



The Regulation and
Quality Improvement
Authority

Families Matter Shared Lives Scheme
RQIA ID: 11292
The Gatelodge
326 Crumlin Road
Belfast
BT14 7EE

Inspector: Rhonda Simms
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**Announced Care Inspection
of
Families Matter Shared Lives Scheme**

24 February 2016

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
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Tel: 028 9051 7500 Fax: 028 9051 7501 Web: www.rqia.org.uk

1. Summary of Inspection

An announced care inspection took place on 24 February 2016 from 09.30 to 14.45. Overall on the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering safe, effective and compassionate care. No areas for improvement were identified there is no Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) appended to this report. This inspection was underpinned by The Adult Placement Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and the Draft Minimum Standards for Adult Placement Agencies 2005.

1.1 Actions/Enforcement Taken Following the Last Inspection

Other than those actions detailed in the previous QIP there were no further actions required to be taken following the last inspection.

1.2 Actions/Enforcement Resulting from this Inspection

Enforcement action did not result from the findings of this inspection.

1.3 Inspection Outcome

	Requirements	Recommendations
Total number of requirements and recommendations made at this inspection	0	0

This inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations being made. Findings of the inspection can be found in the main body of the report.

2. Service Details

Registered Organisation/Registered Person: Agnes Lunny Positive Futures	Registered Manager: Elizabeth Palmer
Person in charge of the agency at the time of Inspection: Elizabeth Palmer	Date Manager Registered: 1 December 2010
Number of service users in receipt of a service on the day of Inspection: 24	

Families Matter Shared Lives Service offers people with a learning disability, acquired brain injury or autistic spectrum condition short breaks or longer stays with approved individuals or families (known as Shared Lives Carers).

Some Shared Lives Carers provide weekend or short term planned support in order to provide existing carers with a short break (respite) and to provide individuals with opportunities to have new experiences. Long term placements are provided when an adult requires long term accommodation, similar to a fostering arrangement.

The agency has currently placed 24 adults within 32 placements. Within this report, adults in receipt of a service from the agency will be referred to as 'people supported', in accordance with their wishes.

3. Inspection Focus

The inspection sought to assess progress with the issues raised during and since the previous inspection and to determine if the following themes have been met:

Theme 1

Carers are trained and supported to meet the needs of individual service users.

Theme 2

The agency regularly reviews and monitors the placement.

4. Methods/Process

Specific methods/processes used in this inspection include the following:

Prior to inspection the following records were analysed:

- The report of the previous inspection
- Any correspondence forwarded to RQIA regarding the service.

During the inspection the inspector met with the registered manager, the operations manager, and two Families Matter Shared Lives Social Workers. Prior to the inspection, the inspector spoke with two carers by telephone.

Prior to the inspection a number of questionnaires were issued to people supported asking them how satisfied they were with the service provided. Five questionnaires were returned and indicated that people supported were either satisfied or very satisfied:

- That they felt safe and secure on placement
- That they were happy with the person they were matched with
- That they know how to make a complaint
- That complaints are dealt with
- That they are listened to
- That they are asked how good the placement is.

Comments from, or on behalf of, people supported

'**** is very happy with the placement, **** could not be happier.'

'I have never had to make a complaint but I know how to.'

'I am happy at the ****'s house (placement) I stay over on a Saturday.'

'**** (carer) is kind to me.'

Prior to the inspection a number of questionnaires were issued to carers asking them how satisfied they were with the service provided by the agency. Six questionnaires were returned which indicated that people were either satisfied or very satisfied.

- With the training provided
- The induction programme
- With the support to participate in review meetings
- That the agency listen to the wishes and feelings of the person supported
- The support they receive as carers.

Comments from Carers

'I like the training.'

'The staff are very supportive.'

'I present at review meetings and feel this is important.'

'I love the training, the various times selected are very flexible.'

'I enjoy meeting other carers...the training was good.'

'We are advised of any changes in the care plan.'

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- Carers' induction records
- Placement agreements
- Carers' Handbook
- Example of carers' diary
- Carers' training records
- Training evaluation records
- Minutes of carer group meetings and events
- A range of care and support plans
- HSC Trust assessments of need and risk assessments
- Care review records
- Placement monitoring reports
- Quality monitoring reports
- Annual quality report
- Evaluation questionnaires from carers and people supported undertaken by the agency
- Support group newsletters
- Staff meeting minutes
- Policies and guidance including those relating to: monitoring and review, whistleblowing, complaints, safeguarding.

5. The Inspection

5.1 Review of Requirements and Recommendations from the Last Inspection

The previous inspection of the agency was an announced care inspection dated 5 March 2015. There were no requirements or recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

5.2 Theme 1: Carers are trained and supported to meet the needs of individual service users.

Is Care Safe?

The agency has a system in place to ensure that carers receive mandatory and other relevant training. The inspector saw completed training records relating to a range of carers, including induction and ongoing training. Discussion with the registered manager, operations manager and social workers indicated that the agency had creatively considered and responded to the training needs of individual carers. The inspector received positive feedback from carers regarding the quality of the training and the additional benefits of meeting and learning from other carers at training events.

It was noted that the agency has methods to ensure that carers have the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities to provide care to people supported. The inspector viewed a number of training evaluation records and noted that training needs are discussed at regular monitoring visits to carers undertaken by Families Matter Shared Lives Social Workers.

The inspector examined records of induction and noted that carers indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied regarding the induction programme in the questionnaires returned prior to the inspection.

‘We were impressed with the induction.’

Agency staff discussed the process of matching people to be supported with carers, including introductory meetings as part of an induction process. The inspector examined an example of the home file and diary provided to all carers during induction which includes information regarding the person supported; relevant policies including safeguarding, complaints and whistleblowing; placement agreements; and what is expected of carers by the agency.

The agency has a policy and procedure relating to short notice or emergency induction arrangements. The registered manager emphasised that the agency deals only with emergencies in relation to people who are already known and supported by the agency.

Is Care Effective?

The agency provides written and verbal information to carers to ensure that they have a clear outline of their role and responsibilities which includes:

- Placement agreement
- Home file and diary containing information about what is expected, agency policies and procedures and relevant contact details for support
- Information and care plan regarding the person supported
- Induction and ongoing training
- Regular monitoring visits and contact with the Families Matter Shared Lives Social Workers as required.

As part of the inspection process the inspector spoke with two carers, both of whom indicated that they had received clear information regarding their responsibilities and felt

confident regarding their role and agency expectations of them. One carer stated, 'The agency is very supportive in every aspect of the person supported, always ready to listen and offer advise if problems arise.'

The inspector discussed the referral and matching process with the registered manager and agency social workers, and saw relevant written records. A Families Matter Shared Lives Social Worker discusses the wishes of the person to be supported regarding the type of placement they would consider and how they would like to occupy themselves whilst on placement. The views of the person to be supported are recorded in a format appropriate to their needs. A carer described how they were successfully matched with an adult they provide short break support to: 'We met and got on really well, we are a perfect match.'

It was noted that the agency uses one to one discussion and training evaluation questionnaires to assess the effectiveness of induction and training. The registered manager could describe how feedback from carer evaluation of training has been used to improve the effectiveness of training events.

The agency has support mechanisms in place to support carers, including carer support events, carer social events, and regular home visits in addition to monitoring visits if required. Information provided to carers includes the contact number of the social worker and how to access out of hours support. It was noted that carers provided very positive feedback regarding the quality of support provided by the agency. One carer stated, 'The staff are very supportive, willing to listen... and act where appropriate.'

Some carers highlighted that the opportunity to meet other carers through training, support and social events has been beneficial for them.

Carers provided feedback to the inspector that they were aware of how to make a complaint or whistleblow. Information relating to whistleblowing is included in the home file and through training.

Is Care Compassionate?

The inspector saw written evidence of how the agency obtains the views of people supported and their families through feedback questionnaires, monthly monitoring, and the annual monitoring report. Prior to the annual review with the HSC Trust, people supported are encouraged to complete a 'How happy are you' document.' The inspector examined summary outcomes and action plans of recent feedback gained from relatives and people supported.

Carers provided positive feedback that the agency informs them in writing of any changes to the care plans of people supported. A Families Matter Shared Lives Social Worker described a process of discussing ongoing changes in the needs of a person supported with the carer and provided written evidence of correspondence regarding changes. A carer providing a long term placement highlighted how they inform the agency of relevant changes in the needs of the person they support.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified in relation to Theme 1.

Number of Requirements:	0	Number of Recommendations:	0
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5.3 Theme 2: The agency regularly reviews and monitors the placement.

Is Care Safe?

The agency maintains policy and guidance which relates specifically to the monitoring and review of adult placements in accordance with regulations and draft minimum standards. The inspector examined records maintained in respect of announced and unannounced monitoring visits undertaken by social workers working for the agency. The agency has devised a template for recording monitoring visits which includes a range of relevant issues including the views of the person supported and the carer.

Is Care Effective?

The inspector received feedback from carers who indicated that they are facilitated to take part in all review meetings, including monitoring visits and reviews with the HSC Trust. The registered manager discussed how annual reviews are scheduled in agreement with the carer and their views are recorded and responded to. It was noted that a range of review minutes contained the views of carers and any actions required in response to their views. Detailed records were kept in respect of announced and unannounced monitoring visits and provided assurance of placement monitoring. Carers who spoke with the inspector provided positive feedback regarding their experience of review processes.

Is Care Compassionate?

The inspector examined a range of records which provided assurance that the views of people supported and their representatives are consulted with and have their views considered in relation to service delivery. The views of the person supported are ascertained and recorded as part of the referral and matching process and then through monitoring visits. Prior to the review, people supported are invited to participate in a 'How Happy Are You' questionnaire. The registered manager and operations manager discussed an ongoing review of agency documentation which could lead to an enhanced representation of the views of people supported in annual review records.

It was noted that carers, people supported and their relatives are included in an annual survey undertaken by the agency and reported on across the wider agency. Comments from a relative included: 'It's a fantastic service.' There was evidence that the views of people supported and their representatives form action plans for service improvement within the agency.

As part of the inspection process the inspector received feedback from carers who indicated that their views were heard and considered by the agency. The agency provides opportunities for carers to meet each other in the context of training, support events and social events. Carers gave feedback to the inspector that this range of activities provides an opportunity to benefit from the experience and support of other carers.

During the course of the inspection, the promotion of human rights and the values underpinning the draft minimum standards were demonstrated by review of a range of documentation and discussion with agency staff and carers.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified in relation to Theme 2.

Number of Requirements:	0	Number of Recommendations:	0
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5.4 Additional Areas Examined

Complaints

The agency returned to RQIA a summary of all complaints received between 1 January 2014 and 31 March 2015. The agency received no complaints during or subsequent to this period.

Quality Monitoring

A report of the annual quality monitoring completed on behalf of the registered person was reviewed. The report evidenced how the agency ascertains and responds to the views of people supported, carers, HSC Trust professionals and staff.

The inspector reviewed monthly quality monitoring reports completed by the operations manager which included the views of people supported, carers, HSC Trust professionals and staff. It was noted that HSC Trust professionals provided positive feedback regarding the service provided. The monthly monitoring reports included improvement actions and progress on their completion.

The agency's monitoring reports were comprehensive and provided assurance of a robust system of quality monitoring and service improvement.

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and weaknesses that exist in the service. The findings set out are only those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not absolve the registered person/manager from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with minimum standards and regulations.

No requirements or recommendations resulted from this inspection.

I agree with the content of the report.

Registered Manager	Liz Palmer	Date Completed	24.06.16
Registered Person	Agnes Lunny	Date Approved	24.06.16
RQIA Inspector Assessing Response	Rhonda Simms	Date Approved	29.06.16

Please provide any additional comments or observations you may wish to make below:

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