

Contrast Care Limited Support Service

1 The Old Telephone Exchange
Drumchardine
Kirkhill
Inverness
IV5 7PX

Telephone: 07738 232 832

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
5 July 2023

Service provided by:
Contrast Care Limited

Service provider number:
SP2015012617

Service no:
CS2015342597

About the service

Contrast Care Limited is a service which is registered to provide a care at home support service to adults or older adults who live in their own homes.

At the time of inspection the service was supporting around 50 people who lived in Inverness, or the rural areas around Beaulieu, Muir of Ord and Conon Bridge.

Services were arranged through NHS Highland, and included some people who were being supported to manage their Self Directed Support budget under Option 2, often referred to as an Individual Service Fund.

Contrast Care also works in partnership with Highland Hospice and NHS Highland to deliver a responsive palliative care service to people in their own homes.

About the inspection

This was an announced (short notice) inspection which took place between 28 June and 4 July 2023. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 13 people using the service and 12 of their family representatives;
- spoke with 12 staff and management;
- observed practice and daily life;
- reviewed documents;
- spoke with 6 visiting professionals.

Key messages

- People who use Contrast Care Ltd can expect to receive a very good standard of care and support.
- There was a high level of satisfaction about the care and support they provided.
- Managers and leaders were skilled, and were committed to continually improving the service.
- Staff were motivated, trained and well supported.
- Managers and staff worked effectively with other agencies, including to deliver a responsive and compassionate palliative care service.
- People's personal plans were suitably detailed and reflected people's support needs.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided by Contrast Care and how these supported positive outcomes for people. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

People experienced care and support with compassion because there were warm, encouraging and positive relationships with staff.

People and their families told us that they were involved in planning the service they received, and that they benefitted from a consistent staff team. This meant that staff knew people well and had a good understanding of their needs and preferences. People received a copy of the staff rotas, they knew who was coming in advance, and were mostly kept informed of any changes. People told us that even if there were staff changes, their support continued to be delivered by staff who they were familiar with, and in whom they had confidence. It was evident that this was a reliable service, with people experiencing the right support, at the right time. This meant that people benefitted from continuity of care.

People felt that they were treated as individuals, and with respect and compassion, by the the Contrast Care team. Feedback from people using this service was overwhelmingly positive. Common themes in the feedback were quotes such as:

"We cannot sing their praises enough".

"They are brilliant".

"Couldn't ask for better"!

"Very happy with the service".

"Absolutely delighted with Contrast Care - care is excellent".

People were supported in a way that enabled them to get the most out of life. We observed staff providing well-paced, person-centred care. Staff understood people's communication needs, and used their knowledge to inform how they supported each person. Support visits felt unhurried, and it was evident that many people valued the companionship offered by staff during these visits. One person told us that "staff are cheery and always smiling which helps if I am feeling a bit down", and others mentioned the "banter " as being an important feature for them. While appreciating that flexibility could be constrained in this type of service, people described every effort being made by management to adjust times and provision in accordance with people's preferences and needs, thus enabling people to maintain their previous routines.

People's health benefited from their care and support. Staff knew people well and they were able to pick up when they needed increased support. When people's needs changed the service was proactive in adapting support to meet those changing needs, and in advocating for increased service provision where this was appropriate.

Across the service, there was very good liaison with other agencies and health and social care colleagues, to support people to maintain their health and independence. Professionals were exceptionally positive about this service. This included the mainstream home care provision, as well as the specialist provision for people with palliative care needs. For example, we were told by one health colleague that she had witnessed first-hand the relationship between relatives and Contrast Care staff and that 'it was wonderful'. Other external colleagues told us that they found them to be 'incredibly professional and to make every effort to meet people's needs ' and also that 'communication is so good - they provide updates all the time'.

The service took appropriate action as needed when there were concerns about people's wellbeing or safety, this included making adult support and protection referrals, and working alongside other agencies such as social work to help keep people safe.

When support was needed with medication, it was administered by staff who had received training, felt knowledgeable, and whose competence in this area of practice had been confirmed. Staff had been trained in moving and handling and used equipment in a confident and competent manner, and effective teamwork was evident when people needed significant assistance. Similarly, people were supported to eat and drink in a well-paced and sensitive manner that encouraged them to enjoy their meal. All this contributed to ensuring people received very good care and support.

We sampled people's care plans and found that they included a good level of detail to guide staff in how to provide care in a way that was personal to each person. People were involved in reviews and in making decisions about their care. Plans were person-centred and reflected people's care needs.

People could be confident that staff understood the importance of infection prevention and control. Staff had received infection prevention and control training, and they used, and disposed of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in line with good practice. Staff were attentive to handwashing on entering people's homes, as well as between tasks. Therefore, we were confident that the risk of infection spread was reduced, and that people were kept safer as a result.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of monitoring and managing people's care and how these supported positive outcomes for people. We therefore evaluated this key question as very good.

This service was led well. The service benefitted from a skilled and experienced manager and senior team who offered strong leadership to their staff. All staff we spoke with commented positively that the leadership team kept in regular contact with them offering appropriate support and guidance. The manager and senior team had a good overview of what was working well in the service, and had good oversight of staff practice on a day-to-day basis.

There was a very open and positive culture across the service. The leadership team were visible and approachable in the day to day service delivery. This helped people feel confident to raise issues. People told us that the staff and managers were very approachable and responsive to any issues. People felt confident that they were listened to. The staff teams worked together in respectful and supportive ways as part of a positive culture that was developed and led by the management team.

We were confident staff had access to appropriate training to support and develop their skills. There were arrangements in place for staff training, including a supportive induction process. Good use was made of staff management and support tools such as supervision, appraisals observations and staff meetings to monitor and develop practice. People using the service, therefore, benefitted from a competent and professionally managed staff group who had the necessary skills to deliver their support.

A range of quality assurance processes helped the manager to continually evaluate the service based on people's experiences. Any issues identified helped to prioritise, direct and support improvement. Some audits were in place, and there was a comprehensive improvement plan in place to support service

development. People were consulted through an annual survey, regular reviews, telephone calls, and through managerial involvement in direct service delivery. Information received was evaluated and informed the improvement plan. This meant that people's experiences could continue to be positive, and the service would continue to develop.

There had been a number of planned developments in this service. Of particular note has been their successful involvement in an ongoing project providing responsive care at home services to people with palliative support needs. Their skilled and committed management approach has ensured that people experienced a compassionate and caring service.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

People experiencing care should have their care needs, including other options of support, such as Individual Service Funds, included in the provider's written agreement. This is to ensure that the provider's roles and responsibilities are clarified and people experiencing care know how their support will be provided.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'. (HSCS 1:15).

This area for improvement was made on 4 December 2020.

Action taken since then

People using this service, including through options such as individual service funds, had clear information available about when and how their support would be provided. Statutory agencies were appropriately involved in reviews about people's service provision, and appropriately deferred to in decision-making regarding money matters relating to this type of funding arrangement.

This area of improvement has consequently been met.

Previous area for improvement 2

The provider should ensure that prior to withdrawing the service a review is offered to the person and their representatives so that everyone is clear about the reasons. In addition, the provider should consider, where possible, people have sufficient time and support to move to a new service.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard (HSCS) which state that:
'I have enough time and support to plan any move to a new service'. (HSCS 4:13).

This area for improvement was made on 4 December 2020.

Action taken since then

We were satisfied that the service appropriately involved people, their representatives and statutory agencies in timely discussions regarding their service provision. This included where there was any potential for the service to be withdrawn.

This area of improvement has consequently been met.

Complaints

Please see Care Inspectorate website (www.careinspectorate.com) for details of complaints about the service which have been upheld.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
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