

# Care service inspection report

Full inspection

## Grampian Women's Aid Housing Support Service

Aberdeen



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

Service provided by: Grampian Women's Aid

Service provider number: SP2004005315

Care service number: CS2003051770

Inspection Visit Type: Announced (Short Notice)

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and 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.

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## Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

### We gave the service these grades

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

### What the service does well

Grampian Women's Aid provides a high quality of care and support and reacts promptly to people in crises. Staff prioritise building trusting relationships with women. We found the support provided by Grampian Women's Aid had made a positive impact on the wellbeing of service users. Staff are insightful about the impacts of domestic violence. Grampian Women's Aid is committed to continuous improvement and staff are passionate about, and committed to their work.

### What the service could do better

The service is aiming to further develop the facilities it has to specifically support women fleeing domestic violence, who have no recourse to public funds. Grampian Women's Aid intend to develop specialist support services for the children who used the service. Other areas for development have been identified under the relevant themes in the main body of this report.

### What the service has done since the last inspection

Grampian Women's Aid has relocated its office premises and appointed a new service manager since the last inspection. The service has recently secured a

five year lottery fund for their outreach project. A number of team members have gone on the IDAA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy) course, some of whom have already successfully completed this course.

Service user house meetings are now held monthly. Grampian Women's Aid was, at the time of inspection, piloting a new support plan. The service manager has revised the new staff induction programme. The service has worked hard to address the areas of improvement identified at the last inspection.

### **Conclusion**

Grampian Women's Aid delivers person centred support to women and children to help them establish safe lifestyles, free from domestic abuse. The staff were knowledgeable about the needs of women and children who used their services. The service users we spoke with told us that the support they received from the staff at Grampian Women's Aid had helped them rebuild their lives.

# 1 About the service we inspected

Grampian Women's Aid provides advice, support and refuge to women (with or without children) who have experienced domestic abuse.

Grampian Women's Aid vision is of a fair and equal society in which women, children and young people are fully included and can live life free from all forms of abuse, empowered with knowledge, skills and tools to live life to their full potential. Key objectives set down by Grampian Women's Aid include:

To provide advice, support and temporary refuge accommodation for women and their children who have experienced, or are in fear of domestic abuse by partners or ex-partners. Domestic abuse can be emotional, physical or financial.

To provide structured, supportive opportunities to allow these women, children and young people to make choices for their future, whether it involves returning home or starting a new life.

To provide opportunities for women, children and young people to shape the development of services, policy and practice at a strategic level.

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com). The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

## Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

## Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

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

**Quality of care and support - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of management and leadership - Grade 5 - Very Good**

This report and grades represent our 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. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

## 2 How we inspected this service

### The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

### What we did during the inspection

We observed the service's registration certificate on display within the premises.

During our inspection visit on 23 Oct 2015, we read service user files, staff files, minutes of house meetings, staff supervision minutes, minutes of staff meetings, service user feedback, the service's strategic plan and their performance management information.

On 23 Oct 2015 we spoke with two service users one to one. Following the day of the visit, we spoke with three service users by telephone.

During the inspection visit we spoke directly with the service manager, the senior domestic abuse caseworker and a support worker. We also spoke with other Grampian Women's Aid staff members over the course of the inspection. We spoke, by telephone with a Police Officer for the local Domestic Abuse Involvement Unit.

### Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

## **Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

## **Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

## The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** Yes - Electronic

## Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self assessment document from the provider. We were satisfied with the way the provider had completed this and with the information included in relation to each theme.

## Taking the views of people using the care service into account

During our visit on 23 October 2015, we spoke with two service users one to one, and following the day of the inspection we spoke with three service users by telephone .

Service users we spoke with made the following comments:

"Me and my child went into refuge and it had all the facilities I needed and was well maintained. My son loved staying here. It helped me to move on with my life. It's a break from everything - being in refuge. The support I got from Women's Aid was fantastic. They helped me with financial difficulties. My keyworker was phenomenal. They have really helped me - I'm more confident. They've helped me realise that what has happened isn't my fault. They understand what I've been through. All of the staff are fantastic. I've not got one bad thing to say about them. They helped and they understood everything."

"My keyworker came to the hospital with me. I went to the group programmes and I met other women who had been through what I've been through. They were really good."

"The work they do - they don't get enough credit for it. It was nothing like I thought it would be. They do a remarkable job."

"They understand domestic abuse. The best thing is having the support and them being there. They offer you advice and help. If you need counselling they help you with counselling. I feel safe at the refuge. There's alarms and CCTV and there's phone numbers to call. Its controlled entry."

"Staff help me with issues and I see support workers every day. I talk to staff at the refuge every day, its very reassuring."

"I trust Women's Aid staff 100 per cent. What they do is brilliant - its amazing."

"I can't praise them enough. They come with me to appointments - with doctors and nurses."

"They identify specialist counselling."

"I'm feeling a lot more confident. I know I'm free. I no longer feel that I need to shut myself off. I know they will support me in anything I can possibly do."

"What they do is brilliant."

"They support you even when you've got your own place. It's excellent what they do. I'm very grateful for all their help and support. They all deserve medals."

"Shared living has its challenges but it's ok, it's alright, I feel safe here. Staff are helpful and understanding. They help me with financial matters, with legal issues, with housing and with health matters. They drive me to the GP. They come with me to appointments with my solicitor and they give me emotional support. They tell me about groups I can join."

They get me information and guidance about everything I need. They listened to what I said and gave me the help I needed."

"The support has made a difference to my life. They helped me to understand about my experience and how to deal with it. The staff had insight."

"My keyworker is so patient and she listens. It's good to let it out."

"Previously I was controlled. I found it hard to get out and shop. They offered to go shopping with me. We have on call numbers for the weekend."

"The only thing is the beds aren't comfortable. Other women have complained. We have told them and they have agreed to look into it. The staff are professional and they've been trained well. I know they keep information confidential. I've had support in every aspect I needed. I find so much more support here than from my family. The best thing is the moral and emotional support - which is exactly what you need after the experience of domestic abuse."

"I am so happy now that I'm in refuge. I feel safe. I want to say thank you to all the support workers who helped me. The support workers are very nice and they visited me at home."

"I feel safe and happy in the refuge. Its better than my last home. I have good relationships with the staff at Women's Aid. They do not need to improve anything."

### **Taking carers' views into account**

Carers were not interviewed as part of this inspection.

### 3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

#### Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

##### Statement 1

“We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.”

##### Service Strengths

We found that the service was performing to a very good standard in relation to this statement. We came to this conclusion after looking at records, speaking to workers and taking account of the views of women using the service.

Staff and service users we spoke with told us that consultation was embedded within the organisational culture. An ex service user sat on the Board of Directors. The service also had their own website which was used to post useful information about the service. Service users were each given copies of their own Welcome Pack which, we saw, contained information about the service. Women we spoke with told us that a staff member would take time to go through the contents of the Welcome Pack which helped to ensure that women knew where to find relevant information, including the refuge information booklet. Service users were given a copy of a statement 'Our commitment to you'. This statement helped to clarify what service users could expect from Grampian Women's Aid.

The service had 'friends' of Grampian Women's Aid who were willing to provide interpreting facilities, if necessary, which increased accessibility of the service to women for whom English was not their first language.

We saw that service users were given copies of the service's complaints procedures as well as information on how to complain to the Care Inspectorate if necessary. Grampian Women's Aid made use of a noticeboard to post information which informed service users about relevant local services. Refuge notice boards invited service users to post their comments. In line with the recommendation made at the last inspection, the service now held house meetings at least once a month which ensured that residents had the opportunity to share their views. We read the detailed minutes of these meetings and saw that they were an opportunity for service users to discuss any key concerns they had. The service had a comments box which allowed service users to express their views and this could be anonymous if preferred. We saw that the service made use of exit questionnaires to obtain service user views. We read a sample of completed questionnaires and saw that this feedback was positive.

Service users told us that they were given the opportunity to make suggestions for developing the support programme. Staff we spoke with told us that service provision was person-centred and that they actively sought service users' views. We were told that there was an open door policy towards service users. Our discussions with service users confirmed that this was the case. Women we spoke with told us that they had very regular contact with staff. This regular informal contact provided a further opportunity for service users to express their needs. We found that service users had been involved in staff recruitment by being involved in selecting candidates for interview.

### Areas for improvement

The service planned to develop more systematic ways of responding to service user feedback. Plans included setting up a service user steering group to explore service evaluation and service user involvement. The service particularly planned to focus on developing service user involvement within the outreach service. The service wanted to increase the response rate to service user questionnaires. A specific member of staff had been designated responsibility for co-ordinating improvements in service user consultation. Progress with these areas of development will be followed up at the next inspection.

**Grade**

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

## Statement 2

“We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential.”

### Service Strengths

The service performed to a very good standard in relation to this statement. The comments detailed under Quality Statement 1.1 relate to this statement.

We observed that service users had individual support plans in place which were reviewed regularly. The service has introduced the support planning tool, Outcomes Star. Support planning was carried out in a way which was interactive. Service users completed their paperwork and held their own copies. Safety planning was incorporated within support planning. Service users had the opportunity to be actively involved in the review of their support plan. We saw that support plans identified specific supports required in order to help women to address their individual areas of need. The service has set up two groupwork support programmes, one of which focussed on health and the other on confidence building and self - esteem. Refuge workers carried out assessments to identify the best time for individual service user to join and benefit from the group programmes. Service users also had access to an on-call service. Women we spoke with told us that if they needed the support, staff accompanied them to appointments with other agencies.

The service used the electronic case management system, Oasis. This system allowed staff members to input notes on an ongoing basis which all staff were then able to readily access in order to gain up to date information in relation to individual service users. The system generated automated messages for keyworkers whenever updates were recorded on the system. This helped to ensure that staff could be kept up to date with specific developments, which in turn helped to inform the support provided to each service user.

Support provided to service users was geared towards helping them to cope with, and recover from their experience of trauma.

Service users were encouraged to build resilience. Support involved practical assistance with, for example, housing issues and pursuing access to employment or training opportunities. The service held information on facilities within the local community and sign posted service users to services which would help them to work towards identified goals. The service was able to provide women with tokens to access the local foodbank, if necessary. Grampian Women's Aid worked in partnership with an organisation which supported service users by providing assistance in relation to individual children. The organisation had established links with organisations which provided donations, including foodboxes, to service users.

### Areas for improvement

The service was piloting a new support planning tool. Progress with this area of development will be followed up at the next inspection.

### Grade

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

## Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

### Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service."

#### Service Strengths

See comment under Quality Statement 1.1 in relation to this statement.

#### Areas for improvement

See comment under Quality Statement 1.1 in relation to this statement.

#### Grade

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

### Statement 3

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

#### Service Strengths

At this inspection, we found that the service was performing to a very good standard in relation to this statement. We focussed on the staff training and supervision taking account of both the views of service users and of staff interviewed during this inspection.

Morale was strong and staff we spoke with told us that they enjoyed their work and gained satisfaction from observing service users make positive choices and lifestyle changes. The high level of staff motivation and commitment was reflected in the quality of care and support delivered to service users, as discussed under Quality Theme 1, and as reflected in the views of people using the service.

Staff we spoke with told us that they received regular formal supervision. We also found that there was a system of annual appraisal in place. One staff member told us her view on the supervision system at Grampian Women's Aid, "I have a belief in supervision. It is important for me in managing my work. You know that time is allocated and that is reassuring. I feel supported and encouraged to bring my ideas and develop them." We noted that the service had a support and supervision policy in place to inform the system of staff supervision. Staff we spoke with told us that they felt supported by their manager and by other team members.

We found that staff were knowledgeable and brought a range of relevant qualifications and experience to their role. One staff member we spoke with was qualified as a registered mental nurse. Another staff member had a degree in community Education. The staff we spoke with told us that Grampian Women's Aid was supportive of staff training and development. Staff told us they were encouraged and supported to access available training resources.

Grampian Woman's Aid was affiliated to Scottish Women's Aid which had allowed the staff to access the Scottish Women's Aid training programme. Staff had therefore accessed a number of training courses including Understanding Domestic Abuse, Why doesn't she just leave? We spoke with a staff member who had recently completed training in Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy and with another who, at the time of the inspection visit, was about to complete this training. This course equips professionals to contribute to reducing the risks from perpetrators of abuse. The service manager had recently revised the staff induction programme. We saw file evidence of a staff member being inducted into their role.

We found that there were regular staff team meetings and that these were used both to share information, and for exploring any key issues. There were systems in place to ensure that staff shared necessary information across the staff team.

The service worked in partnership with local agencies to ensure that risks to women and their children were kept to a minimum. We spoke with a Police Officer from Police Scotland who had worked alongside Grampian Women's Aid via the MARAC (multi agency risk assessment conference) and via the Violence Against Women partnership. This individual told us that the Police were able to learn from Grampian Women's Aid as experts in support provision for families affected by domestic abuse. We were also told that Grampian Women's Aid were considered to provide prompt and invaluable support to help families affected by domestic abuse. The Grampian Women's Aid manager had supported, and worked co-operatively with, Police Scotland in a recent Disclosure pilot exercise.

Staff had access to copies of the National Care Standards and to copies of the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice.

### **Areas for improvement**

The service should develop formal systems to monitor and oversee completion of staff training. The service manager was planning to develop a training matrix. We would support this proposal. Although the service manager received supervision from the chair of the Board this was not minuted.

There should be formal records of all staff formal 1:1 supervision sessions (See recommendation 1 below). Progress with this area of development will be followed up at the next inspection.

### Grade

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

### Recommendations

**Number of recommendations - 1**

1. All staff should have regular formal 1:1 supervision sessions and these sessions should be recorded in writing (National, Care Standards, Housing Support Services, Standard 3, Management and Staffing Arrangements).

## Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very 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

See comments under Quality Statement 1.1 in relation to this statement.

### Areas for improvement

See comments under Quality Statement 1.1 in relation to this statement.

### Grade

5 - Very 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 service was performing to a good standard in relation to this Quality Statement. As detailed in Quality Statement 1.1, service users had a range of opportunities to assess the quality of the service provided. The service manager collated feedback from service users as part of the service's performance management systems. We noted that the service held a complaints log and that the service responded appropriately to the one complaint made since the last inspection.

We saw from reading staff supervision and appraisal minutes that these meetings were used as opportunities to quality assure service provision by reviewing staff development. The service had a policy framework in place to which staff had access. Scottish Women's Aid revised model policies which were then shared with individual Women's Aid services. Then policies were revised, as appropriate, to meet the needs of the service. The service had a system in place to review their policies on a three year cycle. Final drafts of policies were submitted to the Board of Directors for their approval. The resulting policy framework provided an opportunity to guide practice and therefore contribute to quality assuring service provision. There was a procedure in place to report incidents to funders although there hadn't been any incidents since the last inspection.

The service's Board of Directors included individuals who brought with them a range of professional backgrounds including addiction, business, housing, human resources and one Board member was a former service user. We found the Board contributed to quality assuring the service by monitoring performance through the regular reports which were submitted to the Board. The service manager co-operated with external monitoring by compiling and submitting performance management reports to funders.

Grampian Women's Aid had produced a five year strategic plan which detailed their vision for the future. The service was co-operative with the Care Inspectorate and supported us in carrying out our regulatory role.

### Areas for improvement

The service was planning to continue to develop the use of their electronic case management system to generate performance management reports which would monitor and evidence the achievement of specific outcomes for service users. We would support this area of development.

The service should present summaries of service user feedback to the staff and the Board in order to agree, and formally draft action plans in response to feedback obtained from service users. Progress with these areas of development will be followed up at the next inspection.

### Grade

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

## 4 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

### Previous requirements

1. The provider should ensure that all service users have a written plan which details how their support needs will be met. Support plans must be in place within 28 days of admission and set out how service users' health, welfare and safety needs are to be met.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011, No 210: 5(1) - A requirement in relation to personal plans.

Timescale: Within 14 days of receipt of this report.

**This requirement was made on 18 November 2013**

The support workers downloaded support plans onto Oasis. These plans addressed health, welfare and safety needs.

## 5 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

## 6 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

## 7 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

## 8 Additional Information

There is no additional information.

## 9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
22 Oct 2013	Announced (Short Notice)	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good
10 Oct 2011	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	Not Assessed
30 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very Good
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	4 - Good
27 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	Not Assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and Leadership	3 - Adequate

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