

Comely Green Housing Support Service

Linkliving Limited
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Service provided by:
LinkLiving Limited

Service provider number:
SP2004004684

Care service number:
CS2015341372

About the service

Comely Green is registered with the Care Inspectorate to provide a combined housing support and care at home service to adults and older people with mental health support needs living in their own homes. It is one of a number of services provided by Link Living, an organisation which has been in operation for over 25 years. This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 26 April 2016.

The Comely Green service currently provides support to around a 100 people in Edinburgh living in their own homes. The service has expanded since September 2016 when the organisation transferred service users and staff over from another care provider.

The service aims to provide flexible support options to people, to help them take more control of their lives.

Support can focus on a range of issues such as practical, social and emotional support.

Staff support people flexibly helping them to build social support networks as well as supporting people to look for work or training/voluntary opportunities.

Where applicable staff also support people with personal care and medication management.

The service aims to use a person-centred approach to encourage and empower people to be part of their local community by making connections and leading ordinary lives.

What people told us

Before the inspection took place we sent out 30 care standards questionnaires for people who use the service to comment on the quality of the service across a range of areas. Seventeen were returned to us.

During inspection we met four people who use the service. We also contacted service users by telephone and email.

The following comments were made:

"The service have done so much for me and I am involved in recruiting staff. I have learned a lot of skills through being involved in this. I have also been involved in the newsletter and other service publications which I enjoy as digital design is my background. I can't praise the support staff enough. They know me really well and I can talk to them when things are not going so well and I need a bit of extra support. They are always there for you when you need them. Communication is really good. I am involved in my own support planning and that helps me to assess how things are going for me."

"I sought out support from Link Living after becoming unhappy with my other support service - the manager took on board what I disliked about that organisation and has ensured that I am provided with the consistency, stability and continuity of care craved and required."

"I have a very good support worker. I am happy with my support. It takes a long time for me to trust a support worker and I always have doubts and question myself. I feel that I can trust my worker and I have no doubts about trusting her. She is an excellent worker and the best support worker I have had in all the years I have had support."

"Since I took the tenancy things have gone well for me. Staff work hard and are professional throughout. There have been no problems for me."

"My support is very good. Link Living is a great company - happy all aspects."

"The quality of the service is great and my support worker is a wonderful person. I just wish the level of support I receive was a bit better and that the support would adapt to my needs. My life and difficulties have changed so the type of support I receive should change accordingly."

"My support transferred from another service. I continued with the same support worker which I am happy about but the different care provider has meant some changes/uncertainties. I was involved in my support plan. I found the drop down prompts re some questions helpful but others not so sure what they are asking. Support worker is familiar with computerised plan so able to ask if best place to cover something. I have not yet seen a print out of the plan but believe this is being organised."

"Just has first review last week and got welcome pack - would ideally have been pre transfer so I had all the information about the new provider but I have asked my support worker things as they have come up."

"I really like my support worker but I do feel that they don't have enough life experience to fully understand what I am going through at times. They do have all the training and try to support me well. I would welcome a review and discussion about my support package. I think one is being planned for me."

We received very positive feedback from an involved mental health professional who commented:

"Comely Green is a really excellent service. They are very person-centred and have worked so well with people with complex support needs coming out of hospital and have helped people to be actively involved in their community. The support they give helps people to stay in the community and has reduced the need for further hospital admissions in some cases. They communicate really well with me about any issues so that things are picked up quickly. They seem to be really good at recruiting the right people with the right values and have really good ways to involve people."

Self assessment

We no longer ask providers to submit self assessments but do have a look at each service's improvement plans to check that they are continually improving and involving people supported in the improvement planning.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

Comely Green puts people at the centre of all they do and have well established service user involvement processes. People supported have opportunities to share their views about all aspects of the service. Their views and ideas are used to make improvements.

Some people supported were actively involved in recruitment of staff and others are encouraged to use and develop their skills. For example, a service user told us that they design the newsletter and other service information making good use of their graphic design skills. This was helping them to reach their potential and build on previous skills.

The service had promoted self administration of medication, recognising that the way medication was managed previously for some people was unnecessarily restrictive. This was promoting people's independence and helping them to take more responsibility at a pace suited to their current needs.

The organisation had invested in technology so that it was easier for people supported to be involved in their own support planning and looking at things they would like to achieve.

There were a range of activities for service users to be involved in to support them to develop community networks. For example, there were theatre outings, gardening and walking groups. There was also individualised support to help people to attend appointments or pursue individual interests.

We heard of some very positive outcomes for people which were achieved through them having continuity and consistency in support and setting small manageable goals working towards achievable outcomes. The support had transformed some people's lives as they were now integrating in their local communities and doing things that would previously have been extremely challenging for them.

Staff, including those who had transferred from another provider told us that they felt very well supported by management and had clear direction in their work.

There were weekly team meetings which meant that staff had opportunities to discuss practice issues, keep up-to-date with any service developments and have access to management staff on a regular basis.

The organisation had a dedicated training and development officer who maintained an overview of staff training needs. Staff were supported to achieve qualifications in health and social care and in line with the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council.

Staff demonstrated good awareness of adult support and protection issues and reporting procedures. They told us that they worked in a supportive culture which promoted openness and shared learning and development.

What the service could do better

The skills and experience of staff was varied. Some staff needed mental health specific training including applied suicide intervention skills training (ASIST). Training in autism was also an identified staff training need. **(See recommendation 1).**

A few six monthly meetings had been delayed. These were being organised at the time of the inspection. A review matrix would support management in providing an overview of reviews completed and the forward planning review dates. **(See recommendation 2)**

There was still some quality assurance work to be done to check the quality and detail in records such as support plans and risk assessments.

Staff induction and probationary processes were under review. The senior support workers recently appointed would be responsible for ensuring that records were kept up-to-date and supervisions recorded in line with the organisation's policy. This will support staff to reflect on practice and regular monitoring of outcomes for people supported.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. We recommend that the service reviews the full staff team's training needs to ensure that all staff have training specific to the needs of people supported.

National Care Standards Housing Support Services - Standard 3.1: Management and staffing arrangements.

2. We recommend that all outstanding review meetings take place. This is to ensure that all service users have the opportunity to discuss their current health and social support needs.

National Care Standards Housing Support Services - Standard 4.1: Housing Support Planning

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

This service does not have any prior inspection history or grades.

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