



The Regulation and  
Quality Improvement  
Authority

Optimum Care  
RQIA ID: 11037  
Movilla House  
2 Berkshire Road  
Newtownards  
BT23 7HH

Inspector: Jim McBride

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**Unannounced Care Inspection  
of  
Optimum Care**

**15 October 2015**

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority  
9th Floor Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3BT  
Tel: 028 9051 7500 Fax: 028 9051 7501 Web: [www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)

## 1. Summary of Inspection

An unannounced care inspection took place on 15 October 2015 from 09.30 to 12.30. Overall on the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering safe, effective and compassionate care. No quality improvement plan was issued during this inspection. This inspection was underpinned by the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the Domiciliary Care Agencies Minimum Standards, 2011.

### 1.1 Actions/Enforcement Taken Following the Last Inspection

Other than those actions detailed in the previous QIP there were no further actions required to be taken following the last inspection.

### 1.2 Actions/Enforcement Resulting from this Inspection

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

### 1.3 Inspection Outcome

	Requirements	Recommendations
<b>Total Number of Requirements and Recommendations Made at this Inspection</b>	0	0

This inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations being made. Findings of the inspection can be found in the main body of the report. Overall on the day of inspection the management arrangements were found to be safe, effective and compassionate. The outcome of this inspection found no areas of concern. A quality improvement plan (QIP) was not included in this report.

## 2. Service Details

<b>Registered Organisation/Registered Person:</b> Home Care Services (NI) Limited t/a Optimum Care/Lesley Catherine Megarity	<b>Registered Manager:</b> Sara Mc Intyre
<b>Person in Charge of the Agency at the Time of Inspection:</b> Sara Mc Intyre	<b>Date Manager Registered:</b> 24 August 2015
<b>Number of Service Users in Receipt of a Service on the Day of Inspection:</b> 318	

## 3. Inspection Focus

The inspection sought to assess progress with the issues raised during and since the previous inspection and to determine if the following theme has been met:

**Theme 2: Management systems and arrangements are in place that support and promote the quality of care services.**

**4. Methods/Process**

Prior to inspection the following records were analysed:

- Previous inspection report and quality improvement plan (QIP)
- RQIA Duty calls
- Records of notifiable events
- User Consultation Officer (UCO) report

Specific methods/processes used in this inspection include the following:

- Discussion with the registered manager
- Examination of records
- File audits

As part of the inspection the User Consultation Officer (UCO) spoke with six relatives and five service users between the 24 and 29 June 2015 to obtain their views of the service being provided by Optimum Care. The service users interviewed live in the Comber and Belfast areas. The findings from their feedback have been included within the body of this report. The inspector spoke with the registered manager and the registered provider during the inspection of the 15 October 2015.

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- Twelve care plans and risk assessments
- HSC Trust referrals with timetables of services
- Service user agreements
- Care review, quality monitoring visit/survey feedback records
- Service user contact logs
- Monthly monitoring reports for May, June, July, August and September 2015
- Annual quality review report for 2015
- Complaints log and records for 2015
- Notification of incidents log and record for 2014/2015
- Staff meeting minutes for February and September 2015
- Staff training records:
- Safeguarding
- Medication
- Record keeping
- Ten staff monitoring/supervision records

**5. The Inspection**

Optimum Care (formerly known as Domestic Care Service) is a private domiciliary care agency, established in 1995 to provide care and support to people in their own homes.

The agency office is in Newtownards. The staff of 120 provides a range of personal care and support services to 318 service users in the areas of Co. Down and Belfast.

The majority of service users are older people, but some also have mental health care needs, physical disabilities and learning disabilities. The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust are the main commissioners of their services.

The agency currently provides service to 318 service users within their own homes equalling 7864 calls per week.

### 5.1 Review of Requirements and Recommendations from Previous Inspection

The previous inspection of the agency was an unannounced care inspection dated 18 &19 June 2014. The completed QIP was returned and approved by the care inspector.

### 5.2 Review of Requirements and Recommendations from the Last Care Inspection

One recommendation resulted from the inspection of Optimum Care Newtownards undertaken on 18 &19 July 2014.

Previous Inspection Recommendations		Validation of Compliance
<b>Recommendation 1</b>  <b>Ref:</b> Standard 3.3	The registered manager is recommended to ensure individual care plans and risk assessments include specific management plans relating to the area of restraint.	<b>Met</b>
	<b>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</b> The inspector examined a number of care plans that include the information requested. The documentation in place was satisfactory.	

### 5.3 Theme 2 – Management systems and arrangements are in place that support and promote the quality of care services.

#### Is Care Safe?

A range of management systems, policies and processes relating to communication channels with service users and their relatives were viewed. These included daily contacts, on call arrangements and management of missed calls. Where relevant, records confirmed that information had been communicated to the commissioning trust via telephone calls and emails.

The service users and relatives interviewed by the USO had no concerns regarding the timekeeping of the agency's staff and they would be contacted by the agency if their carer had been significantly delayed, this is good practice. Three service users felt that they had experienced a small number of missed calls by the agency. The registered manager discussed this with the USO and the inspector.

The registered manager advised that missed calls are reported to the office by carers, service users and staff. Log books are also checked - reason for any missed calls investigated and action taken if appropriate. Records of missed calls were included in monitoring visits so the management is aware of the extent of the problem, if any.

The inspector noted that between 1 September 2015 and 14 October 2015, 20 calls had been missed; these were reported to the HSC Trust and relatives and were managed effectively in line with agency's procedures.

Assessments of need and risk assessments examined by the inspector reflected the views of service users and/or representatives

### **Service User/Relatives' Comments:**

- "It's peace of mind for the family that someone calls to my xxx every day and contacts me with any issues."
- "I'm very grateful for the help."
- "My xxx is happy with them."
- "No complaints with them."
- "They're very attentive to me."

### **Is Care Effective?**

Management of missed calls and changes to service user needs were reviewed during inspection and had been evidenced as appropriately managed. Records evidenced that where missed calls or poor timekeeping had been identified, the staff involved had been appropriately managed through supervision and/or disciplinary action to address the issues. The registered manager confirmed that there are ongoing staff monitoring endeavours, to ensure these issues are not repeated.

The registered manager confirmed and demonstrated a clear understanding of the agency's reporting processes if staff are running late for next service user visit or were unable to gain access to a service user's home.

The agency has in place a policy on missed calls updated in May 2015. The registered manager confirmed that the agency operates a zero tolerance policy and that all missed calls are investigated in line with this policy. All missed calls or complaints are reported to the relevant HSC Trust. This was verified by the records in place seen by the inspector.

### **Is Care Compassionate?**

During UCO contacts, no concerns were raised regarding the staff care/support; none of the people interviewed felt that care was being rushed. Feedback from the manager indicated that service users receive care in an individualised manner. Care plans and agency records were written in a person centred manner.

The inspector noted that service users and/or their representatives were aware of their right to be consulted and have their views taken into account in relation to service delivery; this was

evident in the quality monitoring reports where service users had discussed concerns with the monitoring officer.

### Areas for Improvement

N/A

<b>Number of Requirements:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>Number of Recommendations:</b>	<b>0</b>
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### 5.4 Additional Areas Examined

The inspector reviewed the agency's RQIA notification of incidents log, with a number of reports received during the past year. Review of this incidents confirmed appropriate recording and reporting to RQIA regarding the medication matters within appropriate timeframes.

Reports of monthly quality monitoring completed by the registered person were reviewed. The reports ascertain and respond to the views of service users, relatives and staff. The agency's reports of monthly monitoring are comprehensive and provide assurance of a robust system of quality monitoring. Monitoring visit records provided by the agency held within peoples home monthly show positive responses to the following questions:

- Are staff on time for your calls?
- Are your cares able to meet your needs within the allocated times?

The inspector noted the positive results of the agency's satisfaction report for 2015; 496 service users responded. Services users stated their satisfaction levels in the following areas:

- My carers know what to do to help me? 98%
- Staff respect my dignity? 99.7%
- Staff are friendly and helpful? 99.6%
- Staff communicate well with me? 99.6%
- I usually see the same staff? 84.9% (the manager and provider stated that they have an action plan in place to try and improve this figure).
- My calls are long enough to meet my needs? 94.2%

6. No requirements or recommendations resulted from this inspection.

<b>I agree with the content of the report.</b>			
<b>Registered Manager</b>	Alexandra Sara McIntyre	<b>Date Completed</b>	20.10.15
<b>Registered Person</b>	Lesley Megarity	<b>Date Approved</b>	20.10.15
<b>RQIA Inspector Assessing Response</b>	Jim Mc Bride	<b>Date Approved</b>	21/10/15

Please provide any additional comments or observations you may wish to make below:

*\*Please complete in full and returned to [agencies.team@rqia.org.uk](mailto:agencies.team@rqia.org.uk) from the authorised email address\**

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and weaknesses that exist in the agency. The findings set out are only those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not absolve the registered person/manager from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with minimum standards and regulations.