Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
Care Inspectorate Wales

Inspection Report

Harlequin Homecare (cwm Taff)

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Date(s) of inspection visit(s): 27/08/2025, 28/08/2025, 01/09/2025

Service Information:

Operated by:	Harlequin Homecare Ltd
Care Type:	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered places:	0
Main language(s):	English
Promotion of Welsh language and culture:	The service provider anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and culture needs of people.

Ratings:

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

Summary:

Harlequin Homecare Cwm Taf provides domiciliary care to people in Bridgend and surrounding areas.

The service delivers positive well-being outcomes through a good level of care and support which is delivered to people using the service. Care plans are person-centred and proactive in addressing needs and managing risks. There are systems ensuring safe administration of medication. People report being treated with dignity and respect and feel safe and well-supported. Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place to protect people from harm.

The service is well-managed, with effective governance and quality assurance processes that support continuous improvement. Staff receive appropriate training and are well-supported in their roles. Recruitment practices ensure staff suitability for working with vulnerable people.

Findings:

Well-being — Good

People are treated with dignity and respect and are supported to identify and achieve their personal outcomes. People report having positive and meaningful relationships with care staff, describing them as *“extremely nice,” “marvellous,”* and *“lovely.”* Observations made during the inspection reflected these sentiments, with care staff demonstrating warmth, kindness, and genuine engagement in their interactions. People and their relatives are actively involved in the care planning process, with individual preferences and routines considered. Regular reviews provide opportunities for people to discuss their care, offer feedback, and influence the support they receive.

The service provided is person-centred, meaning care and support is tailored to meet each person's specific needs. Personal plans contain a good level of person-centred detail, including information about personal histories, family relationships, friendships, health conditions, communication preferences, and how people express their wishes. This information is valuable to care staff, as it enables them to deliver care, which is respectful, responsive, and aligned with each person's circumstances and preferences.

People are supported to maintain their health and receive timely, appropriate care. Care and support needs are regularly reviewed, with personal plans updated to reflect any changes. The service works collaboratively with health and social care professionals, ensuring concerns are reported and referrals made as necessary. Guidance from external professionals is implemented and informs people’s personal plans. People are supported to take their prescribed medication in accordance with local procedures, and effective infection control measures are in place to safeguard people from the risk of cross contamination.

Effective systems are in place to safeguard people. Care staff receive ongoing training to maintain the knowledge and skills required for their roles, including safeguarding training. Potential risks to people and care staff are identified, with appropriate risk assessments in place. People have access to clear information on how to raise concerns. A written guide is provided, offering practical details about the service, the care delivered, the complaints process, and access to advocacy services.

Care & Support — Good

The standard of care and support provided is good. People receiving a service, along with their representatives, speak highly of the care staff. Comments include:

- *"The carers are lovely, very friendly, nothing's too much trouble for them. I'm happy with the care provided."*
- *"I get on with all of the staff, they're all very nice to me."*
- *"They work at my pace; I can't speak highly enough of them."*

Personal plans clearly identify individuals' personal outcomes and provide care staff with guidance on how to support people to achieve these. Risks to health and safety are appropriately assessed and managed. Plans are developed in collaboration with people to ensure their views and preferences are captured, and they are reviewed regularly to reflect any changes in needs. Care staff complete daily recordings to evidence the care and support outlined in personal plans is being delivered.

People are protected through infection prevention and control measures. Care staff are equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and receive regular training in infection control protocols. An up-to-date infection control policy is in place and subject to ongoing review. Care staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their responsibilities, with people confirming PPE is consistently used during personal care and other relevant tasks.

Systems are in place to support people with their medication needs. A comprehensive medication policy, aligned with current best practice guidance, underpins service delivery. Care staff are appropriately trained in medication administration and undergo regular competency assessments to ensure safe practice. Routine medication audits are conducted to identify and address any discrepancies. The Medication Administration Record (MAR) charts reviewed were free from errors, indicating people receive their prescribed medication in accordance with clinical recommendations.

People are protected from harm and abuse through proactive safeguarding measures. Pre-assessments are conducted in people's homes prior to the commencement of care to identify and mitigate potential risks and hazards. All incidents, accidents, and significant events are reported to the relevant agencies. Safeguarding concerns are managed in line with established procedures. All staff have completed safeguarding training and are aware of the process for reporting concerns. People are aware of how to raise complaints and express confidence in the management's ability to respond effectively, which reinforces their trust in the service.

Leadership & Management — Good

The service is well-led, with good governance and quality assurance systems which provide effective managerial oversight and support smooth operations. The manager oversees daily service delivery, supported by care coordinators and supervisors who guide care staff. The Responsible Individual (RI) conducts regular visits, gathers feedback from people and staff, and reviews relevant data. Six-monthly quality of care reviews are completed to evaluate performance and identify areas for improvement. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as needed. The service maintains transparency and complies with regulatory requirements, including timely notifications to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) regarding significant events.

Care staff report high levels of job satisfaction. Care staff say they feel well-supported and confident in their roles, thanks to a clear staffing structure and approachable leadership. Care staff provided positive feedback regarding the management saying, *"I think they manage the service very well, they are exceptional, can't fault them. They're very supportive of staff and clients."* And *"The management are great. I have no issues, they're always there and very supportive."* Records also show care staff are receiving the recommended levels of formal support, helping to maintain a positive and professional working environment.

The service uses an electronic monitoring system to track call times and staff punctuality. Feedback from care staff indicates adequate travel time is generally allocated between scheduled visits; however, this can occasionally be affected by external factors such as traffic congestion or adverse weather conditions. People receiving care reported care staff typically arrive on time, although they are not consistently notified when delays occur. No evidence was found to suggest this issue has had a detrimental impact on people using the service. Management acknowledged the concern and provided assurance that it would be investigated, and appropriate measures taken to address it.

People are supported by a staff team with the appropriate expertise, skills, and qualifications for working in the care sector. Upon starting employment, care staff complete a structured induction which includes core training and shadowing experienced colleagues. Care staff reported the induction helped them understand their roles. Care staff are registered with Social Care Wales within the required timeframe. Ongoing training is provided, and records confirm care staff are mostly up to date in key areas such as manual handling, medication administration, infection prevention, and dementia awareness. Recruitment practices are safe, including Disclosure and Barring Service checks. However, some personnel files lacked required information. This was discussed with management, who assured us the issue would be addressed.

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.

CIW has no areas for improvement identified following this inspection.

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

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