

Santa Monica Healthcare Group Limited

# Santa Monica Healthcare Group

## Inspection report

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## 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

The inspection took place on 4 and 8 March 2016 and was announced. Santa Monica Healthcare is a domiciliary care service that provides a personal care to people living in their own home. On the day of the inspection fifteen people were supported by Santa Monica Healthcare with their personal care and support needs.

The service had a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, 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.

During our inspection we observed staff within the office who were friendly and relaxed and there was a calm and pleasant atmosphere. Information we requested was supplied promptly, records were clear, easy to follow and detailed. People, those who matter to them, staff and professionals all spoke positively about the service. Comments included, "I am happy with everything, it's all good", "Staff go above and beyond, always helping and doing little extra's that mean a lot" and "They go above and beyond my expectations".

People valued their relationships with staff. People said they felt well cared for and that they mattered. One person said, "Staff help with anything I need, they are so helpful and friendly". A relative commented, "I don't know how I'd cope without them, all the staff are wonderful".

People were supported by staff who encouraged them to remain as independent as possible. Staff had a good appreciation and understanding of how to respect people's privacy and dignity.

People told us they felt safe. Staff had undertaken training on safeguarding adults from abuse and put their knowledge into practice. Where staff had raised alerts the service managed the concerns promptly and where required, conducted thorough investigations to protect people. People were protected by the service's safe recruitment practices. Staff underwent the necessary checks which determined they were suitable to work with vulnerable adults before they started their employment.

People were supported to take their medicines by staff that were appropriately trained. People were supported by staff teams that received training that reflected their individual needs and supported how they wanted and needed to receive their care and support. Staff put their training into practice and delivered good care. A health care professional commented that Santa Monica Healthcare staff had been pivotal in creating a very positive change for a person supported.

People and those who mattered to them were involved in identifying their needs and how they would like to be supported. People's preferences were sought and respected and staff provided consistent personalised care and support. Staff responded quickly to people's change in needs.

People's risks were anticipated, identified and monitored. Staff managed risk effectively and actively supported people's personal decisions. This ensured that people had control and independence in their lives. Risks were regularly reviewed and updated promptly following any changes in need.

People knew how to raise concerns and make complaints. People and their relatives who had raised concerns confirmed they had been dealt with promptly and satisfactorily.

Staff described the management to be very open, supportive and approachable. Staff talked about their jobs in a strong positive manner, and were highly motivated. Comments included, "Out of all the companies I have worked for, this is the best. There is nothing I do not like about my job" and "I love my job. I feel really valued and well supported"

There were effective quality assurance systems in place. Action was taken to address areas where practice could be improved and as a result, changes had been made to help ensure the service moved forward and continually improved.

## 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.

Safe recruitment practices were followed and there were sufficient numbers of skilled and experienced staff to meet people's needs.

People were supported by staff who had a good understanding of how to recognise and report any signs of abuse.

People were protected by staff who understood and managed risk. Staff managed situations in a positive way when people displayed behaviour that challenged them.

### Is the service effective?

Good 

The service was effective.

People were supported by staff who had the right competencies, knowledge and skills to meet their individual needs.

People were supported by staff who confidently made use of their knowledge of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. People were involved in decisions about their care and support.

Links with healthcare services were good. Staff improved their practice by following advice and guidance that had been given.

### Is the service caring?

Good 

The service was caring.

People described the caring approach shown by staff as very good.

People felt they mattered and valued the strong positive relationships they had with staff.

People were supported by staff that were focused on maintaining their independence. Staff respected people's dignity and maintained their privacy.

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

The service was responsive.

Care records were personalised and focused on a person's whole life. Staff had a thorough understanding of how people wanted to be supported.

People were empowered by staff to be involved in identifying their choices and preferences, and have as much control and independence as possible.

People were encouraged to maintain hobbies and interests. Staff understood the importance of companionship and social contact.

**Good** ●

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

The service was well-led.

Management were approachable and had clear values that were understood by staff and put into practice.

Staff were motivated to develop and provide quality care.

Quality assurance systems drove improvements and raised standards of care. New ideas were promoted and implemented regularly to provide a quality service.

**Good** ●

# Santa Monica Healthcare Group

## **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 was planned to check whether the provider 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.

The inspection took place on 4 and 8 March 2016 and was announced. The provider was given 48 hours' notice because the location was a domiciliary care agency and we needed to be sure that someone would be present in the office. The inspection team consisted of one adult social care inspector.

Before the inspection we reviewed information we held about the service. This included previous inspection reports and notifications we had received. A notification is information about important events which the service is required to send us by law. We contacted the local authority safeguarding and quality monitoring teams who did not identify any areas of concern.

During the inspection we spoke with the director, the registered manager, the care co-ordinator and three members of staff. We spoke with one relative, an occupational therapist and a social worker who had commissioned care and support from Santa Monica Healthcare Limited. We also visited three people in their own homes that used the service.

We looked at three records that related to people's individual care and support needs. These included support plans, risk assessments and daily monitoring records. We also looked at three staff recruitment files and records associated with the management of the service, including quality audits.

## Is the service safe?

### Our findings

People told us they knew what keeping safe meant and felt safe whilst being supported in their own home. Comments included, "I feel safe with staff". A healthcare professional commented that staff not only managed people's safety well, but were also very good at managing their own safety too.

People were supported by staff who had received training in safeguarding, and could recognise signs of potential abuse. Staff confirmed any signs of suspected abuse were taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and appropriate alerts had been made to protect people. For example, one staff member talked us through an alert they had recently made on behalf of a person they supported. They reported their concerns to the registered manager, who promptly made a referral to the local safeguarding team, to help protect the person from harm. They said, "Any concerns we raise about people's safety are acted on immediately. We are listened to and supported throughout the process, and more importantly the person is kept safe".

Robust recruitment practices were in place and records showed checks were undertaken to help ensure the right staff were employed to keep people safe. Staff confirmed these checks had been applied for and obtained prior to commencing their employment with the service. Checks included the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The DBS carry out a criminal record and barring check on individuals who intend to work with children and vulnerable adults, to help employers make safer recruitment decisions.

People were protected by staff who understood the plans in place to respond to emergencies or unforeseen events. People and staff had access to on call telephone numbers for the service that were operational 7 days a week. This ensured a member of staff was always contactable if needed. One healthcare professional commented, "When I needed Santa Monica to be flexible in an emergency, I rang them and the manager acted immediately". A member of staff said, "What makes me feel safe and confident is knowing there is always a manager on the end of the phone whenever I need them".

There were sufficient numbers of staff to keep people safe. The registered manager confirmed, staff were specifically matched to support people on an individual basis. This ensured that staff had the right skills, knowledge and experience to meet people's individual needs. A healthcare professional commented "The matching process of staff to service user is brilliant" and "The introduction process of staff to service user is gradual and at a pace the person can cope with". The registered manager regularly reviewed the staffing levels so that people received reliable and consistent care and to help ensure staff could be flexible around people's needs.

People were supported by staff who understood and managed risk effectively. Prior to providing support to people the registered provider completed a comprehensive risk assessment. This confirmed whether the service would be able to safely meet the needs of the person concerned and took account of risks associated with lone working. Environmental risk assessments indicated where risks could occur and measures were put in place to minimise the likelihood of incidents occurring. Risk management plans recorded concerns and actions required to address risks whilst maintaining people's independence. Plans were reviewed regularly with the full involvement of the person receiving the service.

Staff understood the importance of safe administration and management of medicines and had completed the appropriate training. Records showed that all staff responsible for administering medication had undertaken competency assessments which were updated annually. The registered manager completed monthly medication audits which included a review of the level of support people required, storage systems in place peoples homes, safe disposal, homely remedies and all documentation which included the risk assessment and completion of Medication administration records (MARs). The registered manager had undertaken an analysis of a persons medication refusals. They had looked at potential patterns, frequency of refusals, particular days, times of day or other potential reasons including individual staff members. A pattern had not been identified , however the information had been shared with the local authority as this person was at risk of becoming unwell and had ensured this persons medication processes had been appropriately reviewed. The service had medicine policies and procedures in place which were in line with current and relevant guidance and regulation.

## Is the service effective?

### Our findings

People felt supported by knowledgeable, skilled staff who had the right competencies to effectively meet their needs. People spoken with told us, "The staff are very helpful, they offer good advice and support" and "I am very happy with my staff, they do everything I need". A relative said "You couldn't ask for any better, [Name] has dementia, staff need a certain level of understanding and they have that. All the staff are absolutely lovely. I don't know how I would cope without them". Healthcare professionals consistently fed back that staff employed by Santa Monica Healthcare were of a high professional standard.

People were supported by staff that had been specifically matched to meet their needs. The registered manager confirmed they used staff's learning and experience to deliver care that met people's individual needs. One healthcare professional commented "One of the best things about Santa Monica Healthcare is that they take care and time when matching the right staff with the people they support, it really helps to make everything work really well", A healthcare professional added, "The staff are following the rehabilitation guidelines put in place. My client works well with the staff and appears to enjoy their input".

Staff received a thorough induction programme and on-going training to develop their knowledge and skills. They told us this gave them confidence in their role and helped enable them to follow best practice and effectively meet people's needs. Newly appointed staff, completed the new care certificate. The care certificate is a set of minimum standards that social care and health workers work with in their daily working life. The standards give workers a good basis from which they can further develop their knowledge and skills. Staff shadowed other experienced members of the team until they and the management team felt they were competent in their role. One member of staff commented, "My induction was very thorough and I felt very prepared to do my job". Records demonstrated regular review meetings had taken place during the induction period to discuss progress.

In addition to the registered providers mandatory training programme, staff received tailored training that reflected how an individual wanted and needed to receive their care. For example, one person had specific needs identified through their rehabilitation programme. Individual guidelines were in place that staff were required to follow in order to maintain the person's progress. Staff received guidance from health professionals alongside the individual in the person's own home. This helped ensure staff had the precise knowledge and skills to effectively carry out their role. Staff felt this enabled them to confidently and consistently provide personalised support.

Staff were supported to achieve nationally recognised vocational qualifications. The service sourced support from and had established links with external agencies that provided funding on behalf of their staff. This enabled and encouraged staff to take part in training designed to help them improve their knowledge. It also helped staff to develop a clear understanding of their specific roles and responsibilities and have their achievements acknowledged. Staff confirmed they had been supported by the registered provider to increase their skills and obtain qualifications. Staff told us this gave them motivation to learn and continually improve. Comments included, "I love all training relevant to my role and have already achieved a level 2 in health and social care" and "I think the standard of training is brilliant and I always learn something

new".

Staff received effective support through regular supervision and appraisals. Supervision was a two way process, used as an important resource to support, motivate and develop staff and drive improvements. Staff confirmed supervision was used to develop and review their practice. Open conversation provided staff with the opportunity to highlight areas of good practice, identify where support was needed and raise ideas on how the service could improve. Comments included, "I can be open about my thoughts and feelings and have a healthy debate" and "I feel confident that I could raise any concerns or worries with my supervisor. I could talk to them in confidence about anything".

People were supported by staff who had good communication skills. People, those who mattered to them and healthcare professionals all spoke highly of staffs ability to communicate effectively. Comments included, "One of the staffs main strengths is their ability to communicate, [Name] has very little communication but the staff always get them laughing" and "I am happy to speak to anyone within the service as communication is always shared as necessary throughout" and "The communication between staff and management is excellent".

Staff understood and had knowledge of the main principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). The 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. Staff were confident to put this into practice on a daily basis to help ensure peoples human and legal rights were respected. Staff considered people's capacity to make particular decisions and where appropriate knew what to do and who to involve, in order to make decisions in people's best interests. A staff member stated, "I always like to ask a person if they want me to help them and ask their consent, to take that choice away from someone, would be so wrong". Daily records demonstrated people were offered choice and had control over their own decisions.

People were supported and encouraged to maintain a healthy balanced diet. Staff placed a strong emphasis on the importance of protecting people from risk of poor nutrition and dehydration. People were supported with their independence wherever possible to prepare and cook their own meals with as little or as much support required. Shopping trips took place to ensure people had the right ingredients to maintain the persons chosen menu for any given week. Some people chose to shop daily for fresh menu ingredients and this was supported. Care plans provided staff with guidance regarding what support people needed. We saw how staff provided advice regarding people's nutritional needs and how people's weight could to be managed to minimise the impact on other health conditions.

## Is the service caring?

### Our findings

People consistently described staff as having a caring attitude and felt staff treated them with kindness and compassion. Comments included, "I don't think I could cope without them now" and "I really enjoy the support, they are all very good people". Relatives stated, "All the staff are absolutely lovely", "They clear everything away after themselves, they are marvellous" and "We are extremely happy and pleased with the care [Name] is receiving. The staff have excellent manners and care qualities". A healthcare professional said "I must acknowledge the fantastic care that the staff are providing".

Staff had genuine concern for people's wellbeing. Staff commented that they felt passionate about the support they gave, they explained the importance of adopting a caring approach and making people feel that they matter. Comments included, "What really makes my job great is making a positive difference to someones life" and "I love my job and helping with people's needs".

People and those that mattered to them valued their relationships with staff and the registered manager. They described them as going above and beyond their duty of care when providing support. A staff member commented that they knew people well and understood how small things can quickly cause upset or equally make a positive difference depending on the individual. They drew from past experiences and their knowledge of the person. They learned from when people had reacted positively and used their learning to help make people feel comfortable.

People confirmed their privacy and dignity were respected and they were encouraged to be as independent as possible. Staff understood the importance of respecting people's own values and upholding what is important to them. One person commented "Staff always knock and wait for an answer before entering my home, I appreciate that" and a staff member said "I always ask permission and explain before commencing any task".

People were supported by staff who knew their individual communication skills, preferences and abilities. People received care and support from a consistent staff team who understood their history, likes, dislikes and needs. Staff were employed who shared people's interests and were matched to individuals, so staff could respond to people's diverse need and form close bonds and understanding relationships. One person told us, "I like my support staff and they know me really well. I like to play snooker with them ". A relative commented, "We have regular support staff who know [Name] really well".

People were supported to express their views in ways that were meaningful to them and were involved in making decisions about their care and support. People told us they were fully involved in their reviews and had also signed their care plans. This meant people were valued and treated as individuals with an opinion. The registered manager had regular contact with all people who used the service and where appropriate their relatives.

The service offered end of life care and had policies and procedures in place for this. A compliment received by the service stated "We'll never forget the true kindness and compassion. You made [Names] last weeks

the best they could have been".

## Is the service responsive?

### Our findings

People received consistent personalised care, treatment and support. When Santa Monica Healthcare agreed to support a person, an initial assessment took place. The person, those who mattered to them and professionals were actively involved in the process. Evidence was gathered of the person's life story to date through an 'all about me' document. Staff were then selected to match the person's identified choices of how they preferred to manage their health and have their care needs met. A healthcare professional said, "I had previously used another agency who were unsuccessful with my client. Due to the matching process and careful introduction of staff by Santa Monica Healthcare they have been extremely successful and all feedback has been positive from my client".

People were empowered to have choice and control over who provided their personal care. People were supported to be involved as much as possible in deciding whether or not staff members selected to support them, met their needs. For example one relative said that they had initially felt that male support staff were most suitable for their family member due to them also being male. This had worked well but following a comprehensive discussion with the registered manager it was agreed to introduce a female support worker to cover for any annual leave or sickness. The registered manager had explained the importance of consistency and always ensuring staff were available to support the required needs. This introduction had been successful and their relative had responded positively to this.

People and their families where appropriate were involved in planning their own care and making decisions about how their needs were met. Staff were skilled in supporting people to do this and assessing people's needs. Staff told us how they discussed ideas about what would make a positive difference in people's daily lives and supported them to achieve their aims. Staff struck the right balance between empowering people and including healthcare professionals and family in support plans. For example, one person wished to decorate and choose the furnishings for their own flat. Staff respected the person's decision to take the associated risks with completing such a task. Some guidance had been offered regarding risks including climbing a ladder. The person accomplished their goal with minimal staff support.

Staff viewed support plans as very important in providing individualised support. Each person had a plan that reflected their needs, choices and preferences, and gave guidance to staff on how to make sure personalised care was provided. Regular review meetings identified changes in care and support needs. Any changes were discussed with the person, healthcare professionals and any chosen relative as required. Changes were clearly documented and the information cascaded to support staff. This ensured continuity of support and that all staff remained up to date.

People were protected from the risk of social isolation and staff recognised the importance of companionship and keeping relationships with those who matter to them. People were enabled to take part in personalised activities and encouraged to maintain hobbies and interests. As part of people's support package staff spent time to ensure they engaged in activities of choice which included coffee and chat, games of snooker and watching films.

The service had a policy and procedure in place for dealing with any concerns or complaints. People and those who matter to them knew who to contact if they needed to raise a concern or make a complaint. There had been two complaints since CQC last inspected in January 2014. The complaints had been responded to in a timely manner and thoroughly investigated in line with the Santa Monica Healthcare complaints policy. Action had been taken and the outcome had been recorded and fed back to the person concerned. The registered manager told us that they used concerns and complaints to improve their service and raise standards of care.

## Is the service well-led?

### Our findings

People were at the heart of the service. The service worked in partnership with other organisations to help enable people to achieve their goals, hopes and dreams. People and their loved ones described the characteristics of the service to be, 'Fabulous', 'Responsive', 'Exceptional' and stated, 'They are a really good company and the communication is excellent'.

The director and the registered manager took an active role within the running of the service and had good knowledge of the staff and the people who were supported by the registered provider. There were clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the management structure.

The director and the registered manager actively sought and acted on the views of others and placed a strong emphasis on continually striving to improve. Healthcare professionals praised staff and described the service as going above and beyond any expectations.

The service had notified the Care Quality Commission (CQC) of all significant events which had occurred in line with their legal obligations. Registered providers are required to inform the Care Quality Commission of certain incidents and events that happen within the service. Providers are required, by law, to notify us about and report incidents to other agencies when deemed necessary so they can decide if any action is required to keep people safe and well.

People, their relatives, healthcare professionals and staff all described the management of the service to be approachable, open and supportive. Comments included, "I can talk to the manager whenever I need to", "The management are so open and easy to talk to and they know the service users really well" and "I think the manager is brilliant, extremely responsive".

The registered manager told us the aim of the service was to aspire to create a friendly atmosphere where the care and support provided both enabled and gave people the confidence to live a full, active and independent lifestyle. They told us that Santa Monica Healthcare strived to treat people as individuals whilst ensuring that they had a flexible, quality support which met their needs and individual requirements.

The registered provider regularly invited feedback by asking people to complete a questionnaire. Feedback from people, friends and relatives as well as healthcare professionals was sought in order to enhance the service. Questionnaire results from November 2015 included 95% of people rated the service as good or above.

Staff told us they were happy in their work, understood what was expected of them and were motivated to provide and maintain a high standard of care. Staff reflected positively about the service. Comments included "Out of all the companies I've worked for this is the best", "Everyone supports each other here including management and staff" and "There is nothing I don't like about my job". A healthcare professional commented that the service were always open to feedback, they were honest about their strengths and

weaknesses and proactively acted upon advice given to improve practice.

The service worked in partnership with healthcare professionals who confirmed to us that the communication was very good. They told us the service worked with them and followed advice and provided good support. A healthcare professional confirmed the communication was a high standard and also stated the service was always fully engaged, attended meetings and gave constructive and clear feedback.

The registered provider undertook regular audits which included medication, accidents and incidents, support plans, cancelled and missed calls in line with the organisations policies and procedures. All audits clearly identified actions required and were fully updated following the completion of any actions. All audit information was collated and a full analysis undertaken to identify trends as well as areas for development.