



Inspection Report on

United Response

**Unit 23
John Baker Close
Cwmbran
NP44 3AX**

Date Inspection Completed

15/05/2024

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About United Response

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	United Response
Registered places	0
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	31 May 2022
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	The service provides an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language. It anticipates, identifies, and meets the Welsh language and cultural needs of people who use, or may use, the service.

Summary

United Response is a domiciliary agency which supports people to live in their own homes in the community. People have close and trusted relationships with the staff who support them. The manager is experienced having run the service for a number of years. The majority of staff are long serving, trained, and dedicated. People told us they are happy and lead fulfilled lives. We saw staff engaging with people with patience and compassion.

The Responsible Individual (RI) stepped down from the role in January 2024. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) has been advised of a replacement who is yet to submit an application. There are systems in place which monitor the quality of the service; however, without this key designated person no one is responsible for overseeing the management of the service and providing assurance it is safe, well run, and complies with the Regulations.

Well-being

People are encouraged to have as much choice and control over their lives as possible. Staff support people to live in the community in their own homes and promote their rights as citizens. People have an opportunity to raise their “*comments, compliments and concerns*” during regular check-ins and reviews. People are highly complementary of the manager and agency staff and have developed positive relationships with staff. Many of the staff have worked at the agency for years providing stability and consistency. The organisation is improving care planning systems to enable people to have more involvement in setting and reviewing their personal outcomes. One person told us, “*I like it here, I like the staff.*” Another said, “*I am happy living here, I have known the staff a long time*” and gave us a thumbs up. Another person said, “*I am happy with how things are going; the manager comes to check out everything is going well.*”

People are included as part of the staff recruitment and selection process. New recruits are matched with people who use the service to ensure they have the necessary skills to meet individuals needs and preferences such as similar age, gender, and hobbies. We found strengthening staff recruitment practices would ensure people who use the service are fully safeguarded.

People are supported to manage their health and wellbeing and are kept safe. People can access healthcare services as required. Staff provide reassurance and a familiar face when people may be frightened or anxious of attending medical appointments. Staff work collaboratively with healthcare professionals to support people with their needs. For example, dieticians and speech and language therapists. Staff support people to manage individual risks whilst promoting a positive risk taking approach. Staff are trained and developed to carry out their roles and keep people safe. Staff promote healthy lifestyle choices to maintain people’s wellbeing.

People are encouraged to engage in meaningful activities. The agency recognises the benefits for people to develop relationships with peers and forge social networks. Staff support people with workplace opportunities and to attend regular activities such as social clubs, holidays, and day trips as part of individual goal setting. People are supported to maintain relationships with family and friends. The service is looking towards improving ways to support people to secure volunteering opportunities.

The service promotes the active offer. People are supported to celebrate significant dates and events in the year if they choose to do so. Staff’s Welsh language skills will be considered during recruitment.

Care and Support

People have a plan of care which sets out how their needs are to be met. The agency has introduced an electronic care planning system for people, which it has recognised will be beneficial for both people who use the agency and staff who support them. There will be more opportunity for people to set and review their personal outcomes. Staff will be able to access people's plans via handheld portals and report on their daily welfare. This will ensure people's documentation is reliable and up to date. Staff are positive about the changes. They told us communication has been improved since the introduction of the new system.

Routine reviews of people's plans have been conducted. It is expected there will be some delays in people's care plan reviews given documentation is in the process of being transferred to the electronic system. The manager has set a deadline for new system to be up and running by December 2024. Care planning will be considered in greater detail at our next inspection.

Risk assessments are in place which support people to take an active part in their lives and maintain their independence. People's support is individually tailored, and the agency is responsive to people's needs. Staff support individuals to maintain tenancy agreements and keep their property safe and secure by reporting faults.

The service adopts safe medicine arrangements. Medication support is given to people in receipt of services. There is a clear medication policy in place which safeguards people. Staff are trained to perform this role. Systems are in place which monitor and audit the agency's medication systems.

Leadership and Management

People receive a consistent, well managed, and planned service. There are effective systems in place to support the running of the agency. The manager is experienced and registered to carry out the role. They are a visible presence and are supported by a stable and experienced staff team who are trained and dedicated to conduct their roles.

At the time of our inspection there was no RI responsible for overseeing the management of the service and providing assurance it is safe, well run, and complies with the Regulations. We were told the area manager was supporting the manager in the RI's absence. A quality of care report was completed in April 2024 which set out improvements for the service. An internal service audit is planned for June 2024. During feedback, we were assured the service is being overseen in the absence of an RI and an application will be submitted as a priority.

People benefit from clarity of staff roles and responsibilities. On appointment, staff are provided with a job description and work specification identifying the responsibilities of the role. A copy of the agency handbook is provided to all new staff. Staff told us the service provider is supportive of staff's wellbeing and services are available to them.

Vetting processes need strengthening to ensure staff's fitness to work with vulnerable adults. An employment agency carries out staff's pre employment checks in the form of Disclosure and Barring (DBS) and seeking former employer references. We found gaps in one personnel file viewed which included a missing reference and gaps in a persons employment history which had been identified but were not explored. The outstanding information was shown to have been provided but not recorded. The manager plans to strengthen practices.

Staff are trained and developed to conduct their roles. Staff told us they felt fully supported to perform their duties. Newly appointed staff complete a recognised induction programme and are expected to complete a recognised care qualification. Staff can update their skills and knowledge via online training. Staff have opportunity for regular supervision. Staff are registered with the workforce regulator, Social Care Wales.

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