Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Respite Care Service

Age Cymru Gwent, 124-128 High Street, Blackwood, NP12 1AF

01633740013

www.agecymrugwent.org

Date(s) of inspection visit(s):

24/04/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Age Cymru Gwent
Care Type:	Domiciliary Support Service
Provision for:	Supported Living
Registered places:	0
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider is not meeting the Welsh language and culture needs of people and this requires improvement.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

The Respite Care Service by Age Cymru Gwent provide full time unpaid carers to take a break from their caring role. The service aims to improve the physical and mental health of unpaid carers and their cared for person. The service provides basic personal care and manual handling support. The service is mainly provided across Newport and Monmouth.

This is a highly valued service by the unpaid carers and cared for people who access it, and all people we spoke with told us how important this service is to them. There is a focus on people's health and well-being which is why we rated this area as Good. Care and Support is rated as good because people's personal plans are very detailed and guide care workers as to how to support each person in their preferred way. Although, the service must ensure people's plans are reviewed more regularly. There are good oversight and governance arrangements in place which is why the service is rated as good for leadership and management.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

There is a strong well-being focus throughout this service. This is a service which provides respite to unpaid carers. Unpaid carers and their relatives value this service greatly. It allows unpaid carers to receive valuable time away from their caring role comfortable in the knowledge the cared for person is safe and engaged in an activity they have chosen. We were told by one unpaid carer "*It has been lifechanging*." People have control over their daily lives because care workers support people to participate in activities they enjoy. People spoken with told us their relatives take the lead when choosing what to do in each session. Care workers empower people to make their own choices. Sessions take place in the community where people access local facilities, or for people with more significant needs then sensory style sessions and other at home activities are facilitated. Risks are safely managed to ensure people can participate in things they enjoy safely.

Care workers make detailed and personal recordings of their sessions. This helps the unpaid carer to be updated of what happens during the sessions and allows the care worker to note their observations of people being supported. There is good communication between care workers and families. Changes to people's health are noted, and referrals to external agencies made when needed. Care workers make note of people's well-being and share their experiences with family. People are supported by a small number of care workers meaning positive relationships are formed. Care workers get to know people well and are able to notice changes in people's presentation and take appropriate actions to maintain people's health. Care workers are supportive of people and their families and have signposted to other services that may be able to help and provide additional support. Whilst personal plans are not always reviewed as regularly reviewed as often as required, people told us care workers are adaptive to people's changing needs and provide appropriate support to their relative.

Care & Support — Good

Before services can start, a thorough assessment is completed which outlines what people's needs are and how care workers can support people. As well as being sure the service can meet people's needs, they take great efforts to understand people's histories, likes and dislikes. People's plans follow a simple format but contain lots of information about how people like to be supported and what is important to them. There is useful prompts for care workers to be mindful of particular situations for people, for example to ensure safety with curbs when waking due to vision issues. Care workers keep considerate records of their sessions with people. The documents reviewed captured details of what happened in each session and notes of people's mood and general presentation . People's personal plans have been recently reviewed; however, reviews do not take place as regularly as required. This is an area for improvement, and we expect the provider to take action.

People are kept safe from harm and abuse. There are robust safeguarding policies in place which reflect latest legislation and best practice guidance. Local safeguarding agencies details are accessible to staff if needed, and staff receive regular training in this area. We reviewed safeguarding records as part of the inspection and are assured care workers know how to appropriately respond when faced with potential safeguarding situations and know correct actions to take. There are risk assessments in place which also identifies potential risks to people. Steps are taken to lower the risks so people can undertake activities they enjoy safely.

People are supported by consistent care workers. The service is organised to allow people to form close positive relationships with a small number of care workers. This ensures care workers can get to know people well and know how best to support them. People speak very highly of the service. Families told us care workers "*Know [their relative] well and make suggestions of activities they know [their relative] will enjoy*". People told us the service is flexible and adapts to changes as much as they are able to. Another relative told us care workers "*Are very adaptable"* to meet the needs of their relative.

There are plentiful supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available for care workers to collect. Care workers take steps to ensure risks of infection are minimised and hygiene practices are good.

Leadership & Management — Good

There are robust recruitment processes in place to ensure care workers are safely recruited. All care workers provide a full employment history and at least two references to show they are suitable for the role. A full Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is made by the service provider. Newly recruited care workers are supported with a thorough induction programme. This ensures care workers receive all training required to be able to support people using the service. All care workers receive regular supervision sessions with a manager. These sessions require care workers to consider their own performance prior to the supervision session. Care worker wellbeing, and work performance is discussed in these sessions. Care workers are offered the opportunity to pursue formal qualifications if they wish to for their own career development. All care workers are registered with Social Care Wales, the workforce regulator.

There are systems in place to ensure consistency for people being supported when care workers are taking annual leave. This ensures people remain supported by familiar care workers so having minimal impacts on people's wellbeing, whilst ensuring care workers have regular access to leave. Care workers attend team meetings, these happen regularly, and care workers are frequently updated of any issues and developments by the service provider. Due to the mostly lone working nature of the service, managers work hard to ensure they communicate with care workers regularly to reduce feelings of isolation and to ensure they feel supported. Care workers are happy working at the service, they told us they feel "*Supported by the manager*" of the service and "*Listened to and respected*"

The Responsible Individual (RI) is a regular presence within the service. They contact people using the service regularly and take their feedback on board. The RI completes a Quality of Care report which sets out the future goals for the service. The statement of purpose ifs regularly updated to ensure is reflects accurately the service that is provided. A service user guide provided to all people using the service outlines what to expect from the service provider and key contacts as well as signposting to other possibly relevant services.

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
Regular review of personal plans ensure the care being provided meets individual needs and wishes.	24/04/25

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2025.
You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.