



REPORT ON CONTRACT MONITORING VISIT

Provider Visited: Avenue Care Services

Contract Compliance Officer: Nicola Gibson

Date of Visit: 09 February 2012

Date of Final Report: 2 March 2012
(First draft 29 February 2012)

INTRODUCTION

This report is prepared by a Contract Compliance Officer within Housing and Community Care. It complements external regulation of care services and is informed by them. All visits by the Community Care Contract Compliance Officer will use the agreed Contract Monitoring Framework and will focus on checking, controlling and recording whether the service is being provided in accordance with the terms of the contract and Perth & Kinross Council's 'Standards for Approved Providers of Home Care.

This is the first monitoring visit to Avenue Care Services since they were registered and added to Perth and Kinross Council's Approved Provider list on 4 July 2011. Avenue Care Services were offered "Spot Purchase" status effective from 1 August 2011 as a result of an external commissioning exercise; this was due to Avenue Care Services being a new provider with no proven track record in the care field. Avenue Care Services were advised that they would receive a monitoring visit within the first 6 months of providing care to check the quality of care. If the quality of care provided is found to be of an acceptable standard, it would then be recommended that Avenue Care Services become a "Core Provider" for North B and North D.

Monitoring took place over the period from 18 January 2012 to 13 February 2012 and the following methods were used to obtain the information for this report:

- Discussions with the Service Division Manager and Manager
- Home visits to 7 service users' who receives all, or part of their care from Avenue Care Services
- Checking 9 staff files
- Checking 7 service users files
- Observed practice visits to 4 service users who receive care from Avenue Care Services
- Avenue Care Services literature; policy documents, all relevant paperwork relating to the provider, the service user and staff

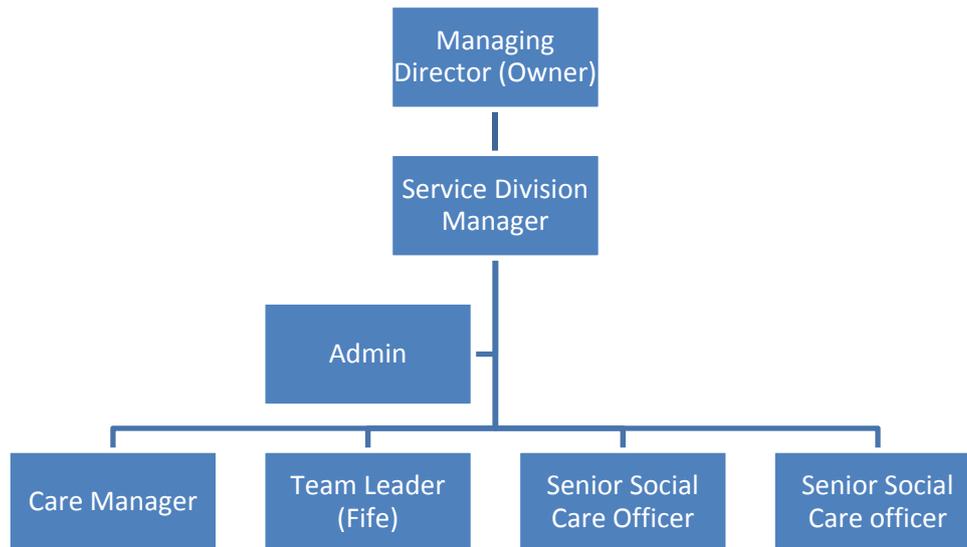
Questionnaires were also sent to 20 staff, 4 of which were returned.

Avenue Care Services is a newly established independent provider of home care based in Auchterarder. Avenue Care Services is part of Avenue Scotland a Recruitment and Consultant Agency based in Dunfermline which have been operating for 19 years. Avenue Care Services opened in August 2011 covering the Perth & Kinross area and they now expanded into Fife.

Avenue Care Services currently provides a domiciliary service for 81 service users who were referred by Housing and Community Care and this equates to 566 hours per week. Avenue Care Services also provide a service to 3 service users who arrange their care on a private basis and this equates to 14 hours of care per week.

Avenue Care Services employs 20 carers all of whom are contracted to 30 hours per week. There are also 5 sessional staff who cover holidays and absences. The Care Division Manager advised that all staff have signed the working time directive which allows them to work over 48 hours per week.

The current structure of Avenue Care Services consists of the:



The Service Division Manager is responsible for the day to day running of the service during the initial set up period but now has a more strategic management role. The Service Division Manager is responsible for line managing the 5 members of staff as outlined above. The Service Division Manager is also responsible for developing and implementing the training plan for Avenue Care Services.

The Care Manager is responsible for the day to day running of the service, staff supervision, service user reviews, direct observational practices on Social Care Officers, management of care plans and is proactive in delivering care if required. The Care Manager has attained an SVQ4 and has achieved the Registered Managers Award.

The Senior Social Care Officers are responsible for scheduling, service user quality control, direct observational practices and implementing hand held records. Both Senior Social Care Officers have attained their SVQ3 in Care.

Avenue Care Services is the only independent provider within Perth & Kinross to operate a real time monitoring system. The system is called I-connect. The system monitors the times that staff arrive and leave the clients houses. This is done via an electronic identity tag which is placed in each service users hand held record. Each

carer is issued with a mobile phone which has an identity tag on it. On arrival at each service users house the carer must touch the identity tag with their mobile phone. The system also alerts the manager on call should any worker be more than 30 minutes late at any call by an email and also if carers were in a house more than 15 minutes over their allocated time it would email the manager on call ensuring the health and safety of the workers at all times which links to the lone working policy. The system alleviates any concern over missed visits and the process allows the manager on call to contact clients if there was to be any change to what time the carer was going to arrive.

Avenue Care Services have not received an inspection from the Care Inspectorate to date. The results of any inspection should be shared with the Contract Compliance Officer upon completion.

All recommendations within this report have been cross referenced to Perth and Kinross Council's 'Standards for Approved Providers of Home Care 2004'.

HOME VISITS TO SERVICE USERS

Home visits were undertaken to 7 service users who receive their care from Avenue Care Services.

All service users' interviewed confirmed they are happy with the quality of care being provided by Avenue Care Services and stated that they feel the carers are experienced and well trained to deal with their care needs.

All service users' interviewed advised they receive a weekly rota from Avenue Care Services and but only some confirmed that they would receive a phone call to advise them of any changes to the rota. Avenue Care Services must notify their service users if carers are expected to be more than 20 minutes later than their appointed time or if there are planned changes to the rota.

All service users confirmed that all Avenue Care Services staff adhere to infection control guidelines and carers always wear gloves to assist with personal care tasks.

Comments included:

“timings are ok at the moment – I might need it a bit earlier in the summer”

“Excellent care – I’ve no complaints, the carers are all polite”

“They do a good job”

“It’s a pleasure to speak to them on the phone – they are so professional. Staff come well prepared and are smart. They are excellent, I can’t fault them at all”

“They try their best but sometimes a breakdown of communication in the office. I really like Rohan”

“They’ve been very good to me. They are all very respectful and kind to me. I’m well looked after”

Recommendation

If a homecare worker is expected to be more than 20 minutes later than their appointed time, service user should be notified as early as possible. (Standard 6.5)

FEEDBACK ON OBSERVED PRACTICE VISITS

Observed practice visits were undertaken on the following dates:

- 8 February 2012
- 9 February 2012

The Team Leader Care at Home and Contract Compliance Officer undertook 4 observed practice visits to service users who receive their care from Avenue Care Services. The observed practice visits are now part of the monitoring process and detailed feedback on each visit was shared with the Manager during the monitoring visit.

The following areas are assessed during each visit:

- Hygiene practices
- Health and Safety
- Moving and Handling
- Food Hygiene
- Medication
- Communication with clients
- Record Keeping
- Service User comments

The observed practices visits highlighted that the quality of care provided by the carers was of a good standard. All carers were respectful of the clients’ rights to privacy and dignity. The main recommendations relate to ensuring that all required paperwork is completed for each service user.

Full records of each observed practice visits were given to the Manager.

1. SERVICE DELIVERY AND QUALITY

1.1 SUPPORT/CARE PLANS AND REVIEWS

Effective from 1 April 2010, all Independent Care Providers are required to use Perth & Kinross Council's standardised Hand Held Records which contain a Care Plan or Personal Outcome Plan as written by Perth & Kinross Council. It was apparent during the home visits that Avenue Care Services are using Perth & Kinross Council's Personal Outcome Plans.

1.2 SERVICE USER FILES

On 1 April 2010, Housing & Community Care implemented the use of their Hand Held Records for all Independent Providers.

The hand held records were found to be of a good standard and contained all the required paperwork with the exception of the Data Protection Consent Form. However, some service users did not have a completed self medicating policy statement, general risk assessment or manual handling profile.

During discussions with the Manager it was advised that all outstanding paperwork must be completed within 1 month of the monitoring visit and further observed practice visits would be undertaken to ensure this recommendation is met within the given timescales.

The profile notes were found to be of a good standard and carers were writing a detailed overview of the care provided at each visit.

Recommendations

Avenue Care Services must complete all the required paperwork for each service user e.g. Data Protection Consent Form, General Risk Assessment, Manual Handling Profile. This must be done within 1 month of the monitoring visit.

1.3 PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

Avenue Care Services have a policy in situ regarding Privacy and Confidentiality which was last updated in August 2011. The policy outlines how confidentiality will be adhered to.

All staff are given training regarding confidentiality during their induction and are issued with an induction pack which contains the procedures to follow to maintain confidentiality. The returned staff questionnaires confirm staff are aware of the importance of confidentiality and how to handle requests for confidential information.

All staff and service users' files within the office are held in a secure filing cabinet to which only the relevant people have access.

1.4 SERVICE USER AND CARER INVOLVEMENT

Avenue Care Services have a policy in site called Quality Assurance/Service User/Carer Involvement. Quality Assurance will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3.

The Service Division Manager advised that Avenue Care Services wish to set up focus groups for service users/relatives/carers and plans for this are underway. The Service Division Manager confirmed that Avenue Care Services would be happy to be involved in any future joint focus groups with Housing & Community Care should the opportunity arise.

1.4 ADULT SUPPORT AND PROTECTION

Avenue Care Services have an Adult Protection Policy in situ which was last reviewed in August 2011. The policy states that Avenue Care Services will adhere to Perth & Kinross Council's Multi Agency Guidelines.

The policy outlines the categories and definitions of harm and the procedures to be followed by staff should harm be suspected.

All staff are provided with Adult Support and Protection Training during the induction process.

There have been no instances of harm or suspected harm since Avenue Care Services commenced providing care in August 2011.

1.5 COMPLAINTS

Avenue Care Services have received 1 informal complaint which was dealt with by the Care Division Manager. The complainant received a formal response via letter however they did not have to sign a complaint outcome form to confirm they were in agreement with the outcome of the complaint.

The completed staff questionnaires confirm they are aware of Avenue Care Services policy on complaints and are aware of the procedures to follow.

The service users interviewed as part of the monitoring process confirmed they have no cause for complaint and confirmed if they did have an issue, they would contact the Care Manager in the first instance. All service users

were also advised they could complain independently and confidentially to Housing & Community Care.

Recommendations

Any outcomes or agreed actions should be recorded and signed by both the person making the complaint and the recipient of the complaint. (Standard 9.3)

1.6 MEDICATION

Avenue Care Services have a Medication policy which was reviewed in August 2011. The policy is in line with the Standards for Approved Providers of Homecare.

All staff are provided with medication training during their induction in accordance with Perth & Kinross Council's Understanding Medicines Workbook 1 & 2. The Care Division Manager and the Care Manager provide the medication training in house.

It was evident upon the inspection of staff files that medication training is provided to staff. The completed staff questionnaires confirm that they receive medication training.

1.7 COMMUNICATION

Avenue Care Services hold staff meetings on a 6 weekly basis and copies of the minutes were made available during the monitoring visit. The communication between the staff and management appears to be clear and effective and memos are sent on a weekly basis which outlines any relevant changes to service users' care or additional information.

The questionnaires returned by staff confirm they are happy with the current amount of contact they currently receive.

1.8 FINANCES

Avenue Care Services have a policy in situ for handling service users' finances which is in accordance with the Standards for Approved Providers of Homecare. There is a financial transaction recording sheet in each service users hand held record.

None of the services users visited as part of the monitoring process required assistance with their finances. The Manager confirmed that all services users are encouraged to maintain control over their finances.

The 3 completed staff questionnaires confirm staff are aware of the procedure to follow should they be assisting service users with their finances.

2. ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

2.1 RECRUITMENT

Avenue Care Services have a Recruitment and Selection Policy in situ which was updated in December 2011.

Avenue Care Services are an equal opportunity employer and follow fair recruitment and selection. There is a recruitment and selection policy in situ which is in accordance with the Standards for Approved Providers of Homecare.

Upon checking the staff files, it was evident that all prospective employees are required to complete an application form which details their previous employment history. All employees are also required to provide the details of two referees, one of which is always the most recent employer.

Since 24 February 2011, all employees are now required to undertake a Protection of Vulnerable Group (PVG) check. All existing employees whose Disclosure Scotland certificates are due for renewal will now complete a PVG check.

2.2 INDUCTION AND TRAINING

Avenue Care Services have a training policy which was last reviewed in August 2011. It is the ultimate aim of Avenue Care Services that all carers achieve SVQ2 or SVQ3. 3 members of staff are already SVQ2 qualified. 8 members of staff have commenced their SVQ2 training, 7 have commenced SVQ3 and 1 has commenced SVQ4.

Avenue Care Services provides a comprehensive induction for all staff which includes the following topics:

- Moving and Handling theory/practical
- Adult Support and Protection
- Food hygiene training
- Hand hygiene training
- Policies and procedures
- Record keeping
- Aims and objectives
- Medication Administration Training

- First Aid Awareness
- Infection Control training
- Health and Safety Training
- Communication training
- Confidentiality training
- Supervision and appraisal
- Reablement training
- Outcome focused training

All employees are also required to undertake shadow shifts working alongside an experienced colleague. All new staff are subject to a 6 month probationary period during which they will receive 2 direct observations and 1 supervision session.

In addition to the induction programme, the training plan for 2012/13 consists of the following additional training:

- Continence Promotion
- CALM Training
- Dying, death and bereavement
- Nutrition & diet training
- Person Centred Care Planning
- Risk Assessment Training
- Care Planning
- Quality Assurance
- Train the trainer
- Dementia Care

Avenue Care Services are aware of the training provided by Perth & Kinross Council's Housing & Community Care.

The Service Division Manager advised that all staff will receive an annual appraisal once they have been working for Avenue Care Services for one year.

2.3 SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

Avenue Care Services have a Supervision and Appraisal policy which was reviewed in August 2011. The policy outlines the purpose, procedure and frequency of supervision and appraisal. The policy states that supervision will be undertaken on a quarterly basis and matters discussed will be recorded. During the 6 month probationary period, supervision will be undertaken every 6 weeks and there will be one direct observation undertaken. Although it is clear from the table below that direct observations are being undertaken on a regular basis to ensure a high

standard of care delivery, out of the 8 staff files inspected, only 2 contained evidence of a having received a formal supervision.

8 staff files were inspected during the monitoring visit; the results of which are outlined below. Each staff file also contained a record of the shadow shifts undertaken during the induction period.

Start date	Supervision date	Direct Observation
30/08/11	X	05/02/12
04/10/11	X	28/01/12
December 2011	X	08/02/12
01/08/11	18/01/12	16/08/11
07/11/11	19/01/12	25/01/12
December 2011	X	X
23/11/11	X	26/01/12
01/08/11	X	25/01/12

The Service Division Manager advised that there is an 'on call' system which operates 24/7. The completed staff questionnaires confirm they are aware of the 'on call' system and who to contact outwith hours.

Recommendations

Avenue Care Services must adhere to their own policy relating to the frequency of supervision especially during the probationary period. (Good practice)

2.4 STAFFING LEVELS AND ROTAS

At present there are currently enough staff employed to cover the workload of the organisation. There are 20 permanent carers and 5 sessional staff covering the Perth and Kinross Area.

Four sample rotas were inspected during the monitoring visit and it was found that adequate travelling time was allocated between each visit and confirmed there is enough staff employed to cover the current workload.

Avenue Care Services are actively recruiting for new carers.

2.5 ABSENTEEISM AND STAFF TURNOVER

All staff absences are recorded within the individuals personnel file and all reasons for absence are recorded.

Since August 2011, 10 members of staff have left Avenue Care Services and 30 members of staff have commenced working for the organisation. There are also 5 sessional staff.

2.6 SSSC REGISTRATION

The SSSC began registering managers of care at home services from 21 January 2011. From 31 January 2014 existing managers of care at home services are required by Scottish Government to be registered with the SSSC.

The Care Division Manager is registered with the SSSC and is aware of the organisations requirements with regards to reporting the dismissal of any staff member on the grounds of gross misconduct to the SSSC.

3. STRATEGIC RELEVANCE, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

3.1 INSURANCE

Insurance certificate is up-to-date for the period 6 September 2011 – 5 September 2012.

3.2 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Avenue Care Services adheres to the standardised rate for Care at Home which was implemented on 1 April 2009. Two different rates are payable;

£13.93 local (classed as any package within a 10 mile radius of Providers Perth & Kinross Base)

£14.46 non local (classed as any package outwith a 10 mile radius of Providers Perth & Kinross Base)

3.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Avenue Care Services have a quality assurance/service user/carer involvement policy which was last updated in August 2011.

Avenue Care Services are planning to undertake a Quality Assurance questionnaire using 'survey monkey' and will continue to do this on annual basis. The survey covers the following areas:

- Before using the home care services
- Privacy and respect
- My care worker
- Quality and reliability
- Communication
- Staying healthy
- Making a difference

All respondents are advised to complete the survey anonymously but are offered the chance to win a prize draw for the completion of the survey. There is a prize for 1st (£25 gift voucher) 2nd (£15 gift voucher) and 3rd (£10 gift voucher). In order to be eligible for this, service users must complete their contact details and submit them separate to the questionnaire.

Avenue Care Services are also in the process of developing a service user focus group which will be in a conference format. Avenue Care Services are planning to invite WRVS, Falls Collaborative and SCARF along to the conference to provide their service users with information.

3.4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Avenue Care Services have a Health and Safety Policy Statement which is in line with current legislative requirements and is signed off by the Managing Director and reviewed annually.

Avenue Care Services also have a Lone Working Policy in situ. Avenue Care Services have completed Risk Assessments for Lone Working which considers the following factors:

- Risk of violence
- Hoists and equipment
- Chemicals
- The worker
- Access and egress

All staff are provided with a staff handbook which contains guidance on Health and Safety and Welfare. All staff are provided with Health and Safety Training during their induction.

FEEDBACK FROM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY CARE STAFF

The feedback from Housing & Community Care staff was extremely positive. Comments received are as follows:

“I deal with Avenue on a regular basis as have done some transitional work with them. They have taken over two runs for me down in the Kinross area. They are very good with communication and have been great with the movement process. In general there are no complaints and are very good to work with. I will be reviewing the service in 4 weeks”.

“I certainly don't have any complaints have up to date found them efficient and helpful, there has been a couple of issues when clients/relatives have come back and said there were some things not getting done that they would

have liked and having addressed them with Jane McLaren they have been sorted out quickly.”

SUMMARY

It was clear from policy documentation, interviews with service users, and their carers and feedback received from Housing and Community Care staff that Avenue Care Services provides a high standard of care to service users in the community. Evidence shows that staff are competent, caring and professional. Both the Service Division Manager and the Care Manager are supportive of their staff and operate an open door policy.

Avenue Care Services are required to focus on ensuring that all staff receive regular supervision in line with the supervision and appraisal policy which states during the probation period employees will be provided with 6 weekly supervision.

Once Avenue Care Services have completed their first quality assurance survey, the results should be shared with the Contract Compliance Officer.

It is recommended that Avenue Care Services are awarded “Core Provider” status for North B & North D and a report will be submitted to Housing & Community Care Senior Management Team outlining this recommendation.

The provider should advise the Contract Compliance Officer, in writing, when this has been completed, enclosing copies of any updated policies, procedures or paperwork.

The recommendations should be actioned within the given time scale as detailed in the action plan.

IMPROVEMENT ACTIONS REQUIRED FOR AVENUE CARE SERVICES

Reference	Recommendation	Person Responsible	Date to be actioned by
Standard 6.5	If a homecare worker is expected to be more than 20 minutes later than their appointed time, service user should be notified as early as possible.	Service Division Manager	Immediately on receipt of report
Good practice	Avenue Care Services must complete all the required paperwork for each service user e.g. Data Protection Consent Form, General Risk Assessment, Manual Handling Profile. This must be done within 1 month of the monitoring visit.	Service Division Manager	within 1 month of monitoring visit
Standard 9.3	Any outcomes or agreed actions should be recorded and signed by both the person making the complaint and the recipient of the complaint.	Service Division Manager	Immediately on receipt of report
Good practice	Avenue Care Services must adhere to their own policy relating to the frequency of supervision especially during the probationary period.	Service Division Manager	Immediately on receipt of report