



Making Social Care
Better for People

Inspecting for better lives

Key inspection report

Domiciliary care agencies

Name:	PULSE
Address:	Building 1 Turnford Place Great Cambridge Road Turnford Hertfordshire EN10 6NH

The quality rating for this domiciliary care agency is:

two star good service

A quality rating is our assessment of how well a care home, agency or scheme is meeting the needs of the people who use it. We give a quality rating following a full assessment of the service. We call this a 'key' inspection.

Lead inspector:	Date:
Jane Greaves	3 0 0 9 2 0 0 8

This is a report of an inspection where we looked at how well this agency is meeting the needs of people who use it. There is a summary of what we think this service does well, what they have improved on and, where it applies, what they need to do better. We use the national minimum standards to describe the outcomes that people should experience. National minimum standards are written by the Department of Health for each type of care service.

After the summary there is more detail about our findings. The following table explains what you will see under each outcome area.

Outcome area (for example User focussed services)

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

This box tells you the outcomes that we will always inspect against when we do a key inspection.

This box tells you any additional outcomes that we may inspect against when we do a key inspection.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

This box tells you our opinion of what we have looked at in this outcome area. We will say whether it is excellent, good, adequate or poor.

Evidence:

This box describes the information we used to come to our judgement.

Copies of the National Minimum Standards – Domiciliary Care Agencies can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or bought from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering from the Stationery Office is also available: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

Our duty to regulate social care services is set out in the Care Standards Act 2000.

Reader Information

Document Purpose	Inspection report
Author	CSCI
Audience	General public
Further copies from	0870 240 7535 (telephone order line)
Copyright	Copyright © (2008) Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, free of charge, in any format or medium provided that it is not used for commercial gain. This consent is subject to the material being reproduced accurately and on proviso that it is not used in a derogatory manner or misleading context. The material should be acknowledged as CSCI copyright, with the title and date of publication of the document specified.
Internet address	www.csci.org.uk

Information about the agency

Name of agency:	PULSE
Address:	Great Cambridge Road Building 1 Turnford Place Turnford Hertfordshire EN10 6NH
Telephone number:	01992305630
Fax number:	
Email address:	lisa.honour@pulsestaffing.co.uk
Provider web address:	

Name of registered provider(s):	Pulse
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	
Miss Lisa Honour	
Conditions of registration:	
Date of last inspection	
Brief description of the agency	
<p>This branch of PULSE is part of a large, national, private sector organisation (Match Healthcare Services Ltd). The Turnford branch of the agency was set up as part of the company's development of it's Independent Living services across the country to provide assistance with personal care, daily living skills and domestic tasks to people in their own homes. The branch office shares modern, purpose built office accommodation with the company head office, which provides supporting functions in relation to finance, payroll, invoicing, out of hours services, training and marketing. The PULSE offices are on the ground floor in a multi occupancy office block with easy access from the A10. The offices are accessible to staff and disabled users. Parking is available. Information about the services provided in the form of a Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide can be obtained from the registered manager. The manager is in the process of developing a scale of charges to be made available to people enquiring about the service. The fees levied for care and support provided by Pulse domiciliary care agency ranged from £11.41 per hour for day time to £26.46 per hour at night time. 'Sleep in' nights are charged at 50 pounds per night.</p>	

Summary

This is an overview of what we found during the inspection.

The quality rating for this agency is:

two star good service

Our judgement for each outcome:



How we did our inspection:

This inspection was unannounced and undertaken over two days, it started with a site visit to the agency offices on 30th September 2008 and finished on 14th October 2008 with a visit to the home of a person receiving support from the agency. The previous key inspection of this service took place on 30th October 2007.

The registered manager was available for consultation and discussion throughout the inspection process.

Prior to the site visit the manager had completed and sent into us (the Commission for Social Care Inspection) the agency's Annual Quality Assurance Assessment (AQAA). This is a self-assessment required by law and gave us detail of how the service feels

they are meeting the needs of the people receiving a service.

We would like to thank the manager, staff team and people using the service for their help throughout the inspection process.

What the agency does well:

Communication with the office staff was good and any changes in circumstances were notified and documented immediately ensuring the agency could respond flexibly. This ensured the needs of people using the service continued to be met in a way that suits them.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since the previous inspection visit new staff members had been given a copy of the General Social Care Council code of conduct so they are aware of their responsibilities as social care workers.

What they could do better:

The registered manager needs to complete a relevant management qualification so that people using the service may be confident her skills and knowledge are up to date and relevant.

If you want to know what action the person responsible for this agency is taking following this report, you can contact them using the details set out on page 4.

The report of this inspection is available from our website www.csci.org.uk. You can get printed copies from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by telephoning our order line -0870 240 7535.

Details of our findings

Contents

User focussed services (standards 1 - 6)

Personal care (standards 7 - 10)

Protection (standards 11 - 16)

Managers and staff (standards 17 - 21)

Organisation and running of the business (standards 22 - 27)

Outstanding statutory requirements

Requirements and recommendations from this inspection

User focussed services

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People are confident that the agency can support them. This is because there is an accurate needs assessment, which they, or someone close to them, have been involved in. This tells the agency all about them and the support they need and is carried out before they are offered a personal domiciliary care service.

People and their relatives can decide whether the agency can meet their support needs. This is because they, or someone close to them, have got full, clear, accurate and up to date information about the agency. People know that the agency can meet their needs because staff have the skills and experience to give them the care they need. If they decide to use the agency they know about their rights and responsibilities because there is an easy to understand contract or statement of terms and conditions between them and the agency that includes how much they will pay and what the agency provides for their money. People are confident that the agency handles information about them appropriately. This is because the agency follows their policies and procedures. They get a consistent, and flexible care service from reliable and dependable staff members.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

People using the service may be confident that a full assessment of their individual needs would be undertaken so that they know their needs can be met.

Evidence:

The agency was providing domiciliary care and support for one individual at the time of this inspection site visit. The registered manager had undertaken a care needs assessment and this, together with the local authority assessment, formed the basis of the care plan that detailed the care and support required to meet the needs and preferences of the individual. The assessment included areas such as mobility, personal care needs continence needs, meal preparation and likes and dislikes.

Personal care

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

Each person is treated as an individual and the agency is responsive to his or her race, culture, religion, age, disability, gender and sexual orientation. Their right to privacy is respected and the support they get from workers is given in a way that maintains their dignity. If people take medicine, they manage it themselves if they can. If people cannot manage their medicine, the agency supports them with it in a safe way.

People's needs and goals are met. The agency has a plan of care that the person, or someone close to them, has been involved in making. They are able to make decisions about their life, with support if they need it, as the staff promote their rights, choices and independence.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

People can expect to receive support in a manner that promotes respect and dignity.

Evidence:

It was not possible to obtain feedback from the individual receiving support from Pulse domiciliary care agency however at our visit with them we observed the support staff to interact with the person with dignity and respect.

The registered manager reported that Pulse support staff only prompt people to take medication via a blister pack or monitored dosage system. The Pulse staff handbook confirmed that staff only prompt with medication or assist by helping the person to position themselves to take medication or give water. The agency's Service User Guide states support workers cannot administer medication unless they have received the specialist training necessary to do this task however they may assist provided that the medication is dispensed from a dossett box or a blister pack. Medication was stored securely.

Protection

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People using the agency are safeguarded. This is because the agency follows health and safety procedures, keeps records appropriately and ensures their staff follow policies and understand the importance of assessing risks. The agency safeguards people from abuse, neglect and self harm and takes action to follow up any allegations.

People are confident that their property and money will always be safe as the agency follows the right procedures. Their health and rights are safeguarded as the staff keep an accurate record in their home of all the support they give them.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

People using the agency can be confident they are protected from the risk of harm or abuse.

Evidence:

The last inspection of this service identified that the registered manager needed to attend external safeguarding training. This had not taken place however Pulse safeguarding training had been attended by the manager and deputy manager. Discussion with the manager showed us that she had a good awareness of the various forms of abuse and the duty of the agency should it be brought to their attention that an individual was at risk. The registered manager was able to demonstrate that a great deal of work had been done with the staff team about the various forms of abuse and the understanding and recognising of abuse via internal processes such as staff handbook, induction, team meetings and supervision. Protection of individuals was a major element of the agency's recruitment procedures. Pulse support staff undertook an induction programme based on the skills for care induction standards, this included an element about safeguarding. The staff handbook contained information about the organisations' policies and procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults. This

Evidence:

information included how to recognise abuse or neglect, what whistle blowing entailed and how to report any suspicion of abuse. The application process includes a set of questions based on the common induction standards. One of the questions contained within this form explores the candidate's knowledge of the various forms of abuse, what signs and symptoms are associated with abuse and what to do if abuse or neglect was suspected. At the point of this visit there was no specific certificated training provided for the staff members about abuse however the organisation had safeguarding training that all staff were due to attend imminently. The organisation had access to a 'live on line' safeguarding training provision, the registered manager reported that this would be available to all staff by the end of October. People receiving support from Pulse domiciliary care staff were soundly protected by robust recruitment procedures including two written references and enhanced Criminal Record Bureau checks (CRBs) for each person. Records showed us that CRBs were routinely renewed annually.

Managers and staff

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People have confidence in the staff at the agency because checks have been done to make sure that they are fit to do the job. Their needs are met and they are supported as the staff get relevant training, support and supervision from their managers.

People have safe and appropriate support because the staff providing their care are qualified and competent. They are confident that the staff that provide their support are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

People using the service may be confident they receive care and support from safely recruited and well trained staff members.

Evidence:

The agency operated a robust recruitment process including two written references and enhanced Criminal record Bureau disclosures (CRBs) to ensure the right people were employed. Any query relating to the validity of papers for overseas staff wishing to work for Pulse were directed to the Home Office. The registered manager had twenty years experience in recruitment and 4 years in social care recruitment. She has managed this agency since the initial registration, keeps herself up to date with current management and care practices and intends to start a relevant management qualification in due course. The last inspection report for this service stated that the manager intended to complete the registered manager's award (RMA), this had not happened by the time of this inspection site visit. The organisation is aware of the impending changes in the RMA and intend for managers to start working towards the new award this month. The service did not operate a formal supervision programme as such however, there was constant contact with the support workers and all interactions were recorded. The organisation had a computer programme (IQX) and this captured detail of each conversation, meeting, concerns, training or performance

Evidence:

issue. In addition to this regular contact the registered manager and deputy visit support staff every three weeks.

5 of the 8 staff members delivering domiciliary care and support had achieved a minimum of NVQ 2 in care, this is equal to 62.5%, exceeding the recommended minimum ratio of 50%.

If staff identified any extra training needed to meet the needs of the people they support the agency provides this, for example Learning Disability Award Framework, epilepsy awareness or dementia.

Organisation and running of the business

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People get consistent and planned support from the agency because the manager runs it appropriately with an open approach that makes them feel valued and respected.

People using the agency are safeguarded because it follows financial and accounting procedures, keeps record appropriately and ensures that their staff follow policies. If people have concerns about the agency they, or people close to them, know how to complain. Their concern is looked into and action taken to put things right.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

People using the service can be confident that the business is managed effectively and that any concerns would be listened to and taken seriously.

Evidence:

The office space is situated within a large purpose built office suite with ample parking. The office houses a large team of Pulse recruitment staff covering the whole range of Healthcare agency needs. This particular unit represents the social care element. The office contained all the equipment necessary for the efficient and effective management of the service. The agency had a clear and comprehensive complaints policy and procedure that was made available to people using the service and contained within the staff handbook. There had been no complaints received by the commission or the service since the previous inspection visit.

A copy of the complaints policy was given to us at this visit.

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

Yes

No

Outstanding statutory requirements

These are requirements that were set at the previous inspection, but have still not been met. They say what the registered person had to do to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
-----	----------	------------	-------------	----------------------

Requirements and recommendations from this inspection:

Immediate requirements:

These are immediate requirements that were set on the day we visited this domiciliary care agency. The registered person had to meet these within 48 hours.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
-----	----------	------------	-------------	----------------------

Statutory requirements

These requirements set out what the registered person must do to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must do this within the timescales we have set.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
-----	----------	------------	-------------	----------------------

Recommendations

These recommendations are taken from the best practice described in the National Minimum Standards and the registered person(s) should consider them as a way of improving their service.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
-----	-------------------	-------------------------------

Helpline:

Telephone: 0845 015 0120 or 0191 233 3323

Textphone: 0845 015 2255 or 0191 233 3588

Email: enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.csci.org.uk

We want people to be able to access this information. If you would like a summary in a different format or language please contact our helpline or go to our website.

Copyright © (2008) Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, free of charge, in any format or medium provided that it is not used for commercial gain. This consent is subject to the material being reproduced accurately and on proviso that it is not used in a derogatory manner or misleading context. The material should be acknowledged as CSCI copyright, with the title and date of publication of the document specified.