

Mrs Amanda Jackson

# Fountains Homecare

## Inspection report

Hurworth Grange  
41 Hurworth Road, Hurworth Place  
Darlington  
County Durham  
DL2 2BN

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Tel: 01325721160

Website: [www.fountainshomecare.co.uk](http://www.fountainshomecare.co.uk)

## Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good ●
Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service effective?	Good ●
Is the service caring?	Good ●
Is the service responsive?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Good ●

# Summary of findings

## Overall summary

Fountains Homecare is a domiciliary care service. It provides personal care for people living in their own homes in Hurworth, Darlington and surrounding areas. The service currently provides care and support to five people.

The service has a registered manager who is also the registered provider and they were involved directly in the running of the business and the provision of care. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered Nominated individuals, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

At our inspection in January 2015 we asked the provider to take action to make improvements in relation to staff supervision, staff recruitment and quality assurance and this action has been completed.

People were protected by the service's approach to safeguarding and whistle blowing. People who used the service told us that they were safe, could raise concerns if they needed to and were listened to by staff. Staff were aware of safeguarding procedures, could describe what they would do if they thought somebody was being mistreated and said that management listened and acted upon staff feedback.

People we spoke with who received personal care felt the staff were knowledgeable, skilled and their care and support package met their needs. People who used the service told us that they had a small team of staff, who were reliable and arrived when expected. Staff confirmed that they were not rushed and had time to provide the care people expected.

Staff told us they were supported by their management and could get help and support if they needed it. Staff did receive supervision through observations and discussions that were recorded.

The service had systems to ensure staff were appropriately recruited, trained and supported. The service was introducing the Care Certificate for new staff and staff were being supported to achieve National Vocational Qualifications in health and social care.

The staff undertook the management of medicines safely and in line with people's care plans. The service had health and safety related procedures, including systems for reporting and recording accidents and incidents. The care records we looked at included risk assessments, which had been completed to identify any risks associated with the person's environment and delivering the person's care.

People and staff told us when they raised any issues they were dealt with promptly and professionally and everyone we spoke with knew how to speak to the management team at the office if they had any concerns.

There were quality assurance systems in place to gain the views of people using the service and staff and the

registered manager would discuss developments and issues together.

The service was an active part of the local community. We saw that the registered manager and staff were committed to supporting people to remain in their own homes with support and worked closely with local GP and district nursing services and other specialist services.

## The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

### Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service was safe.

We found that there were effective processes in place to make sure people were protected from bullying, harassment, avoidable harm and abuse. Staff took appropriate action to raise and investigate incidents and concerns.

Effective recruitment procedures were in place.

Risk assessments were undertaken of the environment and personal risks.

Appropriate systems were in place for the management and administration of medicines.

### Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Staff were trained and supported to deliver the care and support people required.

Records showed and staff understood the importance of obtaining people's consent prior to any tasks being undertaken and staff had been trained in the Mental Capacity Act.

Where the service provided support with mealtimes, we saw that people were provided with effective nutritional support by trained staff.

### Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

We heard the staff had developed positive relationships with people and were caring and kind.

People told us their privacy and dignity were very well respected.

People were supported to retain their independence and we heard examples of the service supporting people being

rehabilitated with help from other professionals.

### **Is the service responsive?**

**Good** ●

The service was responsive.

People's care plans contained individual, person centred information about their needs and preferences.

Care was provided on an individual basis, based on people's individual needs, with changes being made to reflect changing circumstances.

People had been provided with information on how to make formal complaints and said that they were listened to by the registered manager.

### **Is the service well-led?**

**Good** ●

The service was well-led.

People received a reliable and caring service, and expressed good levels of satisfaction with their care.

The service sought regular reviews of client care and feedback.

The management team were immediately responsive to the issues raised from a previous inspection and had put them right quickly.

# Fountains Homecare

## Detailed findings

### Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection checked whether the Nominated individual is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

We inspected Fountains Homecare on 18 May 2016. The registered provider was given 48 hours' notice because the location provides a domiciliary care service with the registered manager also providing care; we needed to be sure that someone would be at the registered office. At the time of our inspection visit the service provided care and support to five people and there were four care staff members employed.

The inspection team consisted of one adult social care inspector.

Before the inspection we reviewed all the information we held about the service including notifications and complaints (of which there were zero). There were no concerns raised from the local authority service commissioners we spoke with.

The provider was not asked to complete a provider information return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make.

We obtained information to contact people who used the service during the course of the inspection and sought people's permission to consult with them.

During the inspection we contacted three people who used the service and two family carers. We also spoke with the registered manager and a support worker and a healthcare professional who worked with the service for one person's needs. We looked at three people's care records, two recruitment records for staff providing personal care, the training chart and training records, as well as records relating to the management of the service.

## Is the service safe?

### Our findings

The people who used the personal care services told us that they felt Fountains Homecare staff delivered safe care.

People said; "I feel comfortable and safe with them," and "I knew who and when they would be coming."

During the inspection we spoke with the registered manager and one of the support staff who provided personal care. The staff we spoke with were aware of the different types of abuse and what would constitute poor practice. The staff member we spoke with told us they had confidence in the registered manager responding appropriately to any concerns. We saw from records that abuse and safeguarding was discussed with staff during supervision and staff meetings.

A staff member told us; "I would immediately report to the manager and follow the safeguarding procedure."

Staff told us that they had received safeguarding training at induction. One staff member said they understood the whistle blowing procedure and would not hesitate to follow this if it was required. The service had a safeguarding policy that had been regularly reviewed and included all the local contact details for safeguarding issues. Staff told us that they felt confident in whistleblowing (telling someone) if they had any worries.

We looked at the arrangements that were in place for risk assessment and safety. The service provided a copy of their health and safety policy. This set out the health and safety duties related to the service and its staff, and referenced other relevant policies and procedures. The care records we looked at included risk assessments, which had been completed to identify any risks associated with delivering the person's care. These risk assessments had been personalised to each individual and covered areas such as moving and handling. The risk assessments provided staff with the guidance they needed to help people to remain safe.

The two staff files we looked at showed us the service operated a safe and effective recruitment system. The staff recruitment process included completion of an application form, a formal interview, previous employer references and a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) which was carried out before staff started work. The DBS helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children.

Through discussions with people and staff members and the review of records, we found there were enough staff with the right experience and training to meet the needs of the people who used the personal care service. One relative told us; "My relative had a laugh with them and felt very comfortable with the staff."

We found that all the staff had completed recognised safe handling of medication qualifications.

The service provided us with a copy of their policy on managing medicines, which provided information on

how the service assisted people with their medicines. The training record the registered manager gave us showed that all staff who provided care had completed training on the safe handling of medicines.

We looked at the information that was available in people's care records relating to their medicines and the help provided by care staff. Medicine administration records (MARs) were in place to record the medicines staff had administered. The records we looked at had been completed fully and showed that people had been receiving their medicines safely and as prescribed. We recommended to the registered manager that any hand written entries onto MARs should be signed by two staff members to ensure this adhered to best practice guidelines.

The staff we spoke with told us in the event of a medical emergency an ambulance would be called and that staff would follow the emergency operator instructions until an ambulance arrived. Staff we spoke with told us they had undertaken training in first aid. We saw records to confirm this was this training was up to date. This meant that staff had the knowledge and skills to deal with foreseeable emergencies.

We also looked at the arrangements that were in place for managing accidents and incidents and preventing unnecessary risk of reoccurrence. Staff we spoke with told us that any incidents or accidents were reported to the office, so that they could be recorded and monitored. We discussed accident monitoring with the registered manager. They showed us how individual accidents were recorded and reviewed within 24 hours and any actions taken to reduce risks.

## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

We contacted two people who directly used the personal care service and two family carers, all of whom told us they had confidence in the staff's abilities to provide good care. They told us the staff from Fountains Homecare were able to deliver the care and could readily carry out the tasks they had been requested from their assessment.

People told us they were very happy with the arrangements. People said; "My carer is very competent, helpful and chatty. I am happy with their company," and a relative said; "We are as a family extremely happy because [name] is!"

We looked at the arrangements that were in place to ensure that staff had the training and skills they needed to do their jobs and care for people effectively. All of the people who used the service and the relatives we spoke with told us that their regular care staff understood what people needed and appeared to have the appropriate skills. For example one person told us; "Oh yes they know what they are doing." A relative also told us; "Because they are a small team they can give you that extra time if you need it and nothing is too much trouble."

From our discussions with staff and review of staff files we found people had obtained suitable qualifications and experience to meet the requirements of their posts. All of the staff we spoke with provided personal care and told us they had received a range of training that was relevant to their role and this training was up to date. We found staff had completed mandatory training such as first aid, safe handling of medicines, moving and handling training as well as role specific training such as working with people who were at the end of their life and communicating effectively.

One staff member said; "It feels like I've had loads of training but it's been good."

We saw induction processes were in place to support newly recruited staff. This included completing all of the mandatory training, reviewing the service's policies and procedures and shadowing more experienced staff. The service was implementing the new Care Certificate and the registered manager told us that they would complete this with all staff not just new inductees.

Staff we spoke with during the inspection told us that they received supervision. Supervision is a process, usually a meeting, by which an organisation provides guidance and support to staff. We saw both supervision meetings and spot checks on staff practice were now carried out by the registered manager.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that as far as possible people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible. No applications had been made by the service to the Court of Protection.

We observed that the service had sought consent from people to the care and support they were provided

with and also that prior to administering medicines, people's consent was sought.

Fountains Homecare staff supported people to have meals. This was in the form of preparing foods purchased by the person or family when they visited. They were not responsible for monitoring whether people's weights were within normal ranges but would raise concerns with visiting healthcare professionals such as district nurses when needed. Some of the staff assisted with shopping but this was to obtain items the person had listed not to design the shopping list. In other situations it was the person's relative or carer who ensured they had an adequate diet.

We saw records to confirm staff liaised with visiting healthcare professionals such as people's G.P or district nurses and took instruction from these staff. We spoke with a professional from the British Heart Foundation (BHF). The service supported one person who was recovering from major heart surgery and who had worked with the BHF to implement a programme of rehabilitation. The BHF told us; "I have never known carers so good. They are fantastic and so supportive of [name]." We found the staff reviewed care records regularly and included any new healthcare professional advice or instructions in the care records. This meant that people who used the service were supported to obtain the health care that they needed.

People we spoke with told us the staff were considerate and really interested in ensuring they remained well, so encouraged them to have regular health checks. One staff member told us; "One person I support had a very limited diet, I have encouraged them and prepared some different foods and they are eating much better now."

## Is the service caring?

### Our findings

People we spoke with who received personal care said they were very happy with the care and support provided. We found a range of support could be offered, which could mean staff visited once a day or several times a day to assist with personal care tasks; or completed domestic tasks or companionship. All visits were of a minimum of half an hour and people and staff told us that care and support was not rushed.

One relative said; "The carer who helps me look after my relative is a very dedicated worker, smart, funny and very reliable."

People said; "They are marvellous, I could not have better," and "Nothing is too much trouble for them."

We reviewed three sets of care records and saw people had signed to say they agreed with their assessment and plan of care. The people we spoke with were readily able to discuss what type of support they received and how they had gone through with staff exactly what their needs were and how these were best supported as part of their assessment.

We found that each person had a detailed assessment, which highlighted their needs. The assessment could be seen to have led to a care plan being developed, which we found from our discussions with staff and individuals met their needs. People told us they had been involved in making decisions about their care and support and developing their care plans.

We looked at the arrangements in place to ensure that people were involved in decisions about their day to day lives and provided with appropriate information. The care records we viewed included information about Fountains Homecare and the services they provided. Everyone we spoke with as part of this inspection had information about the service included in the front of their care file, so that they could access it at any time.

The people we spoke with told us staff always treated them with dignity and respect. People found staff were attentive, showed compassion, were patient and had developed good working relationships with them. One family carer told us; "I feel able to cope with the care my relative needs and the support is fantastic and has given me the confidence I was lacking."

The staff we spoke with explained how they maintained the privacy and dignity of the people that they cared for and told us that this was a fundamental part of their role.

The registered manager regularly contacted people to ensure they were happy with the staff and service. The feedback the service received showed this was the case.

The registered manager and staff that we spoke with showed genuine concern for people's wellbeing. It was evident from discussion that all staff knew people very well, including their personal history preferences, likes and dislikes and had used this knowledge to form very strong therapeutic relationships. We found that

staff worked in a variety of ways to ensure people received care and support that suited their needs.

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

People told us that Fountains Homecare staff always turned up as planned and that if, on odd occasions, they had been delayed by a few minutes the staff rang them to say why this had happened. People told us it was very rare for staff not to turn up on time. Relatives and people using the service told us that they were kept well informed of any changes to the appointments.

Staff told us they encouraged and supported people to remain as independent as possible. The service provided a minimum half hour call and staff told us they did not feel rushed and were able to have meaningful time with people. Staff also said they were able to have sufficient time allocated to travel between calls.

The registered manager outlined the assessment process and we confirmed from the review of care records that this mirrored what had been outlined to us. We found that people's needs were assessed upon referral to establish if the service were able to meet the person's needs. Information was provided about person's care and support needs by, either the person or their carer or family member. This enabled the registered manager to produce a care plan. One relative told us; "The carers have taken time to get to know my relatives preferences thoroughly."

We found that care plans were person-centred and updated on a regular basis. We found that systems were in place to monitor people's needs and ensure the care records were accurate.

Staff visited people at defined times during the day or week and we heard that should someone appear unwell when they visited staff take prompt action to deal with this concern. One staff member told us; "I always read the care plan. Everyone has different needs and if you didn't read it and missed out something no matter how small it could have a massive impact, like if someone had a nut allergy for example."

Care staff told us they were allocated the same people, which meant they could build very good working relationships. One relative said; "[Staff name] has interacted with the family really well. [Person] enjoys her company and he always feels confident when out with [staff name]."

The people who used the service we spoke with told us they were given a copy of the complaints procedure when they first started to receive the service. We looked at the complaint procedure and saw it informed people how and who to make a complaint to and gave people timescales for action. We spoke with people who used the service who told us that if they were unhappy they would not hesitate in speaking with the management team. The service had not received any complaints since our last visit. The management team told us that if they received any concern or issue no matter how minor, they immediately contacted the person via telephone or a visit to discuss and address their issues. They stated by undertaking this pro-active strategy that was why the perhaps the service did not have any formal complaints.

## Is the service well-led?

### Our findings

People told us the service was well led. Comments included; "The manager [name] is excellent, really friendly and helpful," and a home carer told us how the registered manager often popped in to have a cup of tea with them and this was a big support to them.

There was a registered manager in place who was also the registered provider. The registered manager regularly carried out care visits and stated this was beneficial to them. "I enjoy doing the care, you can pick things up and you get more feedback from people. It also helps as you see the care plans more often."

The registered manager discussed the process they used for checking if people were happy with the service and showed us the system. We saw they had regularly contacted people to check that the service was meeting their needs and had a system in place to make sure each person was contacted at least monthly via telephone or visit. People using the service told us they knew the registered manager and knew how to contact her if they needed to. This showed people were consulted.

The service had undertaken a survey questionnaire with people who used the service. This was to take place three times a year and so would include feedback specific to the first contact with the service and first meeting. The comments on this survey from people using the service and their families were very positive.

The registered manager was fully involved in the day to day management and provision of the care service. The registered manager had very detailed knowledge of people's needs and explained how they continually aimed to provide people with good quality care that was responsive to their needs. Staff told us that the registered manager was open, accessible and approachable. One staff member said; "If I need anything at all I just get in touch and things are never a problem."

The service had undertaken meetings for staff but the registered manager told us that at the present time with a small team of people, they tended to communicate with each other via telephone and when staff popped into the office to hand in time sheets and to collect supplies.

We also looked at how Fountains Homecare Care was meeting the requirement to notify CQC of certain incidents and events. Notifiable incidents are events that the service has a legal requirement to inform CQC about and when we prepared for this inspection we reviewed what the service had submitted and on viewing records on our visit we found the service had submitted all appropriate notifications.

We observed the registered manager dealing with a telephone enquiry. They clearly explained the service Fountains Homecare provided and offered further information and an invite to meet the person and their family. The registered manager was extremely professional and courteous in their manner.

Any accidents and incidents that involved the services staff and people using the service were monitored to ensure any trends were identified. The registered manager told us how they reviewed all aspects of the service and amended them where they felt improvements could be made. For example, at a previous

inspection the service was found not to have carried out staff supervision adequately. The registered manager had undertaken staff supervision and spot checks on staff performance and attitude as well as recording feedback from people about the quality of the staff. The registered manager told us this inspection had helped them highlight improvements the service needed to make and to organise paperwork more thoroughly.