



Inspection Report on

Link-Up Care Ltd

**Office 25, Llynfi Enterprise Centre
Heol Ty Gwyn Industrial Estate
Maesteg
CF34 0BQ**

20th December 2021

20/12/2021

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About Link-Up Care Ltd

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	Link-Up Care
Registered places	0
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	20/09/2019
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This is a service that does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It does not anticipate, identify or meet the Welsh language needs of people /children who use, or intend to use their service.

Summary

Link-Up Care is registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) to provide domiciliary support services. The service promotes independence and choice and encourages people to do the things that matter to them. Care workers support people in a person centred way and are respectful and kind. Personal plans set out peoples care and support needs and are reviewed in line with regulation. Positive feedback from people and their representatives demonstrates people receive a good standard of care and support.

Care workers are sufficiently trained and skilled and feel supported in their roles, however, improvements are required to ensure they receive the required levels of supervision and appraisal. The recruitment process is robust and ensures care workers suitability for the role. Care workers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know the process for raising concerns. The service has policies and procedures that underpin safety and good practice, some of which need to be developed further to ensure they contain all of the relevant information. Governance and quality arrangements are good and show the responsible individual (RI) has clear oversight of service provision.

Well-being

People's physical, mental and emotional well-being is promoted by a service that encourages choice and independence. A person centred approach to care planning ensures people are at the forefront of the care and support they receive. People told us care workers support them to do the things that are important to them. This includes attending medical appointments and taking part in a range of activities that they enjoy. Care workers support people in a variety of settings including people's homes, the local and wider community and in the services day care provision. The service offers good continuity of care due to a stable workforce. Consistently good feedback from people and their representatives suggests care workers treat people with dignity and respect.

People are protected from abuse and neglect. Measures such as staff training, safe recruitment and up-to-date policies and procedures help to safeguard people from harm. Robust governance arrangements ensures the management has oversight of people's service delivery and is able to monitor any concerns or safeguarding matters. Risk assessments and management plans identify people's vulnerabilities and promote safe practice. Infection control measures including the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), up-to-date guidance and regular Covid-19 testing reduce the risk of cross infection. There are measures for reducing the risks associated with medication, however the medication policy needs updating to ensure all aspects of medication administrations are clearly documented.

People have control over their day-to-day lives. People access activities that are individually tailored, promote social interaction and community presence. The service provided is flexible and people are able to choose when they receive support. Care workers and people using the service know each other well. Care workers are familiar with people's needs, wants and routines and know how best to support people to achieve their personal outcomes.

Care and Support

People have access to a good standard of care and support that enables them to do the things that are important to them. The service is able to provide good continuity of care due to its low staff turnover. Many of the staff team have worked for the service for a considerable time which means they know the people they support well and have built positive relationships with them. We spoke to a number of people who provided positive feedback regarding care workers. One person said *“The staff are wonderful. I get on well with all of them”*. Another person told us *“Since I’ve been coming to Link-up I have enjoyed every minute of it. They support me to go to the football, I support Cardiff City. They help me if I’m angry about something. It’s like one big family”*. Care workers support people to take part in a range of activities in a variety of settings. These settings include people’s local community and the Digi Lab which is a day service facility operated by the provider. On the day of our inspection we saw people taking part in a cookery session in the Digi Lab.

Personal plans set out people’s care and support needs. We looked at a number of personal plans and found them to be person centred. This means they contain information specific to each person’s care and support requirements. Risk assessments provide care workers with information on how to keep people safe. On the whole, reviews of care documentation are conducted in line with regulation. However, we found some information on people’s personal plans had not been reviewed for some time. We discussed this with the management who explained that the information was no longer relevant and will be archived.

Safeguarding mechanisms help to protect people from harm and neglect. Policies and procedures support safe practice and contain up-to-date national guidance. Discussions with care workers confirm they are aware of the services safeguarding policy. Care workers receive safeguarding training and are clear about their responsibilities and the procedure to follow if they have any concerns regarding the people they support. There are good infection prevention and control measures in place. The service has an infection control policy, which includes the management of a Covid-19 outbreak. Care workers undergo routine testing for Covid-19 to minimise the risk of cross contamination. On the day of our inspection we saw all care workers were wearing the required level of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Leadership and Management

The service ensures care workers are suitable to work with vulnerable people. We examined a number of personnel files and found the service completes all of the required pre-employment checks including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and gaining satisfactory references from previous employers. On commencement of employment new employees have to complete an induction and work a probationary period where their competence is assessed. An ongoing programme of training and development equips care workers with essential skills and knowledge. Care workers told us the services training provision was good. Records show the service is mostly compliant with its core training requirements. Care workers we spoke to told us they feel valued and supported in their roles and were complimentary of the manager. Comments included: *"I've worked here 4 years. I love my job. Best job I've ever had"*. Supervision and appraisal gives care workers the opportunity to reflect on their performance and discuss any issues they may have. We looked at records relating to supervision and appraisal and found care workers were not always receiving the required amount of formal support. This is an area for improvement and we would expect the service to address the matter by the next time we inspect.

Governance and quality assurance measures ensures the service runs smoothly. The Responsible Individual (RI) visits the service regularly and discusses service provision with people connected to the service to inform improvements. A quality of care report is published on a six monthly basis, which sets out the services strengths and any areas for improvement. We noted there was disruption to the quality of care report schedule due to the pandemic, which meant one report was not published. We discussed this with the manager who assured us all future reports would be published on time. We looked at records relating to complaints and found the service has responded to them in line with its policy. We sampled a number of policies and found they were reviewed regularly and contained up-to-date national guidance. However, we found the services medication policy did not contain information relating to the administration of controlled medications and 'as required' (PRN) medications. We discussed this with the manager who agreed to add the information to the policy to strengthen medication practices.

Written information documented in the Statement of Purpose outlines the services aims, values and service provision. A written guide is available for people who use the service which contains practical information including how to make a complaint and contact telephone numbers for agencies such as Care Inspectorate Wales and Social Care wales. We noted the written guide did not contain information relating to the availability of advocacy services. Following discussion the manager agreed to add the required information to the document.

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
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

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
36	The provider is not compliant with regulation 36(2)(c). This is because the service has failed to provide the	New

	required level of supervision and appraisal to staff members.	
36	Refresher training was not being undertaken in a timely manner. 22 gaps in core training of staff members. Including areas such as health and safety, infection control, first aid awareness, safeguarding vulnerable adults, epilepsy. Status on training matrix viewed documented "not completed".	Achieved

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