



Inspection Report on

Seren Support Services Ltd (Cwm Taf)

**Llewellyn House
Harbourside Business Park
Harbourside Road
Port Talbot
SA13 1SB**

Date Inspection Completed

24/06/2024

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About Seren Support Services Ltd (Cwm Taf)

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	Seren Support Services Ltd
Registered places	0
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	21 June 2023
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

People receive good quality care and support from Seren. Care staff have positive relationships with people and support them in a caring and dignified way. The service has developed an extremely strong system to support people where their needs or circumstances become more complex. Care staff do not always arrive within a reasonable amount of time in relation to their expected arrival time. People are supported to stay as healthy as possible and get the right support. People are supported to have their prescribed medication. Risks of infection are reduced and minimised. Systems are in place to help protect people from abuse and neglect. The service co-produces detailed personal plans with people. The service is well run and has a variety of governance, auditing, and quality assurance arrangements. People can be assured staff training and recruitment are as safe and effective as possible. The service takes extremely positive measures to promote staff welfare.

Well-being

Care staff develop positive relationships with people and support them in a caring and dignified way. The service promotes choice so people can be supported in a way which suits them. People are supported to achieve their outcomes, for example by a relative providing care getting a break or helping to prevent an admission to a care home. Care staff do not always arrive within a reasonable amount of time to people's homes, which can impact on people's well-being. People generally praise the conduct of care staff to a very high level and have good relationships with them. Care reviews and quality assurance processes enable people to provide feedback on the care they receive. Information is provided on how to make a complaint, with records and feedback showing actions taken to address any issues.

The service supports people to stay as healthy as possible and get the right support. Issues around people's health and well-being are reported and referred to the relevant health and social care professionals in a timely manner, with subsequent guidance acted upon. Management staff can track how people's care is delivered and respond very promptly where there are issues. Personal plans are person-centred, detailed, are reviewed regularly with people and their representatives and are updated when required. People are supported to receive their prescribed medication as directed in line with national procedures. Infection control measures are used correctly to protect people.

Systems are in place to help protect people from abuse and neglect. The service identifies potential risks to people or care staff and how to manage these. Care staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and how to report issues if they are concerned for a person's well-being, with policies and procedures in place to support this. Care staff feel confident if they raised an issue with the manager, it would be responded to appropriately. The correct pre-recruitment checks are in place and regular supervision and training supports continued development. Incidents and accidents are logged, with appropriate actions taken by the service in response. Ongoing quality assurance audits support systems to be effective and improvements are identified and addressed.

Care and Support

People receive good quality care and support. We observed kind, caring and respectful interactions from care staff. People and their relatives told us care staff are “*very sociable and very pleasant*”, “*exceptional – they take the time to get to know them*”, “*it feels like a team*”, “*carers understand people and how to interact*”, “*they’re all lovely*”, and “*they keep them safe, and they’ll raise any issue*”. We received extremely positive feedback about the service manager, who “*sorts issues*” and is “*very good and emotionally intelligent*”. Care staff know the people they support well, with the same core team of care staff usually working for the same people, which promotes continuity of care. Service records show care staff regularly arrive at times notably different to what should be delivered, and care staff are not always provided sufficient time to travel between calls. We advised this is an area for improvement, and we expect the service to take timely action to address this.

The service co-produces detailed personal plans with people. The service considers a range of information prior to providing support, then works with people and their families to ensure they have the correct information to support people effectively. Personal plans are extremely detailed and person-centred, providing very specific and tailored instructions on how people like to be supported, with relevant risk assessments in place. An electronic care plan system is used. This supports staff to ensure they deliver all areas of care in a person’s plan, with care tasks created from people’s agreed outcomes. People and their families can access this and see information such as call times and who is supporting them. Plans are reviewed with people and updated accordingly. Daily recordings give information about people’s progress, with supplementary monitoring charts, such as for dietary intake, also completed where required. The service refers to other professionals and agencies and acts on direction given.

The service has developed an extremely strong system to support people where their needs become more complex. Team leaders undertake well-being checks to people when required, which provides monitoring and support. This is in addition to the support the service is commissioned to provide. We saw several examples of how this impacted positively on people’s well-being, for example where additional needs have been identified and additional support has then been arranged. This is very innovative, has a positive impact for people, and the service is to be commended for investing in this resource.

Infection control measures are in place to help reduce the risk of transmission of potential sources of infection. Staff have access to a supply of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and use this as needed. People told us staff wear PPE appropriately. There is an infection control policy in place which care staff are aware of and understand their responsibilities. Care staff receive training on infection control.

Leadership and Management

The service is well run and has a variety of governance, auditing, and quality assurance arrangements. These help identify what is working well and where improvements are needed. The Responsible Individual (RI) has very good oversight of the service and is closely involved in its operation. They undertake three-monthly visits to meet with people and staff and complete six-monthly quality of care review reports. The service has recently started to use a system to support the management in the running of the service. This appears an excellent tool to facilitate productive and joined up working, enabling management to have oversight of all aspects of the service in real time. The service is proactive in seeking the views of people and staff, clearly evidencing the range of views expressed. Policies and procedures, such as for complaints, whistleblowing, medication, and safeguarding, are in place. Procedures are in place to deal with complaints, with the service clearly evidencing actions taken around how to resolve these. The service is open and transparent, making the legally required notifications to Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) regarding occurrences at the service.

People can be assured staff training and recruitment are as safe and effective as possible. Care staff files hold the correct recruitment information and evidence of required documentation, such as up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service checks, proof of identity, and Home Office clearance for overseas workers. The correct pre-employment checks are in place, and care staff are registered with the workforce regulator, Social Care Wales. New care staff start work once an induction has been completed, receiving enhanced and structured support in the first few months of employment. Training records show care staff have up to date training in core areas of care. They feel able to request additional training if needed, telling us “*Seren are big on training*”, and all those spoken with feel well-equipped to undertake their role. The service has plans to open a training academy, which would further enhance staff skills and competencies. The service has been proactive in ensuring care staff accessed medication training provided by the Local Authority recently in preparation for a new medication policy and procedures in the area.

The service takes extremely positive measures to promote staff welfare. Care staff told us “*I enjoy my job*”, “*it’s really good*”, and the management team “*listen to me*”. Care staff have regular supervision and a yearly appraisal to reflect on their performance, identify support they might require, and discuss any issues. Staff welfare checks are facilitated by team leaders, with additional spot checks also used. Management staff feel well supported by the RI and other directors. Several care staff told us they feel they could directly approach the RI if needed. The service has sufficient staff to provide care to the people it supports. We saw excellent examples of consultation with staff and measures to support staff welfare, such as developing a well-being project and payments towards staff car MOTs. The service has received national awards for its work in promoting staff welfare.

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
21	Care and support has not been delivered in accordance with people's personal plans. The service needs to ensure care staff arrive at people's homes within a reasonable timeframe in relation to the expected arrival time, with the expected arrival time to be correct in people's plans.	Not Achieved

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