

Scottish Veterans Association - Whitefoord House Housing Support Service

53 Canongate
Edinburgh
EH8 8BS

Telephone: 0131 556 6827

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

31 July 2018

Service provided by:

Scottish Veterans Housing Association
Limited

Service provider number:

SP2004005816

Service no:

CS2004059557

About the service

Scottish Veterans Association - Whitefoord House, in Edinburgh, provides housing support for up to 85 people. The service is available to ex-servicemen and women and their spouses. Up to 10% of residents can be civilians.

The team offers practical and emotional support to help people manage on a day to day basis and live as independently as possible. They help people access health services and mental health support, drug and alcohol support services, training, education and work and to move on to a more permanent home. Seventy five people were living at Whitefoord House at the time of our inspection. Resident numbers were reduced to allow refurbishment of rooms to improve the living accommodation.

The service aims to promote social inclusion and independent living through a person centred approach, empowering people to make decisions, informed choices and achieve their potential. They aim to support people into mainstream housing with the support they need to maintain their home.

What people told us

Everyone who returned a care standard questionnaire to us agreed they were happy with the quality of support they got from the service; five of the ten people strongly agreed with this.

People told us,

"Staff are always on hand if I have any problems."

"I would wholly recommend this service to anyone who has mental health issues of a PTSD nature simply because the staff, if they cannot help themselves, will certainly know someone who can, i.e. they have an in-house psychotherapist who is exceptional."

"Really enjoy it here, feel like I have found my feet within two months"

"I have only been here a week and already feel more at ease than I have for a long time. I feel safe and there is a sense of mutual respect from staff and residents. The support and care opportunities here make me feel sure I'm in the right place to try and fix myself."

"I feel supported."

About staff they said;

"The staff here are excellent"

"The staff at Whitefoord House have been absolutely immense in terms of helping me to move forward from a place I would never like to be again....The staff here in my opinion do a wonderful job in sometimes very difficult circumstances."

"Really happy with the staff; polite, understanding."

"There's always someone I can talk to."

"I find (name) particularly supportive. Being (ex forces), I feel he particularly understands my needs."

And about their key worker;

"She's really good. I can speak to her."

"I'm planning to do courses. She's helped me fill in forms and get my service record together. That will mean I can get a job."

"(Name) organised Veterans First Point. I've tried yoga and I'm going to see the counsellor. She's very supportive."

They told us about the service in general;

"The Scottish Veterans Residence is a great place to be...I'm enjoying my stay here. I have free use of the gym which helps a great deal."

"The service is excellent."

We have included some specific views in the body of the report.

We shared that some people had mentioned the limited availability of fresh drinking water and cooking facilities. The managers informed us that, in response to residents requests, the cool water machine was moved to reception with another machine in the gym for residents' use. Water and cold drinks are provided in the dining room at mealtimes and drinking water is available from taps in each room. As a full meal service is provided cooking facilities are not required.

Self assessment

We are not asking services to submit a self-assessment for this inspection year. We discussed improvements they have made since the last inspection and how they plan to continue to develop the service. The managers shared their current improvement action plan. We suggested they could look at how they use the new Health and Social Care Standards My support, my life, to evaluate their service and plan future improvement.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

People living at Whitefoord House were happy with their support. We heard and saw examples of people moving on to more permanent accommodation, improving their mental and/or physical health, managing or reducing

their drug and/or alcohol use, getting into training, taking up voluntary work and seeking and finding employment. People spoke about feeling safe, sometimes for the first time in many years, and feeling more confident and in control of their life.

At our last inspection we said people could feel more in control if the service developed outcomes focused support. They had introduced "Better Futures", a web based outcomes tool designed to help housing support providers to record people's support needs over time. We saw some very good examples where baseline outcomes had been completed and goal plans clearly agreed with the person. One person said that while day to day support was very good they didn't feel they'd had "an adult conversation" about their future plans. This was a new system and support officers were developing their understanding and confidence using it with people. The service plans to make sure all the relevant information needed to support the person is available and easily accessible on the system.

Support officers were flexible in how they deliver support, making arrangements to suit the person. People were receiving regular support that related to their goals and issues in their lives. The service had continued to develop relationships with other services that can support people, including housing providers and a range of services that offer veterans support with finances, mental health issues, PTSD and social isolation. A positive development has been the links with Change, Grow, Live (alcohol and drug recovery services), with workers regularly available in Whitefoord House to help people to engage more easily with those services. People continued to find the in house counselling service a very helpful support. The development of the housing assistant role has been positive in providing support to people to attend appointments and engage with other services.

The service recognised the importance of people having meaningful things to do and the positive impact this has on physical and mental wellbeing. They've added to the activities on offer both in Whitefoord House and locally and people were encouraged to get involved. We heard positive examples of the difference this has made to individuals' lives.

The service has worked hard to support people to maintain their stay at Whitefoord House. As a result the number of people "evicted" from the service has reduced and the number of people moving on positively has increased.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

People generally felt confident in the staff supporting them. Staff, who need to be, were registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. The service has been proactive in supporting staff to achieve relevant qualifications.

The service had robust recruitment procedures in place to make sure staff were safe to work with vulnerable adults and had the skills, knowledge and experience to provide the support required. New staff completed an induction to the service. They were positive about the support from managers and colleagues to feel confident and competent in their role.

The service supported staff's practice and professional development well. All staff had recently completed appraisal of their performance, reflecting on their practice and focusing on their future development. Staff told us training was good and they felt they had the skills and knowledge to support people. They said they got support when they identified courses that would benefit them in their role. They also told us about positive learning from working with other services. The service was in the process of introducing continuous learning logs with staff to keep track of training completed and when refreshers were required. The service needs to continue to review the learning staff need to be able to support people with the variety of needs and complexities in their life.

While staff said they felt support from managers was available when they needed it, they did not have opportunities for regular 1:1 meetings with their supervisor to support their practice and development. We heard that supervisors observed staff's practice but there was no evidence of those observations or any follow on support with practice development offered as a result. These areas of staff support are included in the service's Improvement Plan.

Daily support team meetings have been positive in supporting communication in the team so everyone knows what has happened over the previous day/night and what is happening during that day. Support officers used these meeting well as an opportunity to discuss any issues or concerns they had with people they were supporting, sharing ideas and information that could help with the team.

The nature of the service and relationships between staff and people living at Whitefoord House can make maintaining appropriate professional boundaries challenging. While staff complete mandatory professional boundaries training annually, there may be some blurred boundaries between staff and people they support, for example confusing being friendly with being friends. We suggested the service add maintaining professional boundaries to the "Support Provision" section in their Improvement Plan.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

There had been significant changes in the management and staffing structure within the service. The support team was now in place, with support officer vacancies filled, housing assistants in place and their role and responsibilities being clarified. A new manager had been recruited and was due to start in the next two months. This should help ensure the service is well led and managed.

People should benefit from a culture of continuous improvement. The service had been proactive in tackling two of the longstanding areas of concerns for residents; mice and drug use in the building, and continues to tackle these issues. The service had developed an improvement plan including actions to improve the staff structure, building maintenance, office configuration, health and safety, dining room/kitchen facilities, drug use, staff training, support provision, support records, quality assurance, activities, mental wellbeing, employment/education/training, links with other agencies, residents welcome pack and residents involvement. The plan needs to be a live document with improvements achieved recorded and communicated to staff and residents to make sure the service continues to improve.

The service could improve recording and monitoring of incidents by making sure staff are reporting all incidents and accidents, making sure each reported incident is followed up and the follow up recorded on the incident form. Putting in place a system to monitor incidents to highlight trends would provide valuable information on where the service could improve. The provider needs to notify us of any incidents or accidents that result in a GP visit, a visit or referral to hospital, an injury reportable under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) or an event that had the potential to cause harm.

People should be meaningfully involved in how their service works and develops, actively encouraged to be involved in improving the service and supported to give regular feedback. The service had recently carried out a survey of residents views and information was to be collated and shared with residents. The service also held regular residents meetings. Improving resident involvement was included in the service's Improvement Plan, with plans to look at different approaches that would encourage more involvement, reviewing the residents meetings to make sure they were effective and investigating different approaches to obtaining feedback.

People should know how, and can be helped, to make a complaint or raise a concern about their care and support and if they have a concern or complaint, this will be discussed with them and acted on without negative consequences. The service had responded to complaints and concerns raised with them. One person said any issues they'd raised had been dealt with quickly.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
1 Jun 2017	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings
10 Dec 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good Not assessed 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
3 Mar 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good
8 Aug 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate
15 Aug 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good
19 Oct 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good
20 May 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good
4 May 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good
8 Jan 2010	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings								
22 May 2009	Announced	<table> <tr> <td>Care and support</td> <td>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Environment</td> <td>Not assessed</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Staffing</td> <td>3 - Adequate</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Management and leadership</td> <td>2 - Weak</td> </tr> </table>	Care and support	3 - Adequate	Environment	Not assessed	Staffing	3 - Adequate	Management and leadership	2 - Weak
Care and support	3 - Adequate									
Environment	Not assessed									
Staffing	3 - Adequate									
Management and leadership	2 - Weak									

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