

Inspection report

East Fife Women's Aid
Housing Support Service

Cupar

Inspected by: Lorna Shewan
(Care Commission Officer)

Type of inspection: Announced

Inspection completed on: 18 November 2008

Service Number

CS2004074976

Service name

East Fife Women's Aid

Service address

Cupar

Provider Number

SP2003001581

Provider Name

East Fife Women's Aid

Inspected ByLorna Shewan
Care Commission Officer**Inspection Type**

Announced

Inspection Completed

18 November 2008

Period since last inspection

63 weeks

Local Office AddressLargo House, Carnegie Avenue, Dunfermline, Fife ,
KY11 8PE

Introduction

East Fife Women's Aid is one of three Women's Aid groups in Fife providing crisis support services to women and children affected by domestic abuse. It is affiliated to Scottish Women's Aid and has been established for twelve years.

East Fife Women's Aid is a charitable organisation which offers support, information and temporary accommodation for women and their children (if any) where women have experienced domestic abuse. A follow-on support service for women leaving the refuge accommodation and an outreach service for women who have not accessed the refuge is also available.

There are twelve single occupancy refuge properties. East Fife Women's Aid is registered with the Care Commission to provide a housing support service to women and their children in Fife.

The group provides an office-based information/support service that operates during office hours. In addition there is a children's support service, providing opportunities to meet the education and emotional needs of children affected by domestic abuse. The children's service is subject to a separate inspection.

One refuge property is fully equipped to accommodate a service user with additional support needs, for example, wheelchair accessible. The office does not have disabled access; however, it is understood that alternative arrangements can be made by staff to meet service users outwith the office base.

In partnership with the other Fife Women's Aid groups, East Fife Women's Aid also operate an on-call service outwith office hours 365 days per year, where staff are available to provide telephone advice and assistance.

All staff are employed in accordance with East Fife Women's Aid recruitment and selection procedure, which includes an application form, two written references (one of whom should be the current or most recent employer), an Enhanced Disclosure Scotland check and an individual interview.

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:
Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good
Quality of Staffing - 6 - Excellent
Quality of Management and Leadership - 4 - Good

This inspection report and grades represent the Care Commission's assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. Please refer to the care services register on the Care Commission's website (www.carecommission.com) for the most up-to-date grades for this service.

Basis of Report

The inspection was carried out during an announced visit on 25 September 2008 between the hours of 10.00am and 13.00pm.

The service submitted a completed Annual Return as requested by the Care Commission.

The service submitted a self-assessment form as requested by the Care Commission.

This was an announced inspection visit and was carried out in line with The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2001, the Regulations which follow the Act mainly Scottish Statutory Instrument 114 - The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002.

The service was issued with service user, questionnaires, three of which were completed and returned. The Care Commission Officers had an opportunity to meet with four service users and three telephone interviews were carried out. The views of service users are considered throughout the report.

The inspection plan for this service was decided after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of inspection necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the CCO which considers complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service (such as absence of a manager) and action taken upon requirements. The CCO will also have considered how the service responded to situations and issues as part of the RSA.

This assessment resulted in this service receiving a low RSA score and so a low intensity inspection was required. The inspection was based on the relevant Inspection Focus Areas and associated National Care Standards, recommendations and requirements from previous inspections and complaints or other regulatory activity.

This service will receive a minimum of one inspection over the year 2008/09.

The inspection was carried out by Care Commission Officer Lorna Shewan.

During the process of inspection, evidence was gathered from a number of sources including:

A review of a range of policies and procedures, records and other essential documentation which included:

- Self assessment information provided by the manager
- Four service user personal plans
- Staff training records
- Health and Safety records
- Accident/incident and complaints records
- Information Booklet
- Staff questionnaires completed and returned to the Care Commission Officer

Discussion with the manager, one senior member of staff and seven service users

All of the above information was considered during the inspection process and is reported on.

The inspection focus area for 2008/09 of Notifications has been selected for inclusion in this inspection and is reported on.

Details of the inspection focus and associated Quality Themes to be used in inspecting each type of care service in 2008/09 and supporting inspection guidance, can be found at:
<http://www.carecommission.com/>

The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced new regulatory arrangements in respect of fire safety, on 1 October 2006. In terms of those arrangements, responsibility for enforcing the statutory provisions in relation to fire safety now lies with the Fire and Rescue service for the area in which a care service is located. Accordingly, the Care Commission will no longer report on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function, but, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Further advice on your responsibilities is available at www.infoscotland.com/fire.

The Manager for the service was present and provided assistance in a professional and competent manner.

Action taken on requirements since last Inspection

There was one requirement and six recommendations made from the last inspection visit. Progress to address these is outlined below:

Requirement (1). The care service will ensure access to appropriate training in adult abuse issues and use of associated policy and procedures to all staff with access to service users. This is in order to comply with The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002. Scottish Statutory Instrument 114, 4 (1) (a), 13 (c) (i).

This has been addressed.

Recommendation (1). It is recommended that policy and procedure documentation be developed to cover student placement and/or volunteer workers within the service. With reference to The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002. Scottish Statutory Instrument 114 (2), and the National Care Standards, Housing Support Services, standard 3 (1), (2).

This has been addressed.

Recommendation (2). It is recommended that policy and procedure documentation be developed to cover the management of staff records. With reference to the National Care Standards, Housing Support Services, standard 3 (1).

This has been addressed.

Recommendation (3). Staff should receive appropriate training/education in relation to restraint issues, including assessment and record keeping associated with restraint. This is in order to comply with The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002. Scottish Statutory Instrument 114, Regulation 13.

This has been addressed.

Recommendation (4). Where possible, all maintenance checks/work should be carried out in the presence of the service user. Where this may not be possible, due a prior commitment, then the service user's agreement should always be sought or an alternative arrangement made. This information should be clearly recorded in each instance. With reference to The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002. Scottish Statutory Instrument 114 (2), (4 b).

This has been addressed.

Recommendation (5). The service will obtain and implement these documents as a basis for decision making in respect of restraint. With reference to the National Care Standards, housing support services, standard 4.

This has been addressed.

Recommendation (6). The care service will obtain and implement the local inter-agency policy. With reference to the National Care Standards, housing support services, standard 3.1.

This has been addressed.

Comments on Self Assessment

The fully completed self-assessment documentation was submitted on-line by the manager within the agreed time scales. This was completed to a satisfactory standard and gave relevant information for each of the Quality Themes and Statements. Information provided demonstrated an understanding of the Quality Themes and knowledge of the National Care Standards, strengths and areas for improvement were identified.

View of Service Users

Three service user questionnaires were completed and returned to the Care Commission. The Care Commission Officer had an opportunity to meet with four service users and telephone interviews were carried out with three service users. Comments about the service were generally positive and included:

"... good support, getting me back on my feet..."

"...staff really patient and respectful..."

"...don't know what I would have done without them..."

"...put at ease, helped me through..."

"...well looked after..."

"...cheery staff..."

"...good security, feel safe..."

"...staff are great..."

"...get good advice and support..."

"...so good to me..."

The Care Commission Officer appreciated the time taken by service users to share their views of the service.

View of Carers

There were no relative/representatives present during the inspection visit.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 5 - Very Good

Statement 5: We respond to service users' care and support needs using person centered values.

Service Strengths

The manager clearly identified that the service is committed to ensuring service users (and where appropriate their representative) are encouraged and supported to participate in assessing and improving the service provided. A range of strategies are in place to ensure service users are at the centre of all decision making and that they are involved in all aspects of the service as it is delivered to them.

The Care Commission officer examined four service user support plans and one anonymous sample support plan. The support plan defines the service to be provided and forms an agreement between the service user and the organisation. Information is detailed and clearly recorded and includes: service user details; support agreement; occupancy agreement; rules; identified support worker(s), risk assessment details, reports and support plan review information. Records are securely held within the main office base ensuring confidentiality of information. Support planning is negotiated with the service user and agreed by them. All service users receive a copy of their support plan. Regular review meetings are carried out to discuss and record the relevance of the support provided and any areas that may not be being addressed. The support plan is updated to reflect any changes.

The service has detailed policy and procedure information to support and guide staff and copies of these can be made available to service users. Those examined during the inspection were; complaints, staff absence cover arrangements, data protection and confidentiality.

The service is part of a Scottish Women's Aid pilot of a new user friendly Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, which was facilitated by Evaluation Support Scotland and outcomes are measured based on justice, autonomy, restoration and safety (JARS).

The Care Commission Officer met with four service users and spoke on the telephone with three service users. Service users confirmed that they felt able to approach staff should they have a concern and they were familiar with the process of how to raise a complaint should this be necessary. Comments about the service were generally positive and included:

"â€.staff are greatâ€."

"â€.staff are really patient and respectfulâ€."

"â€.like an extension of family, professional and sincereâ€."

"â€.approachable, fantastic, caringâ€."

The service evaluates the quality of support offered on an annual basis by means of anonymous service user questionnaires. In addition the views of staff are also sought. Facilitated feedback sessions are held by an independent person.

Systems are in place to allow the manager to directly observe and monitor staff practice.

Areas for Development

The Manager identified that at the end of the pilot period it plans to implement the monitoring and evaluation framework to the electronic case management system.

Three service users completed and returned a questionnaire to the Care Commission Officer. Two service users indicated that they did not know if they had a support plan which contained details of the support that had been agreed. Two service users did not know on what day(s) they would receive support and commented that "...staff just turn up...". Two service users indicated that they were familiar with the complaints procedure and one was not. This was discussed in detail during feedback with the manager. Consideration should be given as to how this can be improved.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 6: People who use, or would like to use the service, and those who are ceasing the service, are fully informed as to what the service provides

Service Strengths

The manager emphasised that at the initial point of contact, all enquirers are made aware of the nature of the service and what it can provide. A comprehensive information pack is available to all service users which contains details about the service, the area, contact information and information they may require when exiting the service. Information can be provided in different formats.

Two service users who spoke with the Care Commission Officer commented;
"â€¦lots of informationâ€¦."
"â€¦good information about what they can offerâ€¦."

The manager emphasised that at the initial point of contact, all enquirers are made aware of the nature of the service and what it can provide. An explanation of rights and responsibilities is also given at the initial assessment and reaffirmed at all support plan review meetings.

Information with regard to the Care Commission is available within the main office base.

The service provides regular support to women in refuge with regard to how to keep them safe and their rights and responsibilities about health and safety.

Six service users confirmed that they felt safe in refuge and that there were systems in place to summon assistance should this be necessary.

Areas for Development

The manager identified an area for development to check service users understanding of the Health and Safety information pack by using an evaluation exercise.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading:

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 6 - Excellent

Statement 3: We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service Strengths

All staff are employed in accordance with the organisation's Recruitment and Selection policy which includes an application form, the taking up of two references (one of whom should be the current or most recent employer), an enhanced Disclosure Scotland check and an individual interview. The service operates a system to re check enhanced Disclosure Scotland checks on a three yearly basis. All staff receive a comprehensive induction to the service at the start of employment, ongoing training and regular planned supervision. All new staff, volunteers and directors are given a copy of the Scottish Social Services codes of practice and the National Care Standards.

Completed questionnaires from eight staff members were returned to the Care Commission officer. All staff confirmed that they received induction training before working with service users and all commented positively with regard to the training opportunities available to them. Comments included:

"â€¦lots of training opportunities givenâ€¦"

"â€¦in the initial six months I was given the opportunity to access lots of training and this has continuedâ€¦"

This was confirmed by six service users; all of whom were 'very satisfied' that staff have the skills and experience to meet service users' needs.

There is a comprehensive range of policy and procedure information to support and guide staff, those sampled included; whistleblowing, absence management and recruitment

The manager monitors all aspects of the service and there are systems in place to allow the manager to directly observe and monitor staff practice.

Areas for Development

The manager identified an area for development would be to ensure all staff maintain continuous professional development and plan to carry out a staff survey with Scottish Women's Aid to include stress at work.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 4: We ensure that everyone working in the service has an ethos of respect towards service users and each other.

Service Strengths

Staff receive an individual copy of the Scottish Social Services codes of conduct and the National Care Standards. Staff's understanding of these core documents is continually monitored during induction to the service, supervision and team meetings.

Staff training is recorded electronically and the system also operates a training needs analysis programme.

The service has a comprehensive complaints procedure and information on how to raise a complaint with the Care Commission.

Regular support and supervision meetings are available to staff and obligations and boundaries are highlighted at these meetings.

Arrangements are in place to ensure that service users have access to independent advice/support, as appropriate.

The service uses a range of systems to encourage comments from service users of how they feel treated by staff. These include; suggestion box, complaints forms, service user feedback sessions, support plan reviews and monitoring and evaluation.

The complaints record was viewed and there have been no complaints for this service since the last inspection visit.

Areas for Development

The manager identified areas for development: to continually monitor and ensure that service users and staff have a clear understanding of the culture of the service and to develop an audit tool for the National Care Standards.

CCO Grading

6 - Excellent

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 4 - Good

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service Strengths

The manager encourages participation with service users. This was evidenced by review of questionnaires, support plans and review minutes.

Service users, (relative/representatives where appropriate) are actively encouraged to participate in the Care Commission inspection process.

The Care Commission inspection poster was clearly displayed in the office base and service users had been notified of the inspection date.

The service user information pack is provided to all service users and sets out what can be expected from the service. The information pack also gives clear information about the importance and process to give feedback or make a complaint.

The board of directors and the local authority monitor the service to ensure the quality of management and leadership.

Areas for Development

The manager identified areas for development; (a) to continue to monitor and ensure that service users and the organisation have a clear understanding of the culture of the service to assess and improve the quality of management and leadership.
(b) to implement the Scottish Women's Aid participation Strategy.

Five service users indicated that they were not familiar with the Care Commission inspection report information. Consideration should be given as to how this may be improved.

CCO Grading

4 - Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 4: We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Service Strengths

The manager was aware of the Scottish Social Services Council Codes of Practice and their responsibility to report to the Scottish Social Services Council any dismissal on the grounds of misconduct. There have been no staff dismissed on the grounds of misconduct for this service.

The service has a complaints procedure and details of this are provided to service users and their relative/representative.

The service operates a range of consultation tools and reports to gather information, gain new ideas and suggestions that influence decisions and the direction of the service. This includes an evaluation when service users end the service.

The service gains feedback from external agencies and staff.

Areas for Development

The manager identified that the service will implement an audit framework for the National Care Standards and complete Fife Rights Forum Quality Assurance scheme.

CCO Grading

5 - Very Good

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards

Enforcement

There has been no enforcement action against this service since the last inspection.

Other Information

N/A

Requirements**Recommendations**

Lorna Shewan

Care Commission Officer