Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Bluebird Care Pontypool and Ebbw Vale

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01495366885

https://www.bluebirdcare.co.uk/pontypool-ebbw-vale

The inspection visits for this service took place between 18/08/2026 and 26/08/2026

Service Information:

Operated by:	Harris Health LTD
Care Type:	Domiciliary Support Service
Provision for:	Supported Living
Registered places:	0
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language and culture or is working towards a bilingual service.

Ratings:

Well-being	Good
Care & Support	Requires Improvement
Leadership & Management	Good

Summary:

Bluebird Care Pontypool and Ebbw Vale is registered to provide domiciliary care and support to people living in their own homes across the Gwent region.

Well-being outcomes for people are good because they receive respectful and compassionate support that promotes their health, well-being and independence. The service encourages people and their relatives to share their views and uses feedback to inform service delivery.

Care and support requires improvement because people experience caring and responsive support; however, greater consistency is needed in updating care plans, managing medicines, and delivering care calls at planned times to ensure people's needs are fully met.

Leadership and management is good because effective governance arrangements support the delivery of the service. Robust recruitment processes help ensure suitable staff are employed, and care staff benefit from regular support, training and opportunities for professional development.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

The service encourages people to have as much choice and control as possible over their everyday lives and the care and support they receive. People's personal plans contain their voice, their life history, as well as the things that are important to them. The service assesses individual needs before support begins and agrees care visit times with people to help ensure the service can meet those needs effectively.

People and relatives spoke positively about the support they receive and the relationships they have developed with regular care staff. However, some people raised concerns about the consistency and timeliness of care calls. They described occasions when people experienced delays in receiving support with personal care, medicines, or daily routines. While some people told us the service usually informed them when care staff were running late, others said communication was less consistent and they occasionally needed to contact the office for updates. Improving the reliability of care call times and communication with people when delays occur would further enhance people's experience and wellbeing.

People receive support that promotes their health and wellbeing. People usually receive support from regular and familiar care staff, which supports positive relationships between them. This also helps care staff to recognise changes to people's usual presentation promoting their health and well-being. The service works with external health and social care professionals when required to support people's changing needs. Medication administration processes would benefit from stronger oversight to provide greater assurance that people consistently receive medicines at the prescribed times and as intended.

The service actively encourages people and their relatives to share their views and experiences. People told us they felt able to raise concerns and believe management would listen and respond appropriately. People are involved in reviewing their care plans and sharing their views on the support they receive, helping to ensure services reflect their wishes and preferences. More frequent reviews and timely updates to care records would further strengthen the service's ability to respond to changing needs and personal outcomes. The management team handles complaints in line with the provider's policies and procedures.

The service has effective arrangements in place to help keep people safe from harm. Robust recruitment processes help ensure care staff are suitable to work with vulnerable people. The service completes risk assessments and personal plans which outline how care staff can manage risks to people's safety and well-being. Risk assessments are completed for care staff, ensuring their safety as they go about their work. Care staff are also guided by clear policies and

procedures. Care staff complete safeguarding training. Care staff have access to sufficient personal protective equipment to minimise the risk of infection.

Care & Support — Requires Improvement

People we spoke with were positive about the care provided and complimentary about care staff. They described staff as kind, patient and respectful and told us they were treated with dignity. One person said staff were *"Lovely",* and they enjoyed talking with them.

The service carries out assessments of each person's individual needs to determine its ability to meet these before agreeing to provide support. Personal plans are developed for everyone receiving a service and include clear information about preferred routines, required care tasks for each visit, and any specific support instructions. Personal plans are created using a person-centred approach and incorporate details such as personal history, preferences, likes and dislikes, and individual wishes, ensuring the person's voice remains central to the care provided.

Improvements are required to ensure plans remain accurate, current and reflective of people's needs. While risk assessments identify vulnerabilities and measures to promote safety, changes in need and emerging risks are not always updated promptly, and reviews are not consistently completed within required timescales. Although people and, where appropriate, their representatives are involved in review meetings and can share their views on the care provided, outdated information may reduce the effectiveness of care planning and risk management. People's care and support may not be met because personal plans are not reviewed on a regular basis and kept up to date. We expect the provider to take action and will follow this up at the next inspection.

Medication management requires improvement to ensure people consistently receive their medicines safely and in line with their assessed needs. While care staff receive medication training and regular competency assessments, oversight arrangements are not sufficiently robust to identify trends, patterns or recurring issues. Personal plans do not always clearly describe the level of support people require with medication or provide sufficient guidance, including the administration of 'as required' and time-sensitive medicines. Although the electronic care system generates alerts when medication is late or omitted and these are generally followed up promptly, further improvements are needed to quality assurance processes to ensure consistent safe and person-centred medication support. People's health and well-being may be at risk because oversight of medication administration is not sufficiently robust. We expect the provider to take action and will follow this up at the next inspection.

Improvements are required to ensure all care calls are delivered at the planned times. Although staff rotas include travel time between care calls, staff reported these do not always reflect factors such as traffic conditions or when additional calls are added. Analysis of electronic call monitoring data identified that care calls do not always occur as agreed; feedback from people receiving a service and their representatives also confirmed this. The Responsible Individual (RI) has

committed to reviewing existing care runs to identify concerns with travel times and call scheduling. Improvements are needed to ensure people receive support as commissioned, at the times they expect, and in a way that promotes their wellbeing and positive outcomes. We expect the provider to take action and will follow this up at the next inspection.

Leadership & Management — Good

The service provider has established organisational arrangements, governance systems and oversight processes that support service delivery. Leaders use a range of quality assurance and monitoring systems. The RI maintains oversight through regular visits, engagement with people receiving a service, their representatives and staff, and completion of quality-of-care reviews.

The RI provided examples of how the service sought to promote a person-centred culture through small but meaningful acts of kindness, such as helping people obtain items they required, recognising birthdays and delivering seasonal gifts. The service had also introduced initiatives to recognise staff contributions including seasonal appreciation packages. Staff we spoke with talked positively about the rewarding nature of their role and described the positive impact they have on people's well-being.

The service provider has robust selection and vetting processes for hiring staff to ensure all staff are suitable and trustworthy. All staff must provide appropriate identification documents as well as complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, provide satisfactory references and full employment history. New staff complete an induction to support them into their caring role. This includes completing mandatory training to ensure care staff have the required knowledge and skills to support people at the service. Staff access training and organisational policies through the provider's electronic systems, including the "Cloda" platform, which allows staff to access policies and guidance whilst working in the community. This supports staff to obtain information when required and promotes consistency in practice.

Staff have regular one-to-one supervision sessions with their line manager on a regular basis alongside an annual appraisal to receive feedback about their work performance. Training records show staff have completed core and refresher training in a timely manner that is relevant to the needs of the people they support. Eligible care staff are registered with Social Care Wales, the workforce regulator, demonstrating their suitability for practice. Staff meetings are held on a regular basis to keep staff up to date with service arrangements and any changes being introduced. Care staff told us they are happy in their roles and feel generally supported by management.

The provider makes an effort to promote the use of the Welsh language, by identifying people's language and communication needs during pre-admission assessments. Key documentation can be made available in Welsh on request, and organisational policies and procedures are accessible in Welsh and other languages through a mobile phone application, supporting people to receive information in their preferred language.

Areas identified for improvement

Where we identify **Areas for Improvement** but we have not found outcomes for people to be at immediate or significant risk, we discuss these with the provider. We expect the provider to take action and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Where we find outcomes for people **require significant improvement** and/or there is risk to people's well-being we identify areas for **Priority Action**. In these circumstances we issue a Priority Action Notice(s) to the Provider, and they must take immediate steps to make improvements. We will inspect again within six months to check improvements have been made and outcomes for people have improved.

The table(s) below show the area(s) for priority action and/or those for improvement we have identified.

Summary of Areas for Improvement	Date identified
People's well-being may be at risk because oversight of medication administration is not sufficiently robust and personal plans do not always include clear guidance for the administration of medicines.	18/08/26
People's care and support may not be met because personal plans are not reviewed on a regular basis and kept up to date.	18/08/26
People do not always receive care at the times agreed to meet their needs because oversight of call times is not sufficiently robust, resulting in recurring late calls.	18/08/26

CIW has not issued any Priority action notices following this inspection.

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