submitted their intention to walk dogs for the local Dogs Trust and local residents. The registered manager shared photographs of service users and staff taking part in dog walking activities through the Friday update service throughout Triangle.

The registered manager advised the inspector that staff from Mid and East Antrim Council were delivering Zumba classes at the agency for both service users and staff.

A service user informed the inspector that they attend the HSC Trust Recovery College as part of their support and recovery plan.

The agency maintains a range of quality monitoring systems to evaluate the quality of services provided, including monthly quality monitoring reports which specifically ascertain and include the views of service users and their representatives.

Service user comments:

- ‘Staff treat me with respect and knock on my door.’
- ‘I like the hall for a cup of tea and a chat with XXXX.’

Relative’s comments:

- (Agency) ‘Staff are most courteous.’

Community key workers comments:

- ‘Overall a good move for XXXX.’

Of questionnaires returned by service users, three indicated they were ‘very satisfied’ that care was compassionate and one indicated that they were ‘satisfied’ care was compassionate. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to the provision of compassionate care and the involvement of service users and their representatives.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

| | Regulations | Standards |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| Total number of areas for improvement | 0 | 0 |

6.7 Is the service well led?

Effective leadership, management and governance which creates a culture focused on the needs and experience of service users in order to deliver safe, effective and compassionate care.

The inspector examined management and governance systems in place to meet the needs of service users. It was noted that robust systems of established management and governance have been implemented at the agency. The day to day operation of the agency is overseen by the registered manager. The management structure of the agency is clearly defined and was understood by staff.

Staff provided positive feedback to the inspector regarding effective working relationships within the staff team and managers.

The inspector viewed evidence of a systematic approach to reviewing information with the aim of improving safety and quality of life for service users. This includes the agency's governance of risk which includes appropriate policies and procedures, regular audit of adverse incidents including safeguarding incidents and incidents notifiable to RQIA, and service improvement strategies implemented by the senior management team.

On the day of the inspection it was noted that a number of incidents had taken place since the last care inspection, 6 September 2016. The inspector examined the records which indicated that the agency had dealt with the incidents in accordance with its procedure and policy.

The agency operates a robust training system and has an appointed safeguarding champion who is available to consult with staff in relation to training and safeguarding issues. A number of safeguarding referrals were made since the last inspection; the inspector examined the records and found that the agency had dealt with the safeguarding referrals in accordance within policy and procedure.

Feedback from staff indicated that they are confident that managers would listen and respond to their concerns.

The agency maintains a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which are reviewed at least every three years. Policies and procedures are maintained on electronic systems accessible to all staff.

The agency maintains and implements a policy relating to complaints and compliments; these are recorded and managed in accordance with the agency's policy and procedure. On the day of the inspection it was noted no complaints had been received since the last inspection, 6 September 2016.

There are effective systems of formal supervision and appraisal (performance review) within the agency. Staff that provided feedback to the inspector were aware of their responsibilities and understood their roles. Written and verbal guidance for staff of their daily roles and responsibilities were available.

Staff could describe how they would respond to concerns about performance of a colleague and knew how to access the whistleblowing policy.

The registered person has worked effectively with RQIA and maintained their roles and responsibilities in accordance with legislation.

On the day of inspection the RQIA certificate of registration was displayed appropriately and was reflective of the service provided.

Feedback provided to the inspector indicated that there are effective collaborative working relationships with key stakeholders and families, which are valued by staff.

The agency had completed their annual plan 2017/2018 and was available for examination by the inspector.

Service user comments:

- 'The service is well led.'

Relative's comments:

- 'If I had concerns I would speak to XXXX.'

Community key workers comments:

- 'The manager leads the service which reflects in the positive outcomes.'

Staff comments:

- 'Manager made a difference, very dependable.'
- 'A hands on manager.'

Of questionnaires returned by service users, four indicated they were 'very satisfied' that the service was well led. No questionnaires were returned by staff.

Areas of good practice

There were examples of good practice found throughout the inspection in relation to governance arrangements, management of complaints and incidents, quality improvement and maintaining good working relationships.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

| | Regulations | Standards |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| | 0 | 0 |

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.



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