

# Thera (Scotland) - (Inverness and the Highlands) Housing Support Service

Melrose House  
69A George Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 2JG

Telephone: 03003 031 286

**Type of inspection:**  
Announced (short notice)

**Completed on:**  
11 August 2023

**Service provided by:**  
Thera (Scotland)

**Service provider number:**  
SP2007008824

**Service no:**  
CS2016346839

## About the service

Thera (Scotland) - (Inverness and Highlands) is a not for profit company operated by Thera Trust, a charity that leads a number of similar companies supporting people with disabilities in England and Scotland.

The service provides combined housing support and care at home services to people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health conditions living in their own homes and in the community. The support services are provided in Inverness and Easter Ross areas. Support can be provided to people in their own homes and in the community up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## About the inspection

This was a short announced inspection which took place between 7 and 11 August 2023. One inspector carried out the inspection.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service which included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service, and people who used the service and provider records.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- visited three people in their homes;
- spoke with seven relatives/guardians over the phone;
- spoke with staff and management;
- received back five questionnaires from partnership agencies;
- reviewed returned electronic surveys; and
- reviewed documents.

**Key messages**

People were living full and varied lives.

Guardians and representatives of people who were supported were respected, listened to and central to the planning of the care and support their loved ones received.

People had formed strong, trusting relationships with their staff members.

Staff were dedicated, kind and caring and strong advocates for the people they supported.

The manager had been focusing on sustaining and building on improvements since the last inspection. The service was performing to a very good standard.

Stakeholders' views were central to driving service improvements forward.

Meaningful ways of including people's views in their reviews needed to be progressed.

**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 leadership?	5 - Very 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 found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

Value based practice was threaded throughout the organisation. We observed staff supporting people with warmth, fun and kindness. People felt safe and happy when care was being delivered as there were strong, trusting relationships between staff and the people they supported. People lived a full and varied life and staff advocated strongly for people's rights. Some of the comments from the people we spoke with included:

"I am happy here."

"They are a reliable and trustworthy company."

"The staff are really good at getting his needs met. They're on the ball and do the best for him they can."

"Everyone is very respectful of each other."

Guardians and relevant persons were central and fully involved in developing and regularly reviewing support plans. Support plans were person centred with clear routines and protocols which promoted the health and wellbeing of individuals. This was especially important when agency or new staff were supporting people who communicated non verbally. In conclusion, care and support was provided the way the person or the representative wished, with a focus on promoting people's abilities and independence. Some of the comments from the people we spoke with included:

"The staff ask for my advice on different things, but I also ask for their views and listen to them if they have tried something that helps with his daily life."

"I am involved in all reviews and staff meetings. Also I get involved in interviews if new staff are required."

"Staff listen to me and I feel that my suggestions are taken on board."

When we considered people's six monthly reviews, we identified two areas of improvement that would make them more inclusive, and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the legal guardian (see area of improvement 1 and 2).

Staff were vigilant and pro-active when monitoring people's health. Partnership agencies confirmed staff sought, and followed advice given which promoted people's well being. Guardian were reassured that staff informed them of changes to their loved one's health. All of the above meant people received high quality care and support based on guidance and best practice. Some of the comments from the people we spoke with included:

"We have been really surprised at how well our relative has settled in. There is really good communication."

"The staff are on the ball and contact the doctor if they have concerns about my relative's health."

"All the clients have high needs and complexities around their needs and conditions and staff work in a very person-centred way and provide good quality support to the clients." (professional).

"Staff work professionally to meet clients' wishes, aspirations, abilities, disabilities and needs. They also show passion and commitment to their work." (professional).

People were supported to have fun and enjoy life. Staff had helped people to re-gain confidence and reconnect with their community following Covid-19. Staff were supporting people to achieve their potential and lead an active and fulfilling life. Some of the comments from the people we spoke with included:

"Staff are always looking for ways to enhance the day to day lives of individuals in their care and sourcing new experiences." (professional).

"My client struggles with activities but staff have tried their upmost to get her to try different activities. They are always exploring the likes of college courses or classes she could try." (professional).

"My relative decides on a daily basis what he wants to do with his day, whether it's going shopping or car trips."

"My relative has a good variety of daily activities. She has grown more independent over the past period due to the increase of daily activities."

## Areas for improvement

1. To further promote person centred reviews, the provider should find meaningful ways to consistently include the views of people in their reviews. This is especially relevant for people who communicate non verbally.

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

'I am supported to communicate in a way that is right for me, at my own pace, by people who are sensitive to me and my needs.' (HSCS 2.8).

2. To ensure choices and decisions are being made by the right person when a person is under a guardianship order, the powers stated in the guardianship order should be reviewed at least annually with all relevant persons.

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

'If my independence, control and choice are restricted, this complies with relevant legislation and any restrictions are justified, kept to a minimum and carried out sensitively.' (HSCS 1.3).

## How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The provider had a robust quality assurance system to evaluate what was working well and what needed improved on. Central to this process was gathering views of stakeholders. We were impressed with the imaginative and creative ways views had been gathered, especially from people who communicated non verbally. For example observations of activities and case tracking of people's experiences of their care and support. This ensured that outcomes and wishes of people were the primary drivers for change. We are looking forward to seeing how the views of stakeholders have influenced the direction of the service at the next inspection.

Following the last inspection there had been significant improvements in staff culture. Staff now had a "can do" attitude and there was a culture of openness and transparency, the focus being on providing person centred care and support to people. The promotion of human rights was embedded in staff induction and training. This helped staff remain focused on delivering person centred care. There were systems in place to ensure staff completed up to date training and were competent and confident when supporting individuals.

There were robust systems in place to identify risks, plan appropriate actions to address these and drive improvement forward. For example medication, financial audits, staff supervision and observations of practice. This helped people get the right care and support at the right time.

Families felt leaders valued and listened to them and took appropriate action when issues were raised. This resulted in true partnership working, with the focus remaining on the individuals' needs and how these were met.

All of the above led to a dynamic and responsive improvement plan that detailed the future direction of the service.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good

## To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

## Contact us

Care Inspectorate  
Compass House  
11 Riverside Drive  
Dundee  
DD1 4NY

[enquiries@careinspectorate.com](mailto:enquiries@careinspectorate.com)

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

## Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iarrtas.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.