

Rowan Alba Ltd – Stramullion

Service name

Rowan Alba Ltd - Stramullion

Service address

20 West Pilton Park
Edinburgh
EH4 4EG

Type of care service

Housing Support Service

Provider name

Rowan Alba Ltd

Service number

CS2007163367

Date Inspection Completed

26/06/2008

Type of inspection

Announced

Care Commission Office

Stuart House
Eskmills
Musselburgh
East Lothian
EH21 7PB
0845 6008335

Period since last inspection

10 months

Introduction

The Strathmullion Project is one of a number of projects operating nationally, which are managed by Rowan Alba Ltd., a voluntary organisation with charitable status, which provides Housing Support and Care at Home services for a variety of service user groups.

Strathmullion provides temporary emergency accommodation and support for up to 10 homeless women in five adjoining two person flats. A sixth flat provides office accommodation and a drop in facility for the service users.

The aim of the service is to provide:

Temporary accommodation and support for a period of up to six months for vulnerable women with or without their children.

To provide a holistic support package in liaison with specialist services where required, enabling women to move into suitable accommodation and supporting them to sustain their tenancies and integrate back into the community.

The service had one vacancy at the time of the Inspection.

The service was registered with the Care Commission in April 2004 and was last Inspected by the Care Commission in August 2007.

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good
Quality of Environment - Not Applicable
Quality of Staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - Grade 5 - Very 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

Before the Inspection

This report was written following an announced inspection of the service, which took place over one day between the hours of 10.00am. and 4.30 p.m. on 26/06/08.

The Annual Return

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

Annual Returns (ARs) are used to ensure that the Care Commission has up to date accurate information about care services. The information provided will also be used in the Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) process to determine how services will be inspected.

An AR must be submitted every year by all registered services. Care services are obliged by law to provide us with the information we have requested in the AR (The Regulation of Care Act (Scotland) 2001, Section 25(1)).

The Self-Assessment Form

The service submitted a self assessment form as requested by the Care Commission. This contained information on areas in which the Manager thought that the service did well and identified developments which the Manager thought would improve the service. It also contained information on how service users were able to participate in service delivery.

Views of service users

Ten service user questionnaires were issued and seven were returned. The service users were advised of the Care Commission visit but none chose to meet with the Officer.

Regulation Support Assessment

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 Care Commission Officer (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.

During the inspection process

Staff at inspection

The inspection was carried out by Frances Bridges, Locum Care Commission Officer.

Evidence

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

- a review of a range of policies, procedures, records and other documentation - including the following:
 - supporting evidence from the up to date self assessment
 - samples of service users' personal plans
 - information about the service (Handbook, leaflets)
 - aims and objectives for the service
 - minutes of staff and service users' meetings
 - staff training records
 - Complaints policy, procedure and records
 - Service User Participation Strategy
 - quality assurance tool(ECCO)
 - accident and incident records
 - Protection of Vulnerable Adults policy
 - sample of staff supervision records
 - newsletters and quarterly magazine
 - Certificate of Registration
 - Certificate of Insurance

- Discussion took place with the Manager and two staff.

The above information was taken into account during the inspection process.

Inspection Focus Areas and links to Quality Themes and Statements for 2008/09

The officer took into account the Inspection Focus Areas for 2008/2009. 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/>

Fire Safety Issues

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/firelaw

Action taken on requirements in last Inspection Report

There were no Requirements as a result of the last inspection.

Comment on Self-Assessment

The Manager had completed and submitted the self assessment documentation prior to the inspection. This was completed to a satisfactory standard, giving relevant information for each of the Quality Themes and Statements. The service identified areas of strength and areas for further development with appropriate timescales for completion.

Views of Service Users

Although service users were advised of the Care Commission visit, none wished to speak with the Officer. Responses from the seven questionnaires returned indicated that six service users were very satisfied with the service and a seventh was satisfied.

Comments made are as follows:

"The staff are very friendly and helpful. Nothing is too much trouble. They will give any support you need."

"Staff are extremely helpful at all times and their support is especially good."

"Having been a rough sleeper for over 4 years, I didn't expect to be successfully housed, I'd given up. Rowan Alba has provided the background for me to turn my life around and break the cycle. The support has been sensitive, I've been encouraged to be as independent as possible with backup when needed. Staff have a good balance of understanding and humour."

Views of Carers

No carers were available to express their views and none of the questionnaires returned contained views of carers or family.

Quality Assessment Framework Themes and Statements

Theme - Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grade - 5 - Very Good

Quality Statement 1.1 **We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.**

Strengths:

The service had a participation strategy, which stated "It is Rowan Alba's aim to enable and encourage full service user participation in the management of Rowan Alba and the delivery of services."

A range of methods were used to ascertain service users' views. These included care planning and reviews, monthly service users' meetings, Manager's surgery, a suggestion and comments box, notice boards in each flat and the office, a robust complaints procedure and a questionnaire for leavers.

Service users participated in identifying their personal care needs and agreeing how these will be met. Weekly meetings between service users and their key worker ensured that care plans could be adjusted as needs changed. Sampled care plans confirmed that service users' opinions and suggestions were followed through.

Evidence indicated that Language Line, an interpreter service, had been used on more than one occasion to ensure that service users were able to participate in care planning. One interpreter attended fortnightly meetings to provide support for a service user. This use of external support to meet individual service users' needs was an extremely good example of how the service had liaised with other providers to ensure service users' participation. The Manager spoke about how language barriers can isolate service users and obstruct effective service delivery.

Monthly service user meetings provided a forum for service users to discuss any issues arising, though not all service users chose to attend. Minutes were taken, so that service users choosing not to attend were kept informed about the discussion which had taken place. The Manager's surgery was scheduled for straight after the residents' meeting, so that service users could have an opportunity to raise any private issues.

The Manager advised that a new suggestion box had been made, which was much brighter and more eye-catching, in an attempt to tempt service users to make use of it. This had been successful and suggestions about an outing had been arranged as a result.

Leavers' questionnaires were used to ascertain views about the service when service users were leaving. This had proved a useful tool in identifying issues which service users may have been reluctant to raise during their stay.

Overall there were effective systems in place to ascertain service users' views and to involve them in service development.

The service had a participation strategy, which stated "It is Rowan Alba's aim to enable and encourage full service user participation in the management of Rowan Alba and the delivery of services."

A range of methods were used to ascertain service users' views. These included care planning and reviews, monthly service users' meetings, Manager's surgery, a suggestion and comments box, notice boards in each flat and the office, a robust complaints procedure and a questionnaire for leavers.

Service users participated in identifying their personal care needs and agreeing how these will be met. Weekly meetings between service users and their key worker ensured that care plans could be adjusted as needs changed. Sampled care plans confirmed that service users' opinions and suggestions were followed through.

Areas for Improvement:

The Manager had identified the intention to try to encourage service users to allow more family involvement in care planning.

A means of recording any action which was taken as a response to suggestions made via the suggestions box would be beneficial.

CCO Grading	5 - Very Good
Number of Requirements	0
Number of Recommendations	0

Theme - Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grade - 5 - Very Good

Quality Statement 1.2 We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential

Strengths:

Evidence seen in care plans, reviews and through discussion indicated that service users were central to the decision making process, making choices in all aspects of the service provision they received. In addition to an assessment of need and corresponding care plan, detailing how support was to be provided, service users had been involved in undertaking risk assessments.

Key work meetings were recorded and had a clear action section, which identified the support action agreed and how and who had responsibility for carrying it out.

There was a clear admission process, which included assessment of needs and risk assessment. Service users were provided with a copy of their "Charter of Rights," the Confidentiality Policy and information about Data Protection. They also received an Occupancy Agreement, which outlined the service to be provided including how it could be ended, a Handbook and leaflet describing Strathmullion, which contained a range of pertinent policies such as Smoking, Alcohol, Anti-Discrimination etc. Service users also received a leaflet on adult protection entitled "Protecting You From Abuse" and a copy of the Complaints procedure.

Service users were kept abreast of current information by means of notice boards and resource files which contained information on a range of services which could provide additional support if needed. Letters were sent out to reinforce the informing process.

Staff support was arranged to accommodate special appointments outwith the project if that was the service user's wish. Service users and staff worked together to plan for times when additional staff cover may be required. There were effective systems in place, such as person centred care planning, ongoing reviews, service user and key-worker meetings and quality monitoring to ensure service users received the support to make individual lifestyle choices and to achieve personal goals.

Areas for Improvement:

The Manager identified an intention to try to encourage service users to keep their own personal copy of their care plan as well as accessing it in the office.

CCO Grading	5 - Very Good
Number of Requirements	0
Number of Recommendations	0

Theme - Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grade - 5 - Very Good

Quality Statement 3.1 **We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.**

Strengths:

The "Service User Participation Strategy" for this service stated that "It is Rowan Alba's aim to enable and encourage full service user participation in the management of Rowan Alba and the delivery of services. Rowan Alba believes in service user involvement as a core value underpinning its Mission Statement."

The system of key-work meetings provided opportunities for consultation with service users on all aspects of user satisfaction as well as oversight of the effectiveness of care plans.

Monthly service user meetings were used as a platform for service user consultation and an opportunity for service users to air their views.

The anonymity of the suggestion box and leavers questionnaires allowed service users to express their views on all aspects of the service including staffing issues, where they may be reluctant to speak out at service users' meetings. The Manager's surgery also allowed for more private discussion.

The service issued a questionnaire card to each service user from the Council Housing Department. This included a question about staff.

A service user survey had recently been undertaken by the service, however this had not yet been analysed.

The service users' responses to the Care Commission questionnaires indicated that five service users were very satisfied and two were satisfied that staff had the skills and experience to meet their needs.

Areas for Improvement:

The Manager had identified a need to further consultation with service users on development of the format for future service user surveys to reflect service users' views about the service.

The Manager was still considering how best to record and progress the findings of the recent service user survey.

CCO Grading	5 - Very Good
Number of Requirements	0
Number of Recommendations	0

Theme - Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grade - 5 - Very Good

Quality Statement 3.3 **We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.**

Strengths:

Staff training records, responses to Care Commission questionnaires and discussion with staff supported the view that staff were trained to work in accordance with the National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

A range of training opportunities were provided, including comprehensive Induction over a six month probationary period when new staff received mentorship, culminating in an end of probation report. During this period staff received monthly supervision.

The Manager spoke of the commitment of Rowan Alba to have trained and motivated staff teams. The staff development strategy identified the expectation that all staff should have the opportunity to be qualified to SVQ level 3 in Social Care. Currently three staff were in process of undertaking SVQ 3, two of whom were due to complete in August. One member of staff was still to commence SVQ training and the Manager had applied for the Registered Manager's Award and was due to commence in September.

Training records were sampled. These indicated that staff had been able to access a wide spectrum of training opportunities specific to the service provided. These included as follows:

- Housing Options
- Dependencies
- Conflict Management
- Equalities
- Dementia and Brain Injury
- Homelessness
- Lone Working

Regular staff supervision was maintained. Supervision records sampled showed that there was a clear process, which reflected prior supervision decisions, monitoring of service user care plans, issues arising, training needs, policies and procedures and which included further action.

Staff confirmed that supervision took place regularly and that training opportunities were good. Staff stated that access to information was good and that supervision and team meetings provided an opportunity to feedback/comment about the service.

All staff were provided with copies of the SSSC Codes of Practice and were aware of the need to register.

Theme - Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading - 5 - Very Good

Quality Statement 4.2 We involve our workforce in determining the direction and future objectives of the service.

Strengths:

Minutes of monthly staff team meetings showed that staff were kept informed about changes within the organisation and the implications these would have for the service. Staff were encouraged to discuss any suggestions which would benefit the service.

One member of staff represented Strathmullion in an annual consultation group, the purpose of which was to explore futures developments and to discuss specific topics submitted by staff.

One staff member was undertaking a review of the service users' handbook as a means of improving the quality of information for service users'.

A staff survey had recently been carried out across all of Rowan Alba services. The outcomes of this exercise had not yet been disseminated.

Annual reports were distributed providing staff with information about the current status of the organisation and highlighting future developments. These were discussed at team meetings and feedback passed back to headquarters.

Although two staff were met only one chose to speak with the Care Commission Officer. The staff member confirmed that staff were able to influence service delivery and felt that they were listened to and their ideas and suggestions were valued. She also confirmed that staff had been party to the drafting of the service Self Assessment for the Care Commission.

Staff were encouraged to develop skills through opportunities to undertake delegated tasks.

Areas for Improvement:

The Manager expressed her intention to develop a service specific questionnaire for staff at Strathmullion, along similar lines to that used across all Rowan Alba staff.

CCO Grading	5 - Very Good
Number of Requirements	0
Number of Recommendations	0

Enforcement

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

Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what is required of a care service to comply with the Act and Regulations or Orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Where there are breaches of the Regulations, Orders or conditions, a requirement must be made. Requirements are legally enforceable at the discretion of the Care Commission.

None identified at this inspection.

Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions the care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service but where failure to do so will not directly result in enforcement. Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, codes of practice and recognised good practice.

None identified at this inspection.

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in the Care Commission re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as Unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).

Areas for Improvement:

The Manager advised of her intention to pursue opportunities for locum staff to access SVQ qualifications.

CCO Grading	5 - Very Good
Number of Requirements	0
Number of Recommendations	0

Theme - Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grade - 5 - Very Good

Quality Statement 4.1 **We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.**

Strengths:

Service users can make their views known through key-work meetings, monthly service users' meetings, the Manager's surgery and through care plan reviews.

The introduction of the Service Users' Survey, the Housing Department questionnaire also the Leavers' questionnaire all provide avenues for service users to participate in assessing the quality of management and leadership within the service.

Responses to the Care Commission questionnaire all indicated that service users would have no hesitation about raising complaints or concerns and would be comfortable raising controversial issues with the Manager. The suggestion box had already been used to highlight two issues, which were in process of resolution.

Service Users could contribute articles in Newsletters and the quarterly Rowan Alba magazine to reflect their views on management and service delivery.

Staff confirmed that the service had an "Open Door" policy and that the manager was accessible to service users and staff. One member of staff commented that the service was very well organised and responsive to suggestions from staff and service users.

Staff were encouraged to develop leadership and management skills through opportunities to undertake delegated tasks.

The Service User Participation Policy referred to enabling service users to "have full input on management and service working groups" and to "empower service users through representation on the Rowan Alba Management Board."

Areas for Improvement:

The Manager was working on development of a recording tool which would show how the service had responded to suggestions/comments made by means of the suggestion box. Consideration was being given to development of more effective recording tools reflecting how the service responded to expressed views of service users.

Service users had been consulted about the content of the information handbook and work on this had yet to be implemented.

CCO Grading	5 - Very Good
Number of Requirements	0
Number of Recommendations	0

This report was written by

Frances Bridges

Care Commission Officer

Date: 22/07/2008

Further information about the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, can be found on the Care Commission web-site, under the section 'The Law'.
www.carecommission.com