



Inspection Report on

1st Grade Care (Cardiff & Vale)

**1st Grade Care Ltd
Unit 2 Charterhouse Links Business Park
Fortran Road
Cardiff
CF3 0LT**

Date Inspection Completed

02/08/2024

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About 1st Grade Care (Cardiff & Vale)

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	1st Grade Care Ltd
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	19 July 2023
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

Summary

People told us they feel the communication in the service is improving and are mostly happy with the care and support they, or their loved ones receive. People told us they mostly have a consistent group of care workers during the weekdays, and this is helping them to become familiar with routines and people's preferences.

There have been changes to the structure of the management since the last inspection, and the provider has now taken on the role of responsible individual (RI) as well as the manager. In addition to this there is now also a quality assurance manager who is seeking to review, update and improve people's personal plans and the delivery of their care and support.

Care staff told us they feel supported by the management team most of the time. Some care staff felt more could be done to improve the communication and relationships between care staff and the office team. We found the RI has identified this area of need and has a plan in place to start to address it.

Well-being

People have control over their day-to-day life, and know and understand what care, support and opportunities are available to them. The service ensures people can access the right information, when they need it, in a way that works for them. The service has improved provision of personal plans, and the written guide to the service is available in people's homes. People are treated with dignity and respect by mostly familiar and consistent care workers. Individual circumstances are considered in the reviewing of their personal plans. The service has a team of staff who are undertaking regular reviews with people and their families/ representatives. People or their chosen representatives can contribute to the decisions that affect their life.

The service seeks to work with external professionals to ensure people's physical, mental, and emotional well-being are protected. People mostly get the right care and support, at the right time. We found in some instances people's call times were not as scheduled, but people told us there had been improvements in this area. People are safe and protected from abuse and neglect. The service has a safeguarding policy in place and people are informed about how to raise concerns. Feedback from people and families about their care and support is mostly positive, they told us about improvement they have seen in the continuity of their staff, as well as call times. People told us they have very good relationships with some of the staff, especially their regular workers who know them well.

A few people told us communication with the office and the manager can sometimes be difficult, but they have seen improvement since restructuring has taken place. Others told us they had positive communication with the office, and found the team there went "*Above and beyond*" to support them in a time of need.

Care and Support

People told us they are building positive relationships with a more consistent team of care staff, who know them and understand their needs. Some people told us on the weekends they may see care staff who are less familiar, but this is improving. The service has introduced new quality assurance processes and is working to improve care delivery and call times. People and their families told us there has been an improvement in call times, but sometimes it is difficult to contact the office when calls are late. However, the RI has identified this as an area of need and is working with the team to improve communication with people and their representatives. One family told us “*Care workers listen and take advice.*” Another family member described the regular care worker for their loved one as “*An absolute asset,*” commenting on how they have improved their loved one’s ability to participate in the local area.

Care staff support people in line with their personal plans. People’s personal plans are strengths based with a focus on what people can do for themselves. The plans are person-centred and provide guidance for staff to help them meet people’s day-to-day needs. Each person’s plan is supplemented by specific actions for staff to complete to ensure care and support is provided in line with their needs and aspirations. Care staff complete digital records of the care and support they provide. These records are reviewed and audited by the quality assurance manager, as well as the RI. Where discrepancies are identified, the management team seek to understand why, and have started to take steps to address any issues. There are clear processes and procedures in place to support the safe management of medication. Medication administration is recorded digitally. The digital system provides up to date information to the management team who are alerted to any concerns or issues, making it possible to rectify these swiftly.

Leadership and Management

There are governance arrangements in place to support the smooth running of the service. Recent changes to the management structure in the service have led to increased oversight and governance. The RI, who is also the manager and provider, is supported by a quality assurance manager, as well as a deputy manager. The management team are working to improve the quality of the service and have regular meetings to review any outstanding actions and tasks picked up in their audits. There is a plan in place to address areas of need over the long term. One identified area is to increase training for care staff. One staff member told us they are *“Really looking forward to training,”* and other told us they have recently attended manual handling training which has had a positive impact on their practice.

The RI seeks feedback from people and their representatives, as well as staff. The feedback is considered alongside data about the service and the RI prepares a report which focuses on the quality of care provided as per their regulatory duties. Within the report the RI has identified a need to improve communication between the office and care team and has a plan in place to address this with increased training and supervision.

There are enough staff on duty to support people effectively. The rotas are planned in advance and the management team are seeking to match care staff with people in terms of compatibility. We saw structured rotas follow the same pattern where possible to ensure continuity of care for people. Care staff are suitably recruited and supported to carry out their duties. The service follows safe recruitment practices and supports care staff to register with Social Care Wales (SCW) the workforce regulator, as well as the Disclosure and Barring Service. Care staff told us they feel supported and have had recent supervisions with the management team. Some care staff told us they feel the management team *“Could do better in terms of employees and communication”* but on the whole they found working for the service to be positive. Care staff receive training to support them in their role. The RI is working with an external provider to develop an induction programme that can be mapped to the All Wales Induction Framework (AWIF) to support staff to register with SCW. Staff told us the recent training opportunities have been positive and made an impact on their confidence and competence.

Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

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