

Key inspection report

Domiciliary care agencies

Name:	Shared Approach Limited
Address:	Parkside House Moss Lane Garstang PR3 1HE

The quality rating for this domiciliary care agency is: three star excellent service

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

Lead inspector:	Date:
Marie Cordingley	2 4 0 9 2 0 0 9

This is a review of quality of outcomes that people experience in this agency. We believe high quality care should

- Be safe
- Have the right outcomes, including clinical outcomes
- Be a good experience for the people that use it
- Help prevent illness, and promote healthy, independent living
- Be available to those who need it when they need it.

The first part of the review gives the overall quality rating for the agency:

- 3 stars - excellent
- 2 stars - good
- 1 star - adequate
- 0 star - poor

There is also a bar chart that gives a quick way of seeing the quality of care that the home provides under key areas that matter to people.

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.

We review the quality of the service against outcomes from the National Minimum Standards (NMS). Those standards are written by the Department of Health for each type of care service.

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

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- Regulating health and adult social care services to ensure quality and safety standards, drive improvement and stamp out bad practice
- Protecting the rights of people who use services, particularly the most vulnerable and those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983
- Providing accessible, trustworthy information on the quality of care and services so people can make better decisions about their care and so that commissioners and providers of services can improve services.
- Providing independent public accountability on how commissioners and providers of services are improving the quality of care and providing value for money.

Reader Information

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Information about the agency

Name of agency:	Shared Approach Limited
Address:	Parkside House Moss Lane Garstang PR3 1HE
Telephone number:	01995601701
Fax number:	01995600620
Email address:	
Provider web address:	

Name of registered provider(s):	Shared Approach Limited							
Conditions of registration:								
Date of last inspection								
Brief description of the agency	<p>Shared Approach Domiciliary Agency is situated in the town of Garstang, in between the cities of Lancaster and Preston.</p> <p>The agency is managed by Mr David Sharples (Managing Director) who oversees the work of the Registered Manager Paul Daly.</p> <p>The agency describes itself as 'domiciliary care plus', which is an appropriate description as it provides 24-hour care over the full seven-day period to enable people with a learning or physical disability to remain in their own supported living/tenancy homes. This care differs from the accepted 'domiciliary care' as it covers a whole range of tasks from in-depth personal care and support, community involvement and domestic tasks and is tailored to ensure it meets the needs of the age ranges of service users supported.</p> <p>The range of fees charged for a domiciliary service depends on an assessment by the agency. The agency charges £13.10 per hour. Further details of fees and other information can be found in the Service User Guide which is available on request from the agency.</p>							

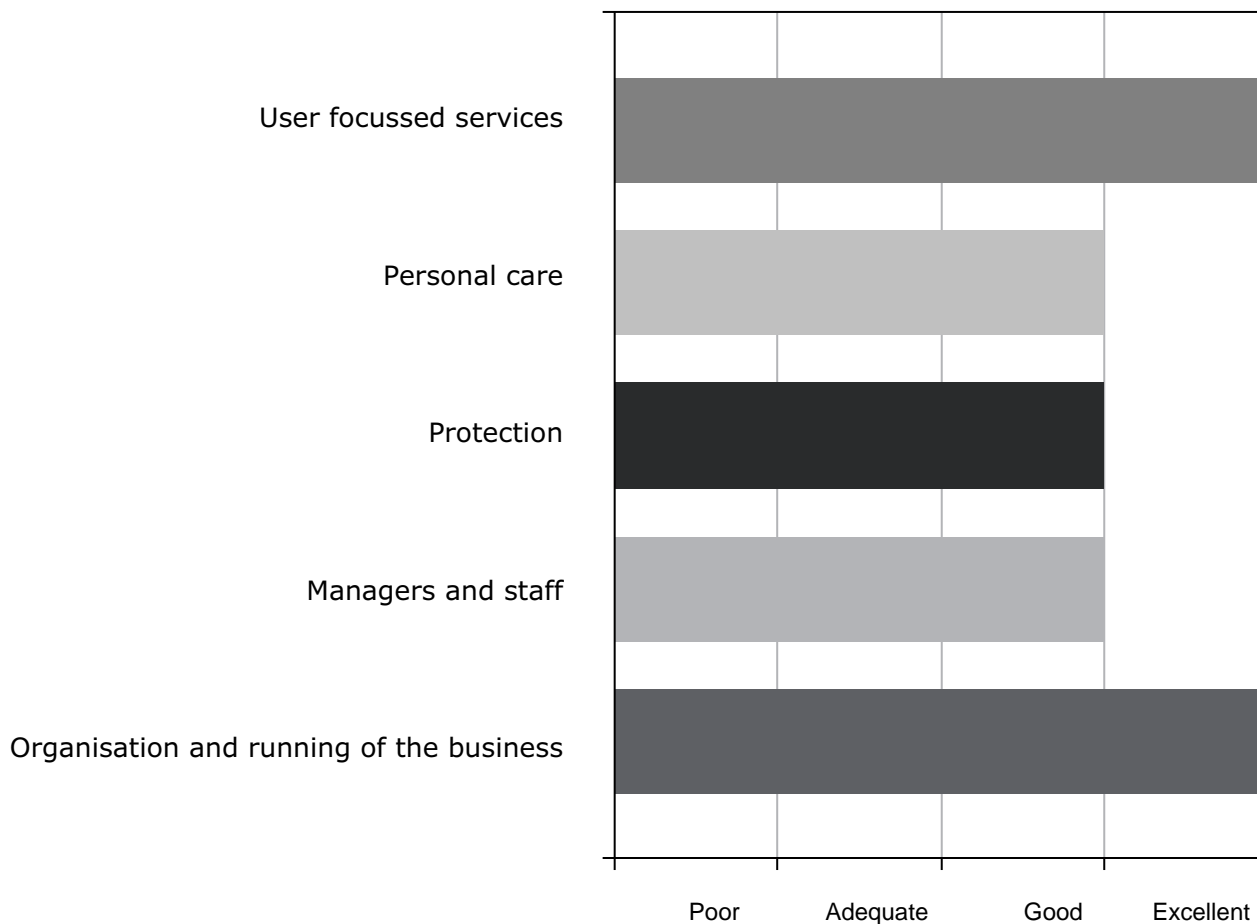
Summary

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

The quality rating for this agency is:

three star excellent service

Our judgement for each outcome:



How we did our inspection:

The inspection of this service included an unannounced site visit to the agency office. As the visit was unannounced the manager and staff did not know it would be taking place until we arrived.

During this visit we viewed a selection of paperwork including clients' care plans and staff personnel files and held discussions with the manager about various aspects of the service.

We visited several people who use the service in their own homes to discuss their views of the agency and also consulted several staff members.

Prior to our visit we asked the manager to complete a comprehensive self assessment which examined all aspects of the service provided and helped the manager to identify particular strengths of the service as well as areas for development.

We also wrote to a selection of people who use and work for the agency and asked them to share their opinions about the service. We received a good response and over twenty completed questionnaires were returned to us.

What the agency does well:

We received 24 completed surveys from people who use or work at the service and the majority of responses were very positive. Comments received included;

'They look after me good.'

'The agency is committed to providing an excellent standard of care and respecting service users.'

'Open door policy for service users and staff. Can talk to anyone at any time.'

'Very good support where I live.'

'I feel at the moment that the agency has improved its training, communication and level of support 100%.'

'The agency look after me well and are good listeners.'

We also met with some people who use the service during our inspection. While most people we met were not able to communicate verbally and tell us their views, they appeared happy and relaxed and clearly got along well with their support staff. During our visits we observed support staff going about their duties and noted that they did so in a professional and pleasant manner.

The agency has a thorough approach to the assessment of new clients. This ensures that people's care can be properly planned and that carers have a good understanding of people's needs before their service begins. It also means that clients can be assured that their needs will be met.

There are comprehensive care plans in place for every client which are regularly reviewed to ensure that carers are aware of people's changing needs.

The service works in a person centred way which means that people's support is planned in line with their individual needs, strengths and wishes. The strong emphasis and creative approach to communication adopted by the agency means that people are enabled to express their views to as great an extent as is possible.

People's health care needs are carefully assessed and their ongoing health is carefully monitored. Any health related issues are quickly identified by support staff and quick action is taken, such as referral to a health care professional. People's medication is carefully managed so as to safeguard their health and wellbeing.

The agency follows careful processes to help ensure that only suitable people are employed. This helps protect the safety and wellbeing of people using the service.

Carers that we consulted told us they felt well supported and able to approach the management team at any time. We also found that the agency has a very structured induction and training programme in place to help ensure that carers have the skills to carry out their roles well.

We found evidence throughout the inspection that the agency benefits from strong leadership and a committed management team who constantly monitor the quality of service provided and work towards continual development.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Since their last inspection the agency has continued to develop good practice to the aim of improving outcomes for people using the service.

There were two requirements made following the agency's last inspection, these were in relation to medication and health care. A number of good practice recommendations were also made.

We were able to confirm during this inspection that both requirements and the majority of recommendations had been met. One outstanding recommendation in relation to financial procedures has been repeated in this report.

What they could do better:

Whilst we found that the level of information in people's care plans was of a good standard, we did note that the majority of care planning information was recorded in a standard written format.

We discussed this with the manager who acknowledged that a number of people using the service would not be able to access this information. We made a recommendation that consideration be given to producing people's care plans in alternative formats that are more accessible to people using the service.

The systems for supporting people with their finances offer them protection from financial abuse. However, there is a danger that the systems used could result in less control for people and limit their opportunities to develop valuable life skills. We discussed this area with the registered manager and made a recommendation that the systems be reviewed.

At the time of our visit less than half the staff employed by the agency held National Vocational Qualifications in care. However, we accept that the recent intake of a large number of staff has caused the percentage of qualified staff to drop. We have made a recommendation that the NVQ programme be continued to help ensure that staff receive this training.

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 on page 4.

The report of this inspection is available from our website www.cqc.org.uk. You can get printed copies from enquiries@cqc.org.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 **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

People receive a personalised service which is planned in line with their individual needs.

Evidence:

A Service User Guide is available for anyone requiring information about the agency. The guide provides comprehensive information about all aspects of the service such as the types of support that can be provided and the fees charged for the support.

In discussion the manager confirmed that the Service User Guide is produced in a variety of different formats including an 'easy read' version. This helps ensure that everyone has access to the information.

Evidence:

At the time of our visit the agency had just started to provide support to four new people. We looked at the processes the agency had followed to ensure they had a good understanding of their needs before their service started.

We found that the agency had carried out extremely comprehensive assessments looking at all areas of people's needs including social aspects such as hobbies, activities and relationships. Assessments had been carried out over a long time period and the agency had worked closely with health care professionals and the new clients' relatives to help ensure they had an in depth understanding of the support people would need.

People we spoke with told us that the manager ensured consistency of care and that there were small dedicated staff teams for each person using the service. One carer who works on a full time basis with a specific client said 'Only people who know the client really well would work with her.'

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's individual strengths and needs are recognised and they are encouraged to participate in their own care planning.

Evidence:

We looked closely at the care of a small number of people using the service and found that there were comprehensive care plans in place in all cases. We noted that each care plan we viewed was extremely detailed in terms of the strengths, needs and personal wishes of the individual. In addition, we found that each person's care plan had been regularly reviewed.

For those people who had complex needs, for example in relation to their behaviour or health care, extremely detailed guidance was in place to help carers manage situations consistently and confidently.

Health action plans were in place for every client detailing their specific needs in this area as well as measures to promote good health such as sensible eating. Where appropriate, community health care professionals had been involved in the development of these plans.

Evidence:

In discussion with the manager and staff it was apparent that there is a strong ethos of person centred working and it was pleasing to note that all staff receive training in person centred approaches.

Each person's care plan we viewed had a strong emphasis on their preferred methods of communication to help ensure that carers could understand their preferences and what was important to them.

We saw a number of examples of how people had been supported to make choices in relation to their daily lives. For example, one person's care plan included a detailed report of how they had been supported to choose a holiday. The whole process had been recorded to provide evidence that the person had been enabled to make their own choices throughout.

Some parts of people's care plans were pictorial, such as the health action plans. However, we did note that the majority of care planning information was produced in a standard written format which would not be accessible to the majority of clients. We spoke with the manager about this and made a recommendation that consideration be given to how care plans could be made more accessible to the people they belong to.

The agency has robust systems in place for supporting people with medication. The support people need in this area was clearly detailed in their care plan as was any additional information such as details of 'as and when required' medicines.

We found that there was a good system in place for recording the receipt, administration and disposal of people's medicines and that medicines and records were regularly checked.

We were also able to confirm that all staff are provided with training in the safe administration of medicines at the start of their employment with the agency.

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.

The agency have robust systems in place to help protect the safety and well being of people using and working for the service.

Evidence:

The agency has a health and safety policy in place which is supported by various policies and procedures in areas such as safe moving and handling and food hygiene and safety.

Training records viewed at the time of our visit confirmed that all staff are provided with training in the key health and safety areas at the start of their employment. The manager has a good system in place to ensure that staff are provided with refresher training at appropriate intervals.

The agency has a nominated health and safety coordinator who carries out risk assessments in clients' homes at regular intervals. This helps ensure the safety of people using and working for the service.

In addition to environmental risk assessments, we viewed a selection of risk assessments that had been carried out in relation to people's individual support needs.

Evidence:

We noted that these assessments clearly identified potential risks and any action required to minimise risk was also very clearly detailed.

There were very detailed plans in place for people requiring support in relation to complex behavioural needs and where relevant these included detailed physical intervention plans. The agency has arrangements in place with other service providers in the area to examine any such plans they develop. This is an additional measure which helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of people using the service.

The agency has robust systems in place to ensure the safe handling of clients' money and regular audits of records of transactions made on behalf of clients are carried out by the management team. Much discussion took place about the financial procedures currently used and it was identified that whilst the current systems afforded protection for people from financial abuse, they did not fully promote people's opportunities to exercise choice, independence and autonomy. A recommendation was made that the systems be reviewed on this basis.

All registered services are required to have procedures in place that are to be followed in the event that it is suspected a client may have been the victim of abuse, generally referred to as safeguarding procedures. Staff spoken with demonstrated a good understanding of the procedures and were confident that they would be fully supported by managers in the event that they raised any concerns of this nature.

Training records confirmed that all staff are provided with training in safeguarding at the start of their employment and as part of their induction. We made a recommendation that more in depth training be provided in this area, particularly to staff in senior roles.

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 receive their support from carefully recruited, well managed staff.

Evidence:

We viewed a number of staff personnel files and found that the agency follow thorough recruitment procedures. Records confirmed that all applicants are required to complete an application form which includes a full employment history and a health declaration. Formal interviews are held for all candidates and a record of the interview is kept.

Before an offer of employment is made, applicants are required to provide two written references (one from a previous employer wherever possible) and undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check.

There is a structured approach to the induction and ongoing training of staff. At the start of their employment all new carers are provided with induction which is in line with Skills for Care standards and ongoing comprehensive training to help them carry out their role.

As well as training in the key health and safety areas such as moving and handling and food hygiene, we found that carers were provided with training in additional areas such as person centred approaches and positive behaviour support.

Evidence:

The agency have a programme in place to provide carers with the opportunity to undertake National Vocational Qualifications in care and records confirmed that out of approximately 80 staff members, 30 had completed their qualification. Whilst this ratio falls short of the national minimum standard it was accepted that the staff team had been increased by almost a quarter in the weeks preceding our visit and that this would have an impact upon the figures.

A number of staff members responded to our written survey and all gave very positive feedback about working for the agency. People told us that they had received a helpful induction and that they were very satisfied with the training provided. People also told us that they felt well supported and that the management team were very supportive.

A number of staff members commented that they had noted improvement in a number of areas over the last year including training and communication between managers and staff. One person wrote 'Shared Approach has made huge, positive changes in the last twelve months. Its run in a very professional manner and maintains its family feel despite the fact that its grown.' Another staff member commented 'There is good co-working between managers and front line staff and regular meetings where the views of staff and thoughts, opinions and ideas are not only listened to but also addressed.'

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

Shared Approach is a well managed agency where people's rights are promoted and their safety and wellbeing protected.

Evidence:

The agency has a strong management structure in place guided by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager.

Prior to our visit we asked the manager to complete a comprehensive self assessment about all aspects of the agency. This was completed to an extremely high standard, providing an excellent level of information and supporting evidence where appropriate.

Throughout our visit the registered manager communicated a genuine commitment to providing a quality service and protecting the wellbeing of people using the service. This was also demonstrated by examples of very good practice and person centred working seen throughout the inspection.

Through discussion we were able to determine that the manager is well aware of the need to keep updated about changes in legislation, social care and best practice and he was able to give numerous examples of updates made to policies and procedures in light of such changes.

Evidence:

There are a number of ways in which quality is monitored and clients' views and those of their representatives are gathered on a regular basis through arrangements such as the service user forum, regular care planning reviews and regular service user meetings. We saw examples of developments made as a result of suggestions from the service user forum such as the format used for health action plans. The agency has a clear complaints procedure in place which is available in a number of formats to suit people with a range of needs. A record of any complaint made and subsequent action taken is maintained to demonstrate that complaints are dealt with appropriately and in a timely fashion.

All the people who use the service and responded to our written survey told us that they knew how to make a complaint should the need arise.

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
1	7	People's care plans should be provided in formats that are accessible and meet their individual needs. This is to help further ensure that people have the opportunity to be involved in their care planning.
2	10	The homely remedy policy should be reviewed to help ensure that people have access to non prescribed medicines when they need them.
3	13	Procedures for dealing with clients' finances should be reviewed to help promote clients' choice and independence.
4	14	More in depth training in the area of Safeguarding should be provided to staff in senior roles.
5	20	The NVQ training programme should be continued to help ensure that the agency has a good ratio of qualified staff.

Helpline:

Telephone: 03000 616161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Web: www.cqc.org.uk

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