



Inspection Report on

Advantage Healthcare South Wales and West (Cardiff and Vale)

**Advantage Healthcare
33-35
Cathedral Road
Cardiff
CF11 9HB**

Date Inspection Completed

13/02/2023

Welsh Government © Crown copyright 2023.

You may use and re-use the information featured in this publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government License. You can view the Open Government License, on the National Archives website or you can write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk
You must reproduce our material accurately and not use it in a misleading context.

About Advantage Healthcare South Wales and West (Cardiff and Vale)

Type of care provided	Domiciliary Support Service
Registered Provider	Advantage Healthcare Limited
Registered places	0
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	This is the service's first inspection since registering with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) under the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act (2016)
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

Advantage Healthcare Limited is a domiciliary support service which operates throughout Wales. They provide care and support to people with complex needs, in their own homes. This report is for the Cardiff & Vale; Cwm Taf; North Wales and Gwent areas, due to supporting 20 or less people in each area. The registered services in Powys; West Wales and West Glamorgan are currently dormant and not delivering care.

People receive a tailored service from Advantage Healthcare Limited. Care needs are assessed and planned for by skilled, nursing staff. Personal plans and risk assessments are thorough, detailed and contain all the information needed to ensure people receive the right care and support at the right time. People are generally happy with the care and support they receive, and they are supported through a personalised approach to care and support.

Care workers are safely recruited, vetted, and trained appropriately. The service has been impacted in the same way as many in the sector with the current recruitment challenges. Two areas of improvement were identified at this inspection, relating to staffing and overall governance. Assurances have been given that the issues raised will be addressed. These issues will be considered at the next inspection.

Well-being

People receive a delivery of care that is individually tailored and driven by professional judgements and evidence-based assessments. People can be confident they are supported by care workers who are trained, have a good understanding of their condition, and implement approaches in line with their needs. We found good evidence of robust consultation with professionals, which helps to effectively manage complex risks for people.

Overall people are happy with the care and support they receive. People speak positively about their relationships with care workers, the following comments were made *‘the care staff are ten out of ten’, ‘very efficient and caring’ ‘I am 100% confident in their abilities, the girls aren’t working for the money, they are working because they actually care’*. Care workers treat people with dignity and respect. People receive appropriate, kind and caring support from care workers who are familiar with their needs. Care workers told us they are motivated in their work and spoke about people they support in a warm and respectful manner.

Turnover of care workers is high, meaning that people are often supported by different staff who do not know them as well as their regular carers do. Despite this people told us there are core groups of care workers they see. One person told us *‘People don’t seem to stay long. The pay and conditions don’t seem proportionate to the level of responsibility and skill they have.’* Another person commented *‘People are leaving as quickly as they are coming in. They need to appreciate their care workers more.’* People spoke highly of the dedication and attitude of care workers. They said care workers are polite and feel confident they know what they are doing. Care workers we spoke to are positive about the job they do, but some are frustrated at the organisation of their rotas, and their terms and conditions of employment.

People have as much choice and control over their daily lives as possible. A personalised approach is taken by the service. People are involved in the planning of the care they receive and how they wish their support to be provided is clearly documented.

Care and Support

The service provider is clear about its aims and objectives. We viewed the statement of purpose (SOP). The SOP is fundamental in setting out the vision for the service and is a key document that should clearly demonstrate the range of health and care needs the service will provide support for, including any specialist service/care provision offered. The SOP provides an overall picture of the service offered and has been updated.

People we spoke to told us they were happy with the care workers they see. One person told us *“I have had a couple of care agencies. Advantage are brilliant. Their staff are the most efficiently trained.”* Another person commented *“Absolutely amazing, can’t fault them”*. People receive an assessment of their needs prior to the service commencing and agree what tasks they would like assistance with and at what time. People are provided with information about the service and details of how they can complain if they are not happy with the service.

Personal plans of care include the views of the person being cared for and highlight what tasks people can do independently as well as what tasks they require support with. There are risk assessments and accompanying information in place where required, care plans are kept under review. We saw evidence that referrals are made to health and social professionals when required.

Regular reviews ensure that information is kept up to date, we saw that personal plans had been updated and in line with regulation. Records show that people have the opportunity to be involved in personal plans and their reviews. One person told us *“Staff are regularly monitored. I can’t fault the nurses, they come often to check staff’s abilities and check equipment.”*

People are protected from abuse and neglect. People told us they feel safe with the support they receive. Care workers go through the appropriate recruitment checks, have a disclosure and barring service check and receive safeguarding training. Safeguarding policies and procedures are in place and reflect current guidance. Care workers know what processes to follow if there is a concern. Policies and procedures provide clear information on who to contact following a concern. All care workers receive appropriate infection control training. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is available to staff. Detailed risk assessments give information to care workers on how to undertake tasks appropriately to reduce risk.

Leadership and Management

There is a robust system to recruit care workers, with staff personnel files containing all necessary information. The induction process ensures care workers have adequate time to work with people they support so they get to know them well, and people feel comfortable being supported by them. Care workers have relevant training and competency checks to meet people's needs, including specialist training to meet the individuals bespoke care needs. Care workers said they feel equipped to undertake their roles. One person told us "*I have worked for a lot of agencies in the past. Advantage is the best by far. Training is number one. There is a number of extra training for complex care if we go into different packages. I highly recommend this company*".

The provider has arrangements in place to oversee the operation of the service and consider the quality of care delivered. There are monthly audits of care documentation, accidents and incidents and recording when matters have been referred on to appropriate external agencies. We recommend all audits are signed and dated to reflect when completed. Policies and procedures are in the process of being transferred to that of City & County Healthcare Group, the holding company for Advantage Healthcare Limited. Policies are comprehensive and reviewed regularly, however make no reference to Advantage Healthcare Limited within them.

Governance arrangements in place support the operation of the service. The Responsible Individual (RI) completes monitoring visits regularly and uses feedback from stakeholders, people who use the service and staff, to produce a report. We discussed that a monitoring report for each geographical area is required. The RI completes a six-monthly quality of care report. Again, each geographical area requires its own six-monthly quality of care report, and improvements are required to ensure that they contain required information in line with regulations. This is an area for improvement and will be followed up at the next inspection.

People reported seeing a high number of new care workers, due to staff shortages, which is disruptive to people and leads to them losing confidence in the care agency. The manager told us that staff are flexible and cover each other's shifts when needed. Everyone works as a team to maintain the service. However, staff morale is mixed. Care workers told us "*Staff have lost their enthusiasm, and morale is very low. The spark has gone from the job.*" Another said "*The payment we receive does not reflect our true worth. I feel undervalued. There are staff shortages, and we sometimes are asked to cover shifts at short notice.*" Other care workers reported "*Good company to work for and I enjoy my job as a carer. There is plenty of work and it's very rewarding.*" And "*I have no issues with the company I work for I feel fully supported*". Staff shortages are having an impact on service delivery. One representative told us "*They keep taking one of the staff off to go to another client at short notice*". Another person told us "*My family have had to provide care when a shift*

couldn't be covered at short notice". This is an area for improvement and will be followed up at the next inspection.

We received mixed feedback from individuals using the service, their representatives and care workers about recommending Advantage Healthcare Limited as a service provider or a company to work for. We were informed of poor communication with the office. One person told us *"Communication is hit and miss with the office. You ask them for something, and they email back way later than you expect"*. A relative told us *"The issues I have with the office staff. You telephone them, and no one that you wish to speak to is available. They say they will ring you back and do not return your call. You have to continuously chase them up"*, *"I don't feel my thanks and positive feedback is passed on to staff"*. Care workers told us *"If you need to change anything, staff are supportive and friendly and try and sort any issues straight away"*. *"My manager was very understanding when I had to cut my hours and supported my decision"*. Whilst other care workers reported *"The lack of help and support I received through a difficult time"*, *"The office only make contact to cover shifts as opposed to actually fixing any issues"* and *"I enjoy my job as a health care assistant, but I am becoming increasingly disgruntled and despondent due to being underpaid and undervalued"*.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
80	Full and robust quality assurance monitoring is not being reported for each operational footprint. The six-monthly Quality of Care report completed does not including the required aggregated data or recommendations for the improvement of the service.	New
34	During times of sickness and holidays there are not always enough staff available to provide care, without staff working additional to their arranged rota. Staff shortages are resulting in short notice cover being sought by staff that are working more hours than they wish to work.	New

Date Published 03/04/2023