

Guide Communicator Service Housing Support Service

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Lenzie
Kirkintilloch
Glasgow
G66 5BG

Telephone: 0141 777 6111

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 7 September 2016

Service provided by:
Deafblind Scotland

Service provider number:
SP2004004448

Care service number:
CS2003053997

About the service

The Guide Communicator Service is registered to provide Support to individuals with a severe dual sensory impairment. The service is operated by Deafblind Scotland.

The service is based on an interpreting model focusing on communication with individuals using their chosen methods. Staff relay to individuals what is seen and heard, including spoken, non-verbal, written and environmental information. Staff will also assist and encourage individuals to develop new communication skills.

Staff within the service are trained in a range of communication methods including British Sign Language and tactile sign language.

The support which individuals receive from the service is dependant on assessments of individual needs and decisions by funding authorities relating to allocated hours. The majority of service users receive less than five hours support per week.

What people told us

During our inspection we spoke to a number of service users usually with the assistance of their Guide/communicator and examined questionnaires which had been completed by them or their relatives. Without exception, all were very happy with and full of praise for the service and especially the guides who supported them. Service users stated that due to their communication challenges, the service enabled them to have an improved quality of life which they would not otherwise have. In particular the support given allowed them to participate in activities and socialise in the community giving them a degree of independence. This was much valued by them.

Self assessment

The service submitted a self assessment which was detailed, complete and submitted in good time.

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

Following our inspection we found that the service provided skilled and bespoke support to service users with a wide range of complex communication needs. Service users were deafblind or severely dual sensory impaired using a wide variety of communication methods and styles developed over their lives. It was the skill of the Guide/communicators to assess this need and match, as best they could, the preferred method of communication adopted by the person.

Having built up a successful and trusting professional relationship with their Guide/communicator the service user was then able to enjoy a vastly improved level of independence and quality of life. The service could also then build a more comprehensive picture of the individual including their needs, wishes and personal goals.

Many service users were also supported by other services for different areas of support and this required an effective level of communication a co-operation with all concerned.

What the service could do better

We found that the service continued to provide a high quality level of support to service users. The main area of concern for service users and their families was a desire if not a need for more support hours to be made available. This was almost without exception the case for all those we had contact with. Although placing the service in a difficult position, we felt they had a role in facilitating service users to make their case in this regard to the budget holders within the local authority. We considered that the provision of this communication service was fundamental to the health, welfare and wellbeing of the deafblind community they served and without which they would and did become socially isolated and withdrawn.

Service users and their families were also aware of changes in the staffing of the office bases which caused them difficulties at times in terms of communication and having their needs and requests met. We understood that newer office and admin staff were in post and were rising to the challenge of this specialised and challenging role.

We also noted that the Guide/communicators employed by the service had no contract and worked autonomously and independently. This made it difficult at times for the service to ensure the continuity of service requested by the service users they supported.

We noted a number of areas within the records and documentation held by the service which would benefit from revision.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 5

1. The service should support service users to make their support needs known to those with decision making responsibility for such matters.

NCS 6 Housing Support Services - Choice and Communication.

2. The service should consider the use of 'Hospital Passports' for use should a person being supported be admitted to hospital.

NCS 4 Housing Support Services - Housing Support Planning.

3. While risk assessments have been carried out and are held in the service's database, copies of these should be held within individual support plans for the immediate information of anyone requiring this information.

NCS 4 Housing Support Services - Housing Support Planning.

4. The service may wish to consider the viability of fixed hour contracts for Guide/ communicators thus providing stability, continuity and control over hours worked.

NCS 4 Housing Support Services - Housing Support Planning.

5. The service should monitor the progress and practice of office admin staff providing all necessary support to ensure a quality response to service user enquiries and requests.

NCS 3 Housing Support Services - Management and Staffing Arrangements.

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

Date	Type	Gradings								
11 Aug 2015	Announced (short notice)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	5 - Very good
Care and support	5 - Very good									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	5 - Very good									
Management and leadership	5 - Very good									
6 Sep 2013	Announced (short notice)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	5 - Very good	Management and leadership	4 - Good
Care and support	5 - Very good									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	5 - Very good									
Management and leadership	4 - Good									
7 Sep 2011	Unannounced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	Not assessed
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Management and leadership	Not assessed									
18 Dec 2008	Announced	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>5 - Very good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>4 - Good</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	5 - Very good	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	4 - Good	Management and leadership	4 - Good
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Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	4 - Good									
Management and leadership	4 - Good									

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