



# Inspection report

## Lowland Care Services Housing Support Service

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<b>Inspected by:</b> (Care Commission officer)	Craig Martin
<b>Type of inspection:</b>	Announced
<b>Inspection completed on:</b>	28 January 2010

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**Service provided by:**  
Lowland Care Services Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2004005379

**Care service number:**  
CS2003053401

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## Easy read summary of this inspection report

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We grade all the Quality Statements for a service at each inspection. Each grade describes how well we think the service is doing based on what we inspected.

We can choose from six grades:

 **6**       **5**       **4**       **3**       **2**       **1**  
excellent      very good      good      adequate      weak      unsatisfactory

### 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      N/A

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

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

### What the service does well

Lowland Care Services offer good opportunities for service users to take part in reviewing and evaluating their care/support package. The service recruits staff in a safe manner.

## **What the service could do better**

The service should continue to develop the ways in which it gathers the views of service users in order to improve the service.

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

The service provider had restructured the management of the service since the last inspection.

## **Conclusion**

Lowland Care offers a good level of service across Dumfries & Galloway. Service users can expect to receive a service where their care and support will be delivered by staff that have been recruited in line with best practice.

## **Who did this inspection**

### **Lead Care Commission Officer**

Craig Martin

### **Other Care Commission Officers**

### **Lay Assessor**

**Please read all of this report so that you can understand the full findings of this inspection.**

## About the Care Commission

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We were set up in April 2002 to regulate and improve care services in Scotland.

Regulation involves:

- registering new services
- inspecting services
- investigating complaints
- taking enforcement action, when necessary, to improve care services.

We regulate around 15,000 services each year. Many are childminders, children's daycare services such as nurseries, and care home services. We regulate many other kinds of services, ranging from nurse agencies to independent healthcare such as hospices and private hospitals.

We regulate services for the very young right through to those for the very old. Our work can, therefore, affect the lives of most people in Scotland.

All our work is about improving the quality of care services.

We produce thousands of inspection reports every year; all are published on our website: [www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com). Reports include any complaints we investigate and improvements that we ask services to make.

The "Care services" area of our website also:

- allows you to search for information, such as reports, about the services we regulate
- has information for the people and organisations who provide care services
- has guidance on looking for and using care services in Scotland.

You can also get in touch with us if you would like more detailed information.

## About the National Care Standards

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The National Care Standards (NCS) set out the standards that people who use care services in Scotland should expect. The aim is to make sure that you receive the same high quality of service no matter where you live.

Different types of service have different National Care Standards. When we inspect a care service we take into account the National Care Standards that the service should provide.

The Scottish Government publishes copies of the National Care Standards online at: [www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

You can get printed copies free from:

Blackwells Bookshop  
53-62 South Bridge Edinburgh  
EH1 1YS  
Telephone: 0131 662 8283  
Email: [Edinburgh@blackwells.co.uk](mailto:Edinburgh@blackwells.co.uk)

## What is inspection?

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Our inspectors, known as Care Commission Officers (CCOs), check care services regularly to make sure that they are meeting the needs of the people in their care.

One of the ways we check on services is to carry out inspections. We may turn up without telling the service's staff in advance. This is so we can see how good the care is on a normal day. We inspect some types of services more often than others.

When we inspect a service, typically we:

- talk to people who use the service, their carers and families, staff and managers
- talk to individuals and groups
- have a good look around and check what quality of care is being provided
- look at the activities happening on the day
- examine things like records and files, if we need to
- find out if people get choices, such as food, choosing a key worker and controlling their own spending money.

We also use lay assessors during some inspections. These are volunteers who have used care services or have helped to care for someone who has used care services.

We write out an inspection report after gathering the information. The report describes how things are and whether anything needs to change.

Our work must reflect the following laws and guidelines:

- the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001
- regulations made under this Act
- the National Care Standards, which set out standards of care that people should be able to expect to receive from a care service.

This means that when we register or inspect a service we make sure it meets the requirements of the 2001 Act. We also take into account the National Care Standards that apply to it.

If we find a service is not meeting these standards, the 2001 Act gives us powers that require the service to improve.

## **Recommendations, requirements and complaints**

If we are concerned about some aspect of a service, or think it could do more to improve its service, we may make a requirement or recommendation.

- 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.
- 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.

Complaints: We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service (or about us). Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints. Depending on how complex it is, a complaint may be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

## How we decided what to inspect

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### **Why we have different levels of inspection**

We target our inspections. This means we spend less time with services we are satisfied are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care. We call these low-intensity inspections. Services where there is more concern receive more intense inspections. We call these medium or high intensity inspections.

### **How we decide the level of inspection**

When planning an inspection, our inspectors, or Care Commission Officers (CCOs) carefully assess how intensively each service needs to be inspected. They do this by considering issues such as:

- complaints
- changes to how the service provides care
- any notifications the service has given us, such as the absence of a manager
- what action the service has taken in response to requirements we have made.

The CCO will also consider how the service responded to situations and issues: for example how it deals with complaints, or notifies us about incidents such as the death of someone using the service.

Our inspections take account of:

- areas of care that we are particularly interested in (these are called Inspection Focus Areas)
- the National Care Standards that the service should be providing
- recommendations and requirements that we made in earlier inspections
- any complaints and other regulatory activity, such as enforcement actions we have taken to improve the service.

# What is grading?

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We grade each service under Quality Themes which for most services are:

- **Quality of Care and support:** how the service meets the needs of each individual in its care
- **Quality of environment:** the environment within the service (for example, is the service clean, is it set out well, is it easy to access by people who use wheelchairs?);
- **Quality of staffing:** the quality of the care staff, including their qualifications and training
- **Quality of management and leadership:** how the service is managed and how it develops to meet the needs of the people it cares for
- **Quality of information:** this is how the service looks after information and manages record keeping safely.

Each of the Quality Themes has a number of Quality Statements in it, which we grade.

We grade each heading as follows:

<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
excellent	very good	good	adequate	weak	unsatisfactory

We do not give one overall grade.

## How grading works.

Services assess themselves using guidance that we given them. Our inspectors take this into account when they inspect and grade the service. We have the final say on grading.

The Quality Themes for this service type are explained in section 2 The Inspection.

## About the service we inspected

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Lowland Care Ltd is an integrated Housing Support/Care at Home service operating in Dumfries and the surrounding area. It offers care and support to adults with physical and/or mental disability, people leaving care and support to parents.

The aim of the service is to provide quality care and support to adults of all ages in their own home in a manner that promotes and respects their independence, privacy and dignity. The service strives to deliver professional, caring services, tailored to an individual's needs, in helping them live as independently as possible; to do this Lowland Care offer personal care, non-personal social care and housing support to it's service users group.

This service registered with the Care Commission on 30 September 2004.

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

<b>Quality of Care and Support</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
<b>Quality of Staffing</b>	<b>5 - Very Good</b>
<b>Quality of Management and Leadership</b>	<b>N/A</b>

This inspection report and grades are our assessment of the quality of how the service is performing in the areas we examined during this inspection.

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

You can use the "Care services" area of our website ([www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com)) to find the most up-to-date grades for this service.

## How we inspected this service

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### **What level of inspection did we make this service**

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 activities did we undertake during the inspection**

We issued a number of Care Standards Questionnaires to service users and their carers; we received eleven completed questionnaires before the inspection.

During the inspection, we gathered evidence from a number of sources including the examination of a range of policies, procedures, records and other documentation.

Evidence sampled included:

Certificate of Registration  
Certificate of Insurance  
Participation Strategy  
Recruitment files  
Disclosure Records  
Revised Recruitment Guidelines  
Supervision Policy  
Quality Visit Procedure  
Complaints procedure  
Staff files  
Company Website  
Information leaflet

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

Each year we identify an area, or areas, we want to focus on during our inspections. We still inspect all the normal areas of a care service; these are extra checks we make for a specific reason.

For 2009/10 we will focus on:

- Meaningful activity for all adult services
- How care services assess the health of people with learning disabilities
- Involving parents for children's services
- Medication for looked after children for residential accommodation for children
- How care services make sure they have safe recruitment procedures for staff for all services except childminders.

You can find out more about these from our website [www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com).

### **Fire safety issues**

The Care Commission no longer reports on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function. Where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Care service providers can find more information about their legal responsibilities in this area at: [www.infoscotland.com/firelaw](http://www.infoscotland.com/firelaw)

### **Actions Taken on Recommendations Outstanding**

We identified three recommendations in the previous inspection report dated 27 February 2009. The provider had met all three recommendations by the time of this inspection.

### **The annual return**

We use annual returns (ARs) to:

- make sure we have up-to-date, accurate information about care services; and
- decide how we will inspect services.

By law every registered care service must send us an annual return and provide us with the information we have requested. The relevant law is the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, Section 25(1). These forms must be returned to us between 6 January and 28 February 2009.

### **Annual Return Received**

Yes - electronic

### **Comments on Self Assessment**

Prior to this inspection, the Service Provider submitted an electronic self-assessment document. Within this, they provided information about where they felt the service had strengths and highlighted sources of evidence to support their statements. In addition, the service manager identified areas for development and improvement.

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

We received seven Care Standards Questionnaires from people who use this service.

All seven indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the care and support provided by Lowland Care Services.

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

We received four Care Standards Questionnaires from friends or relatives of people receiving the service before the inspection.

One questionnaire indicated that the person completing the form felt they were very

satisfied overall with the service; another stated they were satisfied with the care and support their mother received. Two questionnaires were completed indicating that the family members were very dissatisfied with the service; we spoke with the family members and they stated that they had mis-read the form. They stated that they were in fact extremely satisfied with the service provided by the carers of Lowland Care Services.

Comments included:

"Mrs X is very happy with the level of care from Lowland Care Service. All carers treat her with respect, empathy and understanding. They go far beyond the call of duty in all their tasks."

## 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

The service's performance in this area was very good.

The management of the service was able to show that service users are able to take part in assessing and improving the quality of their care and support. 'We saw evidence of ongoing development and review of this aspect of the service during the inspection.

The service had a Participation Strategy to determine the most effective and meaningful way of involving service users and other stakeholders in assessing and improving the quality of the service.

All service users have a Personal Plan detailing the care and support that the service user can expect to receive.

The service had processes in place for the review the care/support plans.

Service users have access to information on independent advocacy service. The service would access advocacy services as part of Lowland Care Services Exit Procedure.

The service conducts a survey of service users' views through Service User Questionnaires.

The service had introduced a quarterly newsletter for service users telling them about events and developments within the organisation.

#### Areas for Improvement

The service provider was in the process of arranging to host a service user forum in the spring to compliment the previous questionnaire excise. New Questionnaires were to be issued in summer 2010.

#### Grade awarded for this statement

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 service's performance was very good in this area.

Lowland Care had a comprehensive information pack for clients.

Service users receive the following information:

Statement of Aims and Objectives, Service User Guide, Complaints Procedure, Medication Guidelines, Service Agreement.

Additional information about Lowland Care Services was available on the company website ([www.lowlandcare.co.uk](http://www.lowlandcare.co.uk)), in marketing leaflets and through contact with the service's Care Co-ordinators.

The service provider was able to demonstrate that there was ongoing development and review of the company's literature. The provider had met the recommendations from the previous inspection report by the time of this inspection.

### **Areas for Improvement**

The service should continue to review and revise information about the service in order to maintain this grade.

### **Grade awarded for this statement**

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

The service's performance in this area was very good.

The management of the home was able to show that service users are able to take part in assessing and improving the quality of staff.

The service gained the views of service users on the quality of staffing through questionnaires and Quality Assurance visits.

The service had Quality Assurance Systems in place that operated independently of the teams that delivered care and support. Questionnaires and Quality Assurance visits inform a development plan.

The service has a quarterly newsletter. The November 2009 issue provided service users with information about staff training, planned service user forums and the management re-structure. This included details about increasing the role of co-ordinators in assessing the quality of the service. 50% of Care Co-ordinators' working time will now involve quality assurance activity in the community.

The service provides all service users with a copy of the organisation's complaints procedure.

The service is able to monitor staff activity through the organisation's 'Telescheduler'. The system allows the provider to allocate staff in response to service users' preferences.

The service has a staff appraisal system. The six monthly probationary reviews take into consideration feedback from service users through real time monitoring and Quality Visits. We saw evidence of the provider taking service users' views into account in the Care Worker Appraisal Review Forms examined during the inspection. These identified training and development for staff.

#### Areas for Improvement

The service should continue to review and develop ways to involve service users and their families in improving the quality of staffing in order to maintain this grade.

**Grade awarded for this statement**

5 - Very Good

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

0

## **Statement 2**

We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

### **Service Strengths**

The service's performance in this area was very good.

Lowland Care Services have comprehensive recruitment and selection procedures. These were revised in September 2009.

Job applicants are required to complete a detailed application form.

Employment is subject to satisfactory references, one of which must be the current/most recent employer.

All applicants require to demonstrate they are physically and mentally fit.

All job applicants are subject to criminal record checks through Disclosure Scotland.

The service provides job applicants with information about the aims and values of the service. The provider gives each applicant a job description and a person specification. The provider gives applicants information about the Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice for Social Care Workers.

### **Areas for Improvement**

The service should continue to monitor and review the recruitment practice in order to maintain this grade.

### **Grade awarded for this statement**

5 - Very Good

### **Number of Requirements**

0

### **Number of Recommendations**

0

## Other Information

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### Complaints

### Enforcements

#### Additional Information

The provider highlighted a number of developments that had taken place since the last inspection of the service:

There had been a change in the management structure. The service had recruited a new manager and they were due to start on 1 February 2010.

The provider had appointed an Assistant Scheduler/Administrator to oversee and improve the efficiency of the company's Tele-scheduler System.

The provider had reviewed the role of the company's Care Co-ordinators. The co-ordinators now spend 50% of their time engaged in community based quality assurance activity.

#### 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).

## Summary of Grades

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<b>Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 6	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of Staffing - 5 - Very Good</b>	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 2	5 - Very Good
<b>Quality of Management and Leadership - Not Assessed</b>	

## Inspection and Grading History

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Gradings</b>
27 Feb 2009	Announced	Care and support      5 - Very Good Staffing                    5 - Very Good Management and Leadership      4 - Good

## Terms we use in our report and what they mean

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**Action Plan** - When we inspect a service, or investigate a complaint and the inspection report highlights an area for improvement; either through recommendations or requirements, the action plan sets out the actions the service will take in response.

**Best practice statements/guidelines** - This describes practices that have been shown to work best and to be achievable in specific areas of care. They are intended to guide practice and promote a consistent and cohesive approach to care.

**Care Service** - A service that provides care and is registered with us.

**Complaints** - We have a complaints procedure for dealing with any complaint about a registered care service or about us. Anyone can raise a concern with us - people using the service, their family and friends, carers and staff.

We investigate all complaints which can have more than one outcome. Depending on how complex the complaint is, the outcomes can be:

- upheld - where we agree there is a problem to be resolved
- not upheld - where we don't find a problem
- partially upheld - where we agree with some elements of the complaint but not all of them.

**Enforcement** - To protect people who use care services, the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 gives the Care Commission powers to enforce the law. This means we can vary or impose new conditions of registration, which may restrict how a service operates. We can also serve an improvement notice on a service provider to make them improve their service within a set timescale. If they do not make these improvements we could issue a cancellation notice and cancel their registration.

**Disclosure Scotland**- Disclosure Scotland provides an accurate and responsive disclosure service to enhance security, public safety and protect the vulnerable in society. There are three types or levels of disclosure (i.e. criminal record check) available from Disclosure Scotland; basic, standard and enhanced. An enhanced check is required for people whose work regularly involves caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults at risk; or to register for child minding, day care and to act as foster parents or carers.

**Participation** - This describes processes that allow individuals and groups to develop and agree programmes, policy and procedures.

**Personal Plan** - This is a plan of how support and care will be provided. The plan is agreed between the person using the service (or their representative, or both of them) and the service provider. It is sometimes called a care plan mostly by local authorities or health boards when they commission care for people.

## How you can use this report

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Our inspection reports give care services detailed information about what they are doing well and not so well. We want them to use our reports to improve the services they provide if they need to.

Care services should share our inspection reports with the people who use their service, their families and carers. They can do this in many ways, for example by discussing with them what they plan to do next or by making sure our report is easily available.

## People who use care services, their relatives and carers

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We encourage you to read this report and hope that you find the information helpful when making a decision on whether or not to use the care service we have inspected. If you, or a family member or friend, are already using a care service, it is important that you know we have inspected that service and what we found. You may find it helpful to read previous inspection reports about his service.

## The Care Commission

We use the information we gather from all our inspections to report to Scottish Ministers on how well Scotland's care services are performing. This information helps us to influence important changes they may make about how care services are provided.

## Reader Information

This inspection report is published by the Care Commission. It is for use by the general public. You can get more copies of this report and others by downloading it from our website [www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com) or by telephoning 0845 603 0890.

## Translations and alternative formats

This publication is available in other formats and other languages 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।

هذه بایتسد یم وونابز رگید روا رولکش رگید رپ شرازگ تعاشا هی

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

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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.

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Improving care in Scotland