

Positive Steps Housing Support Service

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Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
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Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2004069206

About the service

Positive Steps is registered to provide a housing support and care at home service to people who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health. The service is based in the Firhill area with one team providing support across the city of Edinburgh.

Positive Steps aims to:

- Offer a service which is person-centred and focuses on recovery and wellbeing.
- Support people to build their confidence and develop resilience.
- Work with people to prevent admission to hospital and reduce unnecessary delays in discharge for people in hospital.
- Offer a period of support and assessment to people who are making the transition of leaving hospital and returning home.

Support is usually provided for up to eight weeks, although this is flexible depending on the person's need and the availability of ongoing support services.

The provider is the City of Edinburgh Council. At the time of the inspection, 26 people were experiencing support.

About the inspection

This was an announced short notice inspection which took place between 9 June and 13 June 2025. We visited the service's office on 10 June and observed people being supported in their homes on 11 and 13 June 2025. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about the service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with six people experiencing support
- Reviewed questionnaires completed by seven people experiencing support
- Spoke with seven staff and management
- Observed practice
- Reviewed documents
- Reviewed questionnaires from 12 professionals who had regular contact with the service.

Key messages

- People's health and wellbeing outcomes were being met.
- People were supported to be as independent as possible.
- Support was flexible and person-centred.
- Staff received training that was appropriate to their role.
- Observation of staff practice should be strengthened.
- Staff worked well together and were supported by a competent and supportive manager.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated the service as very good for this key question. We found significant strengths which supported positive outcomes for people.

People experienced very good health and wellbeing outcomes as a result of their care and support. We observed staff interactions that were warm and encouraging. People told us that support had helped increase their confidence and motivation. Staff were respectful when they spoke about the people they were supporting. This showed that people's wellbeing benefitted from being treated with compassion, dignity, and respect.

As the service was provided for a temporary period only, part of its role was to work with people to identify their long-term support needs. We found that everyone had a support plan that was an active document, developed as staff learnt what was important to people. The service held reviews very regularly, and people we spoke with felt included in the support planning and review process. This meant people benefitted from a personalised approach to care planning.

While the service was not supporting anyone with medication, staff had completed training in medication awareness and demonstrated a good understanding of people's health. People benefitted from regular engagement with a wide range of health and social care services. External professionals we spoke with commented very favourably about their working relationship with the staff and manager. One told us, "The service does an excellent job with supporting service-users in a variety of ways - both with practical matters and with emotional support. I have heard nothing but positive feedback from service-users about their experience." Another professional said, "I feel that staff are skilled at assessing service-users and risk." This multi-agency approach supported people's health and wellbeing on their discharge from hospital.

People were supported with practical tasks in a way that promoted independence. The staff team shared their knowledge of support services across the city. People were supported to identify goals, and connect with activities they were interested in. This promoted meaningful engagement and helped people stay well.

People experiencing support were asked at the end of their time with the service if there was anything that could be improved, however their responses were not collated or analysed. We raised this with the manager who said they would look into ways to meaningfully involve people in service development. We will consider progress at the next inspection.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

During the inspection people spoke positively about staff and valued the support they received. Comments included, "they were really encouraging" and "staff were nice and supportive." Professionals were unanimously positive, one said, "[The manager] and the support workers I have met from this service always seem to be knowledgeable, helpful, compassionate and promote client's independence very well." This showed that people experienced good quality support.

We found that recruitment processes were robust and staff were registered appropriately with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Staff were supported to undertake professional qualifications to maintain their SSSC registration. Induction processes ensured that new staff received enhanced support and shadowed more experienced colleagues before working alone. This demonstrated that systems were in place to reduce risk to people experiencing support.

The service had found it difficult to recruit suitable staff and had three vacancies at the time of inspection. Agency staff were not used and new referrals were only accepted if the service had the capacity to provide the support needed. This meant that staff had time to provide person-centred and compassionate care.

The service operated a rolling rota, so staff knew their shift pattern in advance. Staff we spoke to felt this worked well and benefitted staff wellbeing.

People were told in advance who would be supporting them and there were no significant issues with missed or late visits. People were allocated a keyworker; however some people we spoke with were not sure who this was. Some people told us that they had felt anxious when meeting several members of the small staff team over a short period. We shared this feedback with the manager to consider if further improvements could be made. On the whole we found that people benefited from consistent and well organised support.

Staff completed mandatory training that was suitable for their role. Staff were enthusiastic about developing their practice and attended additional training relevant to the needs of people experiencing support. Learning was shared amongst the team. This meant that people experienced care and support from well trained and knowledgeable staff.

Communication within the team was good. Staff were appreciative of the support they received from the manager, who was approachable and had good oversight of the day-to-day coordination of the service. There was an ethos of colleagues supporting each other. This meant people benefitted from a committed and organised team.

Staff received regular supervision which they found useful. Team meetings gave staff further opportunities to discuss any issue. We heard that the manager often attended reviews and informally observed staff practice. This was not clearly linked to supervision or staff development. Formalising observations of staff practice would further strengthen management oversight and ensure that people continue to feel confident in their staff team. We have made this an area for improvement (**see area for improvement 1**).

Areas for improvement

1. To support people's health and wellbeing, the provider should formalise the observation of staff practice and keep a reflective record which informs supervision, staff development and appraisal.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14).

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	4 - Good

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