Checking services for people living in their own homes

This is an Easier to Read version of our report on our home care inspection programme.
What is in this booklet

Who are we and what do we do? 1

What works well 3

What needs to get better? 10

Other things we found 15

Next steps 16
Who are we and what do we do?

We are the CQC, (Care Quality Commission), we check health and social care services in England.

We know that more and more people are getting care in their own homes and each year we have more home care services giving that care.

Because of this, we decided to do a special check on how good home care services are.

We also wanted to test the way we listened to what people had to say about their services. This included:

- people who used services
- carers
- family.
We also checked that services met our rules about good care and used the things we found out to make our checking better.

We checked 250 home care services:

- 208 were private
- 22 were run by the council
- 20 were run by voluntary organisations.

The size of services was very different, some supported less than 5 people, one supported 700.

We found 3 out of 4 services were very good.
What works well

We saw a lot of good work and we want others to do these things to make their services better as well.

Things that work well:

- people using services get to meet new care workers before they start
- care workers not changing often and when they do people being told it would happen
- people being asked to say how they want things done, these are then written down so everyone knows what to do
- services using different ways to find out what people think about their service
● the things people say are used to make the service better and people are told about these changes

● managers talking to people who use their services

● having good information about services and choices, and people explaining them

● care workers always knock and say they have arrived

● staff always wearing badges to say who they are
• care workers know about locks and keeping people safe

• care workers are kind, friendly and gentle

• care workers respecting peoples homes and things in them

• family and carers are involved

• care plans are kept in peoples homes, are up to date and have good detail

• care workers filling in daily logs with good information
• reviews and risk assessments are often done and care plans are changed to meet changing needs and wants

• staff understanding the illnesses people have and are able to give the right amount of support when it is needed

• staff knowing a lot about dementia

• care workers talking to each other

• care workers trained before they start work and keeping up to date

• people being given information about abuse and knowing who to contact if they have any worries
- care workers knowing what abuse is, including not giving care in the right way

- all staff having DBS checks. (DBS, or the Disclosure and Barring Service, is the new name for CRB checks to see if workers have broken the law)

- services getting references for workers

- new workers are checked and follow workers who know what they are doing for a while

- staff not being asked to do things they don’t know how to do
● staff having team meetings and getting information that keeps them up to date

● managers checking how good services are

● the things staff say are used to make services better

● complaints are looked into properly and changes are made to make services better

● people making complaints are told what happens.
We found 2 good signs of a good service.

1. We asked services if they had written down what people like to be called.

9 out of 10 services had written this down.

When they had written it down, nearly all of them passed our check on respecting and involving people.

When they had not written it down only 8 out of 10 services passed the check.

2. We also asked if information about abuse and how to tell someone about it was given to service users.

8 out of 10 services did give out this information.

When services had given this information out, nearly all of them passed our check on keeping people safe from abuse.

When they had not given it out only 9 out of 10 services passed the check.
What needs to get better?

We had some worries about services in 5 areas.

1. Respecting and involving people who use services.

These included:

- care workers changing all the time
- not enough information for people about the choices they had
- people not being told about changes to their visits.

2. The care and well being of people who use services.

These included:

- workers missing or being late for visits, especially at weekends
● staff not knowing enough, especially about dementia

● not properly checking and reviewing what people need

● care plans with not enough detail in them

● visits needing 2 care workers not organised well enough

● family and carers not involved.

These included:

- not passing on worries about abuse
- out of date rules about how to tell people about abuse
- staff not knowing enough about keeping people safe or telling others when they think something is wrong (whistleblowing).

4. Support for staff.

These included:

- staff feeling they didn't get enough support
- staff too rushed to do care properly
● not having time to travel between people

● extra visits suddenly added to a busy day

● not enough meetings with managers to talk about how well staff are doing

● people not getting the training they need

● training for new staff not finished or not good enough.

● staff not knowing how to use equipment properly
5. Services checking to see how good they are.

These included:

- not having a proper way of checking services
- people who use services were not asked what they thought of them
- nothing was done when people said something was wrong
- no record was kept of visits that were late or missed
- not having clear rules about what to do when there was a complaint or problem.
Other things we found

There were some types of service that were better than others. These were:

- services that helped people get independent again after an illness more often passed our checks on keeping people safe

- services that gave over 10 hours a week support to people more often passed our checks on checking how good they were

- services supporting people with dementia more often passed our checks on keeping people safe and supporting staff.
Next steps

We have seen good care that respects people’s dignity and rights.

A lot of older people, carers and their family told us how good their care workers were.

We have also seen services with good management and rules.

Home care services can use the things we found out to make their services safer and better.
We have found some things that services still need to try harder to sort out. These are:

1. Late and missed visits.

2. Care workers changing all the time.

3. Not enough support for staff to do their work.

4. Not enough time to travel between people’s homes.

5. Poor care planning and missed reviews.

6. Staff not knowing enough about how they should be keeping people safe and telling others when things are wrong (whistleblowing).
We also found some services that were not good enough at checking how good they were including asking what people and their carers and family thought.

This is especially important when people might not want to complain because they are worried about:

- getting their care workers into trouble
- getting into trouble themselves or it being taken out on them.

Some services need to get better at these things.
Artwork is from the Valuing People Clipart collection and cannot be used anywhere else without written permission from Inspired Services Publishing Ltd.

To contact Inspired Services:

www.inspiredservices.org.uk
Where we are

The Care Quality Commission's head office is at

Finsbury Tower
103-105 Bunhill Row
London EC1Y 8TG

How to contact us

Phone: 03000 616161
(calls charged at normal rates)

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Please contact us if you would like a summary of this publication in other formats or languages.