



Making Social Care  
Better for People

Inspecting for better lives

# Key inspection report

## Domiciliary care agencies

<b>Name:</b>	Crossroads in Wirral, Caring for Carers Ltd
<b>Address:</b>	GF2 Candy Park Old Hall Road Bromborough Wirral Merseyside CH62 3PE

<b>The quality rating for this domiciliary care agency is:</b>	two star good service
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A quality rating is our assessment of how well a care home, agency or scheme is meeting the needs of the people who use it. We give a quality rating following a full assessment of the service. We call this a 'key' inspection.

<b>Lead inspector:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
John Mullen	0 2 1 2 2 0 0 8

This is a report of an inspection where we looked at how well this agency is meeting the needs of people who use it. 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.

Copies of the National Minimum Standards – Domiciliary Care Agencies can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://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](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

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- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

Our duty to regulate social care services is set out in the Care Standards Act 2000.

## Reader Information

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## Information about the agency

Name of agency:	Crossroads in Wirral, Caring for Carers Ltd
Address:	Old Hall Road GF2 Candy Park Bromborough Wirral Merseyside CH62 3PE
Telephone number:	01513431960
Fax number:	01513431507
Email address:	enquiries@wirralcaringforcarers.co.uk
Provider web address:	

Name of registered provider(s):	Crossroads in Wirral, Caring for Carers Ltd
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	
Sheila Elaine Logan	
Conditions of registration:	
Date of last inspection	
Brief description of the agency	
<p>Crossroads In Wirral, Caring for Carers Ltd, is a domiciliary care agency. It is part of a national agency and is a charitable organisation, managed by a Board of Trustees. It provides a variety of services to both adults and children including day services and group work. The responsible individual is Karen Urmston and the registered manager is Sheila Logan. This company is currently undertaking a major reorganisation of its services. At the time of the inspection the agency was covering the areas of the Wirral, Ellesmere Port, Neston and had acquired Chester on the first day of the inspection. Further expansion is planned to include other parts of Cheshire in the immediate future. At the time of the inspection the agency had 208 service users and 40 staff. The agency's charges range from £8.00 an hour to £15.11 an hour with separate charges applied to night and weekend work depending on the type of support required.</p>	

## Summary

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

The quality rating for this agency is:

two star good service

### Our judgement for each outcome:



### How we did our inspection:

The quality rating for this service is 2 stars. This means the people who use this service experience good quality outcomes.

This was a key unannounced inspection of Crossroads In Wirral Domiciliary Care Agency which included a site visit. All key standards were assessed in addition to a selection of other standards.

The inspection encompassed information received since the last inspection and Annual Service Review of 11th January 2008. In addition, it included information provided by the agency through its pre-inspection questionnaire and supporting documents.

Interviews took place with the responsible individual, the registered manager, two team leaders, a senior care supervisor and three care workers. Visits were made to three service users' homes although only one responded. A telephone interview was held with a father of a service user and comment cards were received from service users, families and staff.

The premises were inspected and a large amount of documentation examined.

### **What the agency does well:**

Crossroads in Wirral is a good domiciliary care agency that provides a consistent and reliable service. Comments from service users and families were overwhelmingly favourable about the service with comments such as "excellent service" and "very good". The service is based on thorough assessments, resulting in an individualised approach to support.

The agency has a full range of policies and procedures to underpin practice. It has a full management structure to ensure that the business is properly organised and is based in appropriate premises to further advance effectiveness.

Most of all, the agency trains its staff thoroughly and regularly, both vocationally and in other subjects, so that they remain competent and knowledgeable about the work.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The last key inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations. However, the agency has appointed two new care supervisors since that time to improve certain management functions, including the more regular assessment of cases. Otherwise, they have maintained the standards noted in the last report.

### **What they could do better:**

Within the context of a good, individualised care planning process, the agency needs to expand some of its care plans so that they give detailed instructions to staff. Both the care plans and risk assessments are being regularly reviewed but the evidence is not present in service users' homes which is necessary for the information for staff.

The agency has good policies and procedures but one complaint was found not to be recorded appropriately and the date of outcomes are not being stated which are deficits in the complaints' procedure. The agency has a full management structure but consideration needs to be given to extra administrative support given the expansion of their work. Equally, the Staff Handbook could be usefully revised to include all those elements specified by regulation so that staff have an easy point of reference for all relevant subjects.

Staff comments were very positive about their work and the work of the agency. There were however comments about the lack of knowledge of service user needs in certain circumstances which must be addressed so that work is properly planned and delivered.

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 set out on page 4.

The report of this inspection is available from our website [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk). You can get printed copies from [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.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 **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

The needs of service users must be known to all care workers so that work can be appropriately planned and carried out.

Evidence:

The pre-inspection material stated that the agency has a full assessment on service users prior to the commencement of the service so that work can be planned. An examination of case files in the office confirmed this to be so, meaning that the support can be appropriately arranged. Interviews with managers revealed that support workers are usually involved in initial visits so that needs can be explained and work planned. However, comment cards from staff included one that stated that care

## Evidence:

workers are sometimes sent to new cases not knowing their needs and this was confirmed by an interview with another care worker who stated that she did not always "have a full picture of the work to be done". Managers expressed surprise but conceded that they needed to address this to improve practices.

Interviews with the responsible individual and the registered manager showed that the agency is committed to a consistent and reliable service. In addition, these interviews did confirm that the rotas allow ample time for care workers, with a minimum of one hour for each call. In addition, interviews with other managers showed that the agency arranges a team of care workers to support individual service users so that consistency is promoted. Interviews with care workers found a generally consistent caseload although two did admit that sometimes they are called to different cases. This was also conceded by the registered manager and responsible individual with examples on the second day of the inspection when staff sickness meant that covering rotas was a problem. However, all service users contacted, with one exception, were complimentary about the high standard of the service including its consistency and reliability.

## 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.

The agency provides a good level of personal care resulting in a high level of satisfaction from service users.

Evidence:

The pre-inspection material confirmed a commitment to individual care planning so that work is individualised and relevant. An examination of case files in the office found a care plan in each which had been reviewed regularly to confirm its relevance. However, the detail of the care plans varied considerably and did not always give detailed guidance to staff on the work to be undertaken. An interview with a senior care supervisor confirmed that part of her role is to review care plans at six weekly and twelve monthly intervals and this is done routinely to ensure they remain up to date. However, she also stated that the evidence for this remains in the office files and not in service users' home so that care workers do not always have immediate access to this. This was confirmed by a visit to a service user where the evidence of reviews was not present. Interviews with care workers found them positive about the care plans which they felt were helpful.

## Evidence:

Previous contact with this agency, including the Annual Service Review, has found no concern with the provision of personal care. The pre-inspection questionnaire stated that all staff received training in the provision of personal care and this was confirmed in interviews with the responsible individual and registered manager. The induction programme for staff includes a module on personal care so that they are introduced to the principles early. In addition, the pre-inspection questionnaire and the site visit confirmed a very high level of vocational training, currently at 80%, so that practice is being underpinned appropriately. Contacts with service users found a high level of satisfaction with the personal care being provided by staff. Comments included "very good" and "the service excellent".

The last Annual Service Review found no concerns in the area of medication and these practices were confirmed by the pre-inspection questionnaire which showed appropriate policies and practices. The site visit included a consideration of the medication policy which has been recently reviewed, approved by the commission and gives full direction to staff in this area. Interviews with staff throughout the agency found no concern in the area of medication and that all appropriate staff had been trained in this subject. A review of the induction programme confirmed that medication is one of the taught subjects so that staff are introduced to this subject early. One service user's home visited where assistance was being given in medication found that correct procedures were being followed, including recording, so that the service user was being supported appropriately.

## 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's policies and practices result in a safe service.

Evidence:

All previous contact with this agency, including the Annual Service Review and the pre-inspection material, has produced no concern about the safe provision of support. The site visit confirmed that the agency has full policies and procedures to reflect this and interviews with the responsible individual and registered manager confirmed that training has been provided in the required subjects and has been refreshed on a regular basis to update knowledge. An examination of the induction programme confirmed that health and safety and related topics are taught at that point so that staff are introduced to these subjects early. An examination of training documents showed a good level of training in health and safety matters to direct staff. This was confirmed by interviews with care workers who displayed no concerns in this area and felt that support was being provided safely. All contacts with service users, including visits, revealed no concerns in this area as all service users felt that the support was being provided safely.

## Evidence:

The pre-inspection material stated that risk assessments were being provided regularly by competent staff so that risks are managed appropriately. The site visit confirmed this to be the case. An examination of service user files showed that risk assessments have been taken in both moving and handling and general areas and reviewed regularly so that they remain valid. An interview with two team leaders and a senior care supervisor showed that there is a routine assessment of risk which is regularly reviewed to confirm relevance. In addition, these interviews also showed that these staff have been trained in this subject and this training is refreshed regularly so they remain up to date. All contact with service users found no problem in this area. However, interviews with managers, confirmed by a visit to a service user's home showed that the review of risk assessments, although taken regularly, are not kept in the home so that this information is not always available to care workers.

The pre-inspection material confirmed that the agency has a full safeguarding policy and that training in this subject is regularly given to staff so that they are aware of the issues. The agency provides support both to adults and children so that safeguarding training needs to be provided in both categories. An examination of the induction programme and training records generally in the agency show that training in this area is being regularly provided and this was confirmed by an interview with the team leader of the childrens' services who confirmed close liaison with Councils for this purpose. The site visit included an examination of the agency's policy and showed it had been approved by the commission as appropriate for its purpose.

## 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.

The agency recruits, trains and supports staff to a good standard so that they are appropriately guided in their work.

Evidence:

Pre-inspection material confirmed that full recruitment procedures are in place for the safety of service users. An examination of staff files showed this to be the case with police checks, personal references, checks of identity and medical information all on files to confirm a robust process. Some police checks have not been renewed in the last three years which is a recommendation from the commission to ensure that up to date information is available. An interview with a recently appointed member of staff confirmed that she felt the process was fair and robust and this also was the view of staff contacted via comment cards. The agency has a Staff Handbook which is detailed but does not contain all those elements contained in regulation so full information is not necessarily readily available for staff. All interviews with care workers found them fully suited to their position. Comments from service users included "I always have confidence that they have caring staff".

The pre-inspection material stated that training was being provided regularly and refreshed appropriately so that staff remain up to date. The site visit confirmed this.

## Evidence:

Evidence was seen of a full induction programme to enable staff to be properly prepared for their work. Comment cards from staff and interviews with them confirmed that training is a high priority within the agency. Comments made included "I am better trained here than anywhere else I have worked", training is "very good" and that there is "loads of training". Examination of training documents within the agency confirmed a full and regular training programme for staff which is being refreshed to ensure staff are up to date. Interviews with the responsible individual and registered manager show that the agency was accessing training as needed and providing it to staff in appropriate locations.

The pre-inspection material stated that staff were being well supported, including through formal supervision, so that they have the help they require. Comment cards from staff and interviews with them confirmed that they felt well supported with regular contact from their managers to give direction as needed. Managers within the agency confirmed a frequent and structured approach to supervision and appraisal so that staff are supported appropriately. An examination of staff files reinforced this evidence and confirmed a positive approach to support for staff.

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

The agency is well managed in the interests of its service users.

Evidence:

The last Annual Service Review concluded that the agency was being well managed in the interests of service users. The site visit found that there was a full management structure which was sufficient to ensure all management functions are undertaken. The management structure has been increased by the appointment of two care supervisors which enables, amongst other things, a more thorough review of cases and assessments to be undertaken. The current management structure only includes a part time administrative assistant which, given the large and increasing administrative tasks, would appear insufficient for the size of the agency. A tour of the premises found them fit for purpose being fully equipped and secure to enable the business to be conducted efficiently and information to be stored safely. The responsible individual stated that the company is looking to relocate the agency given the reorganisation being undertaken and the need for a more central location. The registration certificate was prominently displayed to reflect the registered status of the agency. Comments from and interviews with care workers confirmed that they felt that the agency was well managed.

## Evidence:

The pre-inspection material stated that the agency has a full complaints' procedure to ensure service user views are heard. An interview with the responsible individual and the registered manager stated that this procedure had been given to all service users so that they were aware of the procedure to be followed. This was confirmed by a visit to a service user's home which showed that all such information was present in an easily understood form. An examination of the book recording complaints showed that they were being entered correctly but that the outcome date was not present so the agency could not demonstrate that it had responded within the required time. In addition, an examination of a case file found a complaint had been made about the service and this was not recorded in the Complaints' Book or in any other place. The registered manager accepted this was an oversight. The overwhelming view of service users and family members contacted was that the agency was providing a good service with no complaint about its performance.

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
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## 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
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### 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
1	2	14	Care needs of service users must always be known to staff.  So that the work is appropriately planned and carried out.	02/02/2009
2	26	20	All complaints must be recorded with the outcome date given.  To enable the agency to demonstrate an open and timely response to complaints.	02/02/2009

### 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	Care plans to be expanded when necessary and evidence of reviews to be kept in service users' homes so that care workers are fully updated on progress.
2	12	The reviews of risk assessments to be recorded in service users' homes so that all information is available to care workers.

3	17	Crossroads should consider whether to renew police checks at a three-yearly intervals so that they are up to date.
4	17	The Staff Handbook should be reviewed in order to include all the elements required by regulation.
5	22	The company should reconsider the amount of administrative support in the light of the reorganisation and expansion of the service.

## Helpline:

**Telephone:** 0845 015 0120 or 0191 233 3323

**Textphone:** 0845 015 2255 or 0191 233 3588

**Email:** [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk)

**Web:** [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk)

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