



Inspection Report on

1st Grade Care (West Wales Branch)

**Office 3
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SA11 1NB**

Date Inspection Completed

05/03/2024

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About 1st Grade Care (West Wales Branch)

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	1st Grade Care Ltd
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	[8 June 2022]
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	The 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

The service providers are currently operating in two areas across West Wales, Carmarthenshire, and Ceredigion. We found the standard of care and support, and management oversight varies between these areas. We found in Ceredigion people appear to be experiencing positive wellbeing outcomes, and communication between the manager, people and their families is good. In Carmarthenshire people are experiencing poor outcomes which is having an impact on their mental and physical wellbeing.

The service provider has policies and procedures in place to provide oversight and governance to the service. However, we found these are not consistently implemented in the Carmarthenshire area, leading to poor planning and assessment of care and support, and impacting on people and their families. This is having an impact on people's health and wellbeing and placing them at risk. The service provider must take immediate action to address these issues.

Well-being

People have varying experiences of their physical and mental health needs being met as well as their emotional wellbeing. This is often dependent on which area of the service provides their care and support. People are experiencing good outcomes in the Ceredigion area, and feedback from people and their families is positive. People told us the care staff are “*gentle and polite*” “*punctual and caring.*” We found call times and durations in this area reflect people’s personal plans and people are generally satisfied with the care and support they receive.

In contrast feedback from people and their families is poor in the Carmarthenshire area, and people are experiencing poor physical and mental wellbeing as a result of the standard of care and support they are receiving. People told us calls are frequently late or not attended by care staff. Care staff do not consistently receive the relevant training to enable them to meet the needs of people and has placed people at risk of physical injury due to poor manual handling techniques. The service provider has not taken appropriate steps to ensure there are enough skilled, qualified, and trained care staff in order to meet people’s needs, and people are experiencing late or missed calls resulting in a lack of personal care being completed, along with missed meals and medication.

Some people who require medication are not receiving this in line with their care plans and poor recording of medication makes it difficult to guarantee medical conditions are being managed effectively.

People are not always supported to have control over their day-to-day life and their rights and entitlements promoted. In Ceredigion we found positive responses to people’s feedback, and we saw a complaint received was investigated and responded to appropriately and in a timely manner. This was not reciprocated across the rest of the service where we were informed of complaints being made to the service provider which had not been responded to and investigated. Furthermore, people in Carmarthenshire told us they are not receiving care in line with their needs and preferences, and at times, this is causing significant distress to people and resulting in basic care needs not being met. At the time of inspection, the statement of purpose for the service is out of date and therefore did not provide people with key information as to how the service operates and geographical areas it covers. The service provider has since provided an update to statement of purpose.

Care and Support

There is a variation in the quality of care and support provided between areas, and we found there are differences in the quality of documentation between Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion offices. The personal plans in Ceredigion provide clear and comprehensive guidance for care staff to enable them to safely complete their duties and meet people's day-to-day needs. Personal plans are highly personalised and focus on meeting people's wellbeing outcomes. During the inspection, we found the personal plans in Carmarthenshire have some positive qualities. Personal plans have a focus on relationship building, and contain people's preferences for food and drinks, as well as an outline of what support is required in each call visit. However, the personal plans viewed for this area do not provide clear detailed guidance for care staff to meet the day-to-day needs of people. Although, the provider has a system in place for monitoring and reviewing people's personal plans, we found information gathered through review was not present in people's personal plans, placing people at risk of harm and neglect.

The provider has processes in place for assessing people's needs prior to commencing care and support. We found not all assessments provide comprehensive information about people's care and support needs. The assessments used are not sufficient for enabling care staff to understand the extent of people's needs. This is particularly an issue for health conditions and the administration of medication. Although, the provider has a policy and procedures in place for the handling and administration of medication, we found that medication is not being safely managed. At the time of inspection, the service has limited information in place to record the administration of medication. People's plans do not all contain sufficient information about their medication and some people's assessments contain misinformation about their medication needs. The service is not currently undertaking any audits of medication and has missed opportunities to address missed medications. This could impact on people's medical conditions and impair their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Care staff complete digital call logs to capture the care and support delivered to people during each call visit. We found most calls attended were for the agreed duration within both geographical areas. However, people in Carmarthenshire cannot be assured they are receiving the care and support outlined in their personal plans. People's call logs showed that not all aspects of planned care and support are being delivered consistently. We viewed call logs for some people in Carmarthenshire which highlight care tasks that are not completed, leading to poor outcomes for people. This is having an impact on people's health and well-being and placing them at risk and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address this issue.

People are not consistently safeguarded from harm, abuse, or neglect. The service provider has a policy and procedure in place to safeguard people from harm and abuse. However, at the time of inspection, we found the Carmarthenshire area was not operating in line with

their policy and procedures and had failed to make notifications to the regulator about several allegations of abuse and harm against staff members. We found there is a consistent pattern of poor practice being identified by external professionals and families, and the provider has failed to take action in response to this. This is having an impact on people's health and well-being and placing them at risk and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address this issue.

Leadership and Management

The service provider has processes in place to provide oversight and governance to the service, though these have not been sufficient in order to identify and address significant failings within the delivery of care to people. During the inspection, we found concerns for the health and safety of people, many of which have previously been brought to the attention of the service provider. The service provider has failed to notify the regulator of any allegations of abuse made against staff and reviews of care records indicated people were not receiving care in line with care plans, such as food not being cut up as required. Records indicate calls are often late in the Carmarthenshire area and some are missed, furthermore essential records to evidence the support care staff receive are not available due to issues with access to the record management system. We found at the time of inspection, the service provider had not notified the service regulator that the service was operational and the service was not provided in conjunction with the statement of purpose. The provider has a statement of purpose (SoP) in place for the service, however at the time of inspection the SoP stated that the service is non-operational and did not contain information relating to all areas operating within the footprint. The concerns around the provision of the service and service provider's oversight is having an impact on people's health and well-being and placing them at risk and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address this issue.

Feedback about care workers is mixed. Some people and families in Carmarthenshire told us care staff are "*polite and positive but appear to lack training.*" Feedback from families in Ceredigion suggests staff are "*caring.*" We found care staff do not receive frequent support and supervision and there is little oversight of care delivery from the service provider. Care staff have not all received appropriate training to carry out their roles competently and confidently. This is having an impact on care delivery and placing people at risk of harm. Feedback from care workers in Carmarthenshire is poor. Care workers told us they are required to undertake moving and handling tasks without training, and one care worker told us their induction was poor as they did not have opportunities to shadow shifts. We found the coordination of care calls and the lack of suitably trained care staff impacted on the care people received. In the Carmarthen area, a high number of calls were late. This resulted in people's care needs not being met promptly, impacting on skin integrity, poor medication management and some people missing meals. Furthermore, where specific gender of care staff had been agreed at the point of contract, this was not always met resulting in some people getting distressed and not having their personal care needs met. Furthermore, we were informed of other key staff roles such as the administrator, which have not been replaced and is impacted on the running of the service. This is having an impact on people's health and well-being and placing them at risk and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address this issue.

Feedback from the branch managers is positive, stating that they feel supported by the RI. The RI is carrying out regulatory visits to the service however they have not demonstrated

sufficient processes for providing clear oversight and governance to the service. The RI has not completed an assessment of the quality of care and has missed opportunities to address areas of poor quality of care and support delivery. This is having an impact on people's health and well-being and placing them at risk and we have therefore issued a priority action notice. The provider must take immediate action to address this issue.

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
6	The service provider has not ensured the service is provided with sufficient care, competence, and skill, having regard to the statement of purpose. The service provider must take action to ensure there is sufficient and effective oversight of the delivery of care and support, and staff are suitably supported and trained to carry out their duties.	New
21	We found that there are poor outcomes for people receiving support in the Carmarthen area of the footprint. The provider has failed to ensure that care and support is provided in a way which protects, promotes and maintains the safety and well-being of individuals through improper oversight and governance of care delivery.	New
26	The service provider has not provided the service in a way which ensures that individuals are safe and are	New

	protected from abuse, neglect and improper treatment. The service provider must follow their own safeguarding policy and procedure as well as Government safeguarding procedures in order to safeguard people from further harm and abuse.	
34	The service provider has failed to ensure that at all times a sufficient number of suitably qualified, trained, skilled, competent and experienced staff are deployed to work at the service, which is impacting people's physical and mental wellbeing. The service provider must ensure there are sufficient numbers of qualified, trained, skilled, competent and experienced staff to do provide safe and good quality care to people.	New
66	The responsible individual has not provided adequate supervision of the management of the service, nor analysis and oversight of the service delivery which has led to poor outcomes for people receiving care and support. The provider must ensure that the RI is supported and enabled to carry out their duties effectively and in a timely manner.	New

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

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