

Review of compliance

Allied Healthcare Group Limited Allied Healthcare - Telford

Region:	West Midlands
Location address:	Unit 4 Badham Court, Castle Street Hadley Telford Shropshire TF1 5QX
Type of service:	Domiciliary care service
Date of Publication:	March 2012
Overview of the service:	Allied Healthcare, Telford operates as a domiciliary care service. They are part of the Allied Healthcare Group that have branches nationwide. They are registered for the activity of personal care and nursing care. They currently provide care and support packages to adults and children in Telford, Newport, Bridgenorth and Albrighton.

Summary of our findings for the essential standards of quality and safety

Our current overall judgement

Allied Healthcare - Telford was meeting all the essential standards of quality and safety.

The summary below describes why we carried out this review, what we found and any action required.

Why we carried out this review

We carried out this review to check whether Allied Healthcare - Telford had made improvements in relation to:

Outcome 04 - Care and welfare of people who use services

Outcome 16 - Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

How we carried out this review

We reviewed all the information we hold about this provider, carried out a visit on 1 February 2012, looked at records of people who use services, talked to staff, reviewed information from stakeholders and talked to people who use services.

What people told us

We carried out this review to monitor the continual improvements made by the agency since our last visit.

As part of the process we had telephone discussions with five people who received a service and with representatives of three people who would have been unable to share their views with us. We also spoke with five staff and the registered manager. On the day of our visit to the office we reviewed care files and looked at systems in place for monitoring the service provided.

Everyone we spoke with told us that they were very satisfied with the care and support that they received. People told us that they felt involved and consulted in relation to how they received their support. People said that staff knew how to meet their needs and listened to them when they expressed their preferences.

People told us that staff were flexible, obliging and kind. Everyone told us that they thought staff were well trained and did a good job

People told us that staff arrived when they were expected and always stayed the allocated amount of time. People told us that in the unlikely event of them being late that staff from the office would call to let them know.

We were told that the agency asked people if they were happy with the service received and everyone said that they would contact the office if they had any worries or concerns. People said that the managers were easy to talk to and listened to them.

Care plans seen were very detailed and centred around the identified needs of the individual. This meant that likes and dislikes were recorded as well as any special needs. Staff told us that they liked these documents. One staff member said that they were especially useful when supporting people with complex needs. Risks associated with providing individualised care and support were also documented and ways of reducing these risks were recorded. Again staff told us that these were useful tools to provide safe care.

The agency had systems in place to monitor the quality of the service provided and the registered manager demonstrated that the agency had responded positively when issues had been identified. The manager was aware of the strengths and the challenges of the agency.

What we found about the standards we reviewed and how well Allied Healthcare - Telford was meeting them

Outcome 04: People should get safe and appropriate care that meets their needs and supports their rights

People who receive a service from Allied Healthcare, Telford experience good quality care and support that meets their individual needs and wishes.

Outcome 16: The service should have quality checking systems to manage risks and assure the health, welfare and safety of people who receive care

People supported by Allied Healthcare Telford receive safe and appropriate care that is monitored to ensure it is of good quality. Ongoing formal and informal quality assurance processes ensure that people's views about the service are listened and responded to.

Other information

Please see previous reports for more information about previous reviews.

**What we found
for each essential standard of quality
and safety we reviewed**

The following pages detail our findings and our regulatory judgement for each essential standard and outcome that we reviewed, linked to specific regulated activities where appropriate.

We will have reached one of the following judgements for each essential standard.

Compliant means that people who use services are experiencing the outcomes relating to the essential standard.

A **minor concern** means that people who use services are safe but are not always experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard.

A **moderate concern** means that people who use services are safe but are not always experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard and there is an impact on their health and wellbeing because of this.

A **major concern** means that people who use services are not experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard and are not protected from unsafe or inappropriate care, treatment and support.

Where we identify compliance, no further action is taken. Where we have concerns, the most appropriate action is taken to ensure that the necessary improvements are made. Where there are a number of concerns, we may look at them together to decide the level of action to take.

More information about each of the outcomes can be found in the *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety*

Outcome 04: Care and welfare of people who use services

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

* Experience effective, safe and appropriate care, treatment and support that meets their needs and protects their rights.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with Outcome 04: Care and welfare of people who use services

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us

We spoke with five people who had received a service from Allied Healthcare Telford. We also spoke with representatives of three people who would have been unable to share their views with us. Everyone told us that they were very satisfied with the care and support that they received.

People said that they had care plans that reflected their needs and wishes. People told us that if they wanted anything doing in addition to this that they would just ask. People told us that carers were flexible and obliging.

People told us how important their carers were to them. People liked the fact that they had regular carers who had been with them for a long while and knew them well. One person liked having new carers and office staff were aware of this and accommodated them whenever possible.

Care plans focussed on maintaining people's independence as far as possible. People told us that they were supported to do things for themselves and this helped them to cope when they were not being supported. One person told us, "I want to thank them from bottom of my heart. I wouldn't be where i am now without them. They have helped me maintain my independence".

Carers were described as being "very good". One carer was described as being "absolutely brilliant".

People told us that staff met their care and support needs in ways that they preferred and that they would always be flexible to accommodate their changing needs. People said that staff were always polite, courteous and respectful.

People told us that they felt safe being supported by carers. People said that they considered staff to be well trained and fully able to meet their care and support needs.

One person told us of their experiences of raising a problem with the agency. Although they were not happy with the agency's response at the time, they told us that they totally trusted the carers that they now received.

Other evidence

Staff told us that they received good support from senior staff. They told us that support was always available at the end of the phone.

Staff also spoke of regular training opportunities. This included basic general training and also training that had been delivered to support the identified needs of the people they supported. This training was often delivered by health care professionals. In relation to one particular support practice, each staff member was seen to have been 'signed off' as competent before they were allowed to support the person. Staff who spoke with us liked the E learning format of the general training provided. One person said that this training was, "terrific".

Staff told us that the care plans provided them with all essential information required to help them support people in ways that they preferred. They said that they worked with health and social care professionals when required. Staff said that they could contact key health and social care professionals for support and advice at any time. People considered that this joint working meant that they could continue to support people with deteriorating health to remain in their own homes.

We reviewed four care files during our office visit. All were found to be very well organised and the manager stated that they were a duplicate of information kept at people's homes. We saw that plans had been reviewed and updated. All files detailed how staff were required to support people. Attention to detail was seen, especially in relation to ensuring that staff promoted people's independence as far as was possible. Staff told us that care plans and risk assessments were valuable documents especially those for people with complex support needs. One staff member told us that they ensured that new staff read the care plans before they started supporting the individual.

Our judgement

People who receive a service from Allied Healthcare, Telford experience good quality care and support that meets their individual needs and wishes.

Outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

* Benefit from safe quality care, treatment and support, due to effective decision making and the management of risks to their health, welfare and safety.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with Outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us

People told us that they were asked by the agency if they were happy with the service that they received. They told us that senior staff observed carers to ensure that they were doing a good job. Staff confirmed to us that they had their practice observed as part of their ongoing support and supervision.

People told us that they would be confident to approach the manager with any issues, concerns or complaints.

The manager told us that the agency carried out annual quality assurance questionnaires. We saw the onscreen summary of findings that reflected 'good' outcomes overall. Where areas had been identified as requiring improvement the manager had taken these on board and produced an action plan to address the issues. We saw this to have now been completed. Three people who spoke with us said that they had received a questionnaire about the service they received.

One person told us that they liked to visit the office regularly and always shared their comments and compliments with the staff there. They felt encouraged and supported to do this.

Representative of people who received a service from Allied Healthcare Telford told us that they had been consulted about the quality of care provided and had been involved in the assessment and planning process. One person told us that trust was very important to them as this enabled them to leave their relative knowing that they would be well looked after.

Other evidence

The manager of the agency showed us numerous ways that they monitored the service provided. For example we saw how the agency monitored incidents and accidents internally and within the organisation as a whole. Staff training was also monitored to ensure that staff had the skills and knowledge to do their jobs. The computer system alerted the manager when refresher training was required. Staff told us that training was delivered regularly and that the training was suitable to meet their needs.

Staff told us that they received regular support and monitoring. Staff also told us that, overall, they felt well supported by the management of the agency.

We saw that changes were made to people's care plans and risk assessments when needs changed and individual records showed how the agency liaised with health care professionals to ensure that they were able to offer safe care and support. Staff told us that they reported any issues or changes to people's support needs to the office. Staff told us that the agency could improve their support for one client by updating their care plan quicker when needs changed. Other staff stated that because senior staff were regularly on site that plans were updated immediately.

We saw how complaints were recorded and actioned. We were shown the system that recorded complaints electronically. Complaints could only be closed when they had been reviewed by senior managers within the organisation. We spoke with a person who had previously made a complaint to the agency. They had not been satisfied with the agency's response at the time however they were still being supported and were now very satisfied with the support that they received.

Records showed that effective communication between carers, the office and social care professionals protected people by identifying actions needed to keep people safe and well. For example we saw how an agency worker had informed the office of concerns in relation to the safety of one person and this was investigated. The outcome was that measures were put in place to ensure that person's safety for the future. The manager was able to share numerous other examples of how they had worked with outside agencies to keep people safe.

All staff, including the manager knew how to recognise and report abuse. In discussions, staff demonstrated their understanding of how to protect adults and children from abuse. Training records showed that they had received training to support them to do this.

Risks within the agency were seen to be continually assessed. Environmental assessments and moving and handling assessments were seen on files reviewed during our site visit. Staff told us that they thought risk assessments were an essential part of the care plans and that they were, "very good".

Our judgement

People supported by Allied Healthcare Telford receive safe and appropriate care that is monitored to ensure it is of good quality. Ongoing formal and informal quality assurance processes ensure that people's views about the service are listened and responded to.

What is a review of compliance?

By law, providers of certain adult social care and health care services have a legal responsibility to make sure they are meeting essential standards of quality and safety. These are the standards everyone should be able to expect when they receive care.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has written guidance about what people who use services should experience when providers are meeting essential standards, called *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety*.

CQC licenses services if they meet essential standards and will constantly monitor whether they continue to do so. We formally review services when we receive information that is of concern and as a result decide we need to check whether a service is still meeting one or more of the essential standards. We also formally review them at least every two years to check whether a service is meeting all of the essential standards in each of their locations. Our reviews include checking all available information and intelligence we hold about a provider. We may seek further information by contacting people who use services, public representative groups and organisations such as other regulators. We may also ask for further information from the provider and carry out a visit with direct observations of care.

When making our judgements about whether services are meeting essential standards, we decide whether we need to take further regulatory action. This might include discussions with the provider about how they could improve. We only use this approach where issues can be resolved quickly, easily and where there is no immediate risk of serious harm to people.

Where we have concerns that providers are not meeting essential standards, or where we judge that they are not going to keep meeting them, we may also set improvement actions or compliance actions, or take enforcement action:

Improvement actions: These are actions a provider should take so that they **maintain** continuous compliance with essential standards. Where a provider is complying with essential standards, but we are concerned that they will not be able to maintain this, we ask them to send us a report describing the improvements they will make to enable them to do so.

Compliance actions: These are actions a provider must take so that they **achieve** compliance with the essential standards. Where a provider is not meeting the essential standards but people are not at immediate risk of serious harm, we ask them to send us a report that says what they will do to make sure they comply. We monitor the implementation of action plans in these reports and, if necessary, take further action to make sure that essential standards are met.

Enforcement action: These are actions we take using the criminal and/or civil procedures in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and relevant regulations. These enforcement powers are set out in the law and mean that we can take swift, targeted action where services are failing people.

Information for the reader

Document purpose	Review of compliance report
Author	Care Quality Commission
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