Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report on

Advantage Healthcare South Wales and West (Cardiff and Vale)

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Date Inspection Completed

18/07/2024

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About Advantage Healthcare South Wales and West (Cardiff and Vale)

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	Advantage Healthcare Limited
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	13 February 2023
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This 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

Advantage Healthcare Ltd provides specialist care including clinical care and support to people in their own homes throughout Wales. Currently the service supports people in North Wales, Cwm Taff, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, and the Gwent areas. This report is reflective of the experience of people using the service who live throughout Wales. The main office for the service covering all areas in Wales is based in Cardiff. People are extremely happy with the service and recognise the difference it makes to allow them to live as independently as possible.

Care workers are highly trained and competent to provide specialist care and support for people with complex health needs. People are also supported with their mental health. The service is reliable, with improvements in consistency of care workers. The service is highly successful in helping people to live at home with their family, many of whom have previously spent several years living in a hospital environment. There is good communication and coworking with specialist community nurses, enabling planning and reviews with people to facilitate the best possible outcomes.

The provider has a Responsible Individual (RI) who oversees the service. The RI ensures their regulatory duties are routinely carried out and provide very good support to the service. Robust policies, procedures and systems are in place. A dynamic and dedicated manager has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the service. The provider ensures care workers are suitable to work with people in a vulnerable situation.

Well-being

People can access the right information to help manage and improve their well-being, and this can be provided in Welsh if required. The service has a comprehensive client guide and statement of purpose to inform people what to expect from the service. Before people receive a service, they or their representatives are involved in meetings with clinical commissioners to ensure important information is shared. The provider produces outstanding personal plans containing exceptionally detailed information and these are agreed with the person. Care and support is kept under review and official monthly reviews are documented to show changes to any agreed care. People report that communication is good, and they can approach the management in the service office with requests or questions and these are responded to quickly.

The service supports people to be as healthy and as active as possible. Personal plans outlining clinical regimes, exercise plans, dietary and medication requirements are followed. Care workers are highly trained, including in specialist clinical practices specific to the person. The experience and expertise of the care workers ensures that they pick things up quickly and report concerns so these can be actioned. Care workers can access lead nurses in the wider organisation, helping to focus on prevention, so that issues do not arise. There are robust medication administration policies and processes, and these are followed.

People are protected from abuse and neglect. The provider has robust systems, policies and procedures in place, with good oversight to ensure practices are followed. Care workers are recruited in the safest way with checks carried out to make sure they are fit to work with people. The induction, training and competency testing of care workers is good, and people have a team of care workers who have been specifically trained to meet their unique needs. There is improved communication and continuity of care, helping to reduce risks. People who find decision making difficult have access to advocacy, so their voice is heard. The provider has a highly organised and efficient system to monitor the safe delivery of care, including lead nurses, management, a RI and the wider organisation’s expertise.

The service supports people with their mental health and general well-being. The service tries to ensure care workers are matched with a person, enabling positive relationships to be formed. People told us how they like their care workers, and how their approach shows they understand the person’s needs, especially when they are having an emotionally challenging day. People are helped with, or have conversations about, things that interest them. This is extremely important for people’s mental health and well-being, taking the focus off the complex clinical needs they have. The service is extremely successful in helping people to remain living at home despite their complex needs, ensuring people are achieving their main desired outcome of living with their family.

Care and Support

People are happy with the care and support they receive. People told us they have a team of regular care workers. One person told us "*They're amazing*," confirming the care workers do everything they need to, in addition to providing very valuable companionship. Another person told us the majority of their care workers "*Often go above and beyond*" in their roles. A relative of one person told us how the care workers "*Just want to make X happy."* We saw people being supported with activities they really enjoy, promoting their well-being. Due to people's complex needs, reviews are completed monthly, or sooner if required, with the service being responsive to any changes. A community nurse told us the overall quality of the service and client satisfaction is "*Good*," and the service is "*Very open to discussion and trying to address concerns fairly."*

The provider excels in ensuring people's health care needs are supported. The service consults people before they receive a service, considers information available, and meets with specialist health professionals to understand a person's clinical needs. This helps to develop a personalised and exceptionally detailed personal plan used to inform care workers on how to best support the person. These are fully supported by risk assessments. Due to the complexity of some people's health needs, a lead nurse in the service oversees the care and has responsibility for keeping plans up to date. Personal plans are outstanding. People have access to external health professionals with many people or their relatives managing their ongoing health consultations independently, but the service supports this if required. Daily records show the care provided. These are supported with other records such as weight and medication charts, all of which are completed to a high standard.

The service is highly successful in helping people to achieve their desired outcomes. The service is essential to allow people to live at home. This is usually the person's main wish, but care workers know people well and know what is important to them. The provider is considering how they can better capture people's more personalised desired outcomes. When people are unable, or find it difficult to communicate their wishes, the service ensures advocates act in the person's best interest. The reliability of the service supports people to carry out daily living tasks to meet their identified needs. People confirmed their calls are on time, except for a rare occasion, and care workers stay to complete the agreed care. Some people have overnight support and care workers remain awake and vigilant throughout this period. People told us how flexible the service is, accommodating changes to times or days of care, so they can, for example, attend appointments or events. When people have behaviours that challenge, effective measures are taken to diffuse the situation based on good training and documented techniques.

Leadership and Management

There is excellent oversight of the service through governance arrangements. The service is part of a wider organisation with specialist departments supporting them for example, with policy writing. The provider has nominated a Responsible Individual (RI) to have oversight of the quality of care and service delivery. They visit people, speak to care workers and consider the information available to them. The RI is knowledgeable, has a nursing background which helps to fully understand the more clinical needs of people, enabling them to determine if people are being supported appropriately. Documentation is available to inform people and care workers about the service, including care delivery and terms of employment. All documentation can be made available in Welsh if needed and the 'Welsh Active Offer' is being met where people do not have to ask for a service to be delivered in the Welsh language.

The service is run smoothly. A dedicated manager has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the service throughout Wales. Though based in a Cardiff office, they visit people in other parts of Wales, along with the RI, ensuring everyone can let the management know what they think of the service they receive. People confirmed this. The service has increased regular staffing levels with use of agency workers on rare occasions to help cover annual leave. One person told us the regular agency care workers who form part of their team are "*Good*." People know at least three months in advance who will be providing their care and when. A coordinator arranges and monitors calls using an electronic system. Audits, including those around calls, are used to monitor the service.

Recruitment processes are robust, and the workforce is highly trained and competent. Pre-employment checks are carried out to ensure the care workers are fit to work with people in a vulnerable situation. Many of the care workers are registered nurses due to the complex health care needs people have. All care workers have contracts of employment. All care workers receive an induction and mandatory training such as 'Moving and Handling' and 'How to safeguard people.' One care worker told us "*New starter training is amazing; shadow shifts are in-depth*." Specialist training is provided to support a person's needs, such as use of a ventilator. People confirmed their care workers are knowledgeable and their competency is regularly tested.

The provider values the workforce and has systems in place to support them. Line managers supervise care workers, having regular meetings to discuss any issues and professional development. This is conducted by a registered nurse when required. Care workers told us that communication within the service has improved. Care workers can access an App, giving them information for their own personal support and mental health. Care workers are encouraged and supported to develop, with many choosing to follow a career in nursing.

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. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status

N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A
80	Full and robust quality assurance monitoring is not being reported for each operational footprint. The six-monthly Quality of Care report completed does not including the required aggregated data or recommendations for the improvement of the service.	Achieved
34	During times of sickness and holidays there are not always enough staff available to provide care, without staff working additional to their arranged rota. Staff shortages are resulting in short notice cover being sought by staff that are working more hours than they wish to work.	Achieved

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