



## Inspection Report on

**Gentle Care Services Limited**

**Croeserw Community Centre  
Bryn Siriol Cymmer  
Port Talbot  
SA13 3PL**

## **Date Inspection Completed**

07/12/2022

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## About Gentle Care Services Limited

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	Gentle Care Services Limited
Registered places	0
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

### Summary

Gentle Care Domiciliary Support Service provides a good standard of care and support to people. We spoke to people, relatives, care workers, managers and the Responsible Individual (RI) to gather their views on the service. We found robust and thorough support planning processes and documentation in the service. The provider ensures people are fully involved and participate in decisions regarding their care and support needs. There are governance and quality assurance processes across the service. We have requested improvement in the frequency and recording of quality assurance procedures completed by the RI. The RI and Registered Manager (RM) take an active role and are present and directive in the service. Care workers access both core and specialist training. We have requested improvement in relation to ensuring all care workers receive appropriate refresher training in some subjects. Care workers told us managers are very supportive. There are robust staff vetting and compliance checks in place. We have requested improvement in relation to the RM receiving regular, documented supervisions and appraisals. There are detailed policies and procedures in place to guide staff and the Statement of Purpose (SoP) is reflective of the service provided.

## Well-being

People contribute to decisions that affect them and participation, choice and inclusion is actively promoted and upheld by the provider. We saw a good standard of documentation across the service. This includes people's support plans, health information, reviews and record keeping. People and relatives gave us consistently positive feedback about the quality of service provision. This is despite a challenging period in relation to staff recruitment and retention which is similar across the social care sector. The provider has had to adapt to this which has meant some changes and delays in relation to call times. The RM and RI are working hard to minimise the impact of this on people. All people and a relative spoken to confirmed that generally the service provided is of a good quality and communication with and from the provider is good.

The RI and RM work regularly in the service along with a deputy manager. There are consistent checks and audits to monitor the quality of service provision. A recent quality of care review includes feedback from people, staff and an overview of service provision. We have requested improvements are made in relation to the frequency and content of RI checks and documentation. All care workers told us they have a positive working relationship with their managers, feeling supported and listened too. We saw regular staff meetings are planned and documented. Staffing levels reflect people's needs as documented in care plans and assessments. People confirmed there is continuity in relation to care workers and they are generally informed about any changes.

There are experienced, knowledgeable and trained care workers working in the service. We saw staff information evidencing compliance with regulation in respect of required checks. Care workers receive a range of core and specialist training to ensure they can carry out their work roles effectively and to a high standard. However; we have requested improvement in relation to some training as we noted not all care workers are currently up to date with all of their training requirements. Care workers receive regular planned supervision and appraisals. Care workers gave consistently positive feedback about the support and training they receive.

People are protected from abuse and neglect as care workers know what to look out for and how to raise concerns if they suspect someone's wellbeing is at risk. Care workers receive training in safeguarding and have access to clear and detailed policies and procedures to guide them. There are robust personal support plans in place to keep people safe and promote independence as far as possible. Care workers receive training in relation to infection control and food hygiene.

## Care and Support

People are provided with a good standard of care and support. We visited three people at home and spoke to people, relatives, managers, care workers and the RI. Feedback received was positive about the quality of care and support provided. One person told us; *“care workers are always very polite and respectful. They are very good. Normally have a group of carers, this helps because they know and understand my needs”*. Another person stated; *“all the carers are very polite and nice. The manager is marvellous. Would not change a thing I greatly value the support”*. A relative told us the standard of care is very good but some recent changes have impacted on call times. This was discussed with the RI who explained the service is experiencing some challenging recruitment and retention staffing issues currently. Some care packages have been returned to the Local Authority due to these issues. It is hoped this will improve in the New Year and the provider is attending a recruitment fair to promote working in the sector shortly.

The service has an accurate, up to date personal support plan which is regularly reviewed and is complimented by detailed and thorough record keeping. We completed an audit of three support files. We found these are appropriate and people are fully involved and consulted in relation to their support planning and choice. We also saw relatives are consulted where necessary and appropriate. Both people and relatives spoken to confirmed communication with and from the service is very good. Several comments received about the RM state: they go ‘above and beyond’ where necessary to ensure good outcomes for people. We visited people at home and found support files in place containing key documentation including personal support plans, service user guides and daily records.

People are safe and risks to their health and wellbeing minimised as far as possible. All care workers spoken with told us they have received safeguarding training and have good knowledge regarding the importance of safeguarding and their responsibilities. However; in general care workers need to have updated refresher training in subjects such as dementia awareness and safeguarding. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement and we expect the provider to take action. The RM informed us there are no current active safeguarding issues, service complaints or concerns. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) are notified appropriately and promptly of any issues by the provider.

## Environment

The quality of environment is not a theme that is applicable to a domiciliary support service. However, the service operates from a self-contained office with good facilities for staff and off road parking. Rooms seen are clean and well equipped, with suitable space for record keeping, meetings and locked filing cabinets for the storage of confidential information.

The RI and RM have a strong presence in the day to day running of the service. The provider ensures regular audits are completed in relation to the quality of service provided. These include the use of feedback questionnaires, regular management audits by completing home visits and staff team meetings. We read a recent quality of care review and noted it was not dated and was completed in response to an improvement action requested by commissioners. We discussed with the RI how this process can be further strengthened and reports needing completion bi-annually going forward. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement and we expect the provider to take action.

We spoke to care workers and gathered information as part of the inspection. A care worker told us; *“nice place to work, get on well with colleagues and happy with everything”*. Another care worker stated; *“very well supported, really understanding with any issues or problems and can get hold of managers when needed”*. We completed an audit of care worker files and saw robust and thorough employment checks such as Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks and references are in place. All care workers are now either registered with Social Care Wales (SCW – the workforce regulator) or working towards it. Improvements have been made since the last inspection and we noted care workers now receive regular documented and planned supervision and appraisals. However; we did not see any supervision or appraisal records in place for the RM. While no immediate action is required, this is an area for improvement and we expect the provider to take action. We read the latest Statement of Purpose (SoP) which is an accurate reflection of the service provided. The RI informed us it has been a very challenging period, particularly in relation to staffing. Despite this the RI is optimistic and positive about the service moving forward and there are no current financial concerns regarding business continuity. We viewed a selection of policies and found them to be regularly reviewed, detailed and informative.

### Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
<b>New</b>	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
<b>Reviewed</b>	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.
<b>Not Achieved</b>	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
<b>Achieved</b>	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
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80	A full inspection took place on 7th December 2022. A quality of care review document was seen as part of the inspection. This was completed as part of an improvement action plan put in place by NPT LA. The document provided was not dated and only one was provided since the last inspection. This will continue as an AFI and as discussed with the RI during inspection feedback.	New
36	A full inspection took place on 7th December 2022. There is no evidence the registered manager is currently receiving planned and documented supervisions and appraisals.	New
36	A full inspection took place on 7th December 2022. Not all core and specialist training is current for care workers.	New
42	Care workers continue to be working on zero hour contracts without any evidence of choice of alternative contractual arrangements being offered by the provider.	Achieved
36	Not all care workers are currently receiving planned 1:1 supervision on a three monthly basis.	Achieved
73	The registered individual needs to complete regular three monthly audits by meeting with people and care workers.	Achieved
80	There are insufficient arrangements in place for monitoring, reviewing and improving the quality of care and support provided by the service currently.	Achieved

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