



# Stepping Out<sup>TM</sup>

Helping people help themselves

## Care Quality Commission Review of Compliance December 2011

The Care Quality Commission carried out an unannounced inspection of our premises and reviewed our company's policies and procedures in the month of August 2011. This document should be used as a tool by purchasers in order to ensure they fully understand our report and are able to obtain up to date information pertaining to suggested improvements and the actions Stepping Out have taken to improve its service. Stepping Out values the opinion of the Care Quality Commission and acknowledges any recommendations the CQC made in relations to aiding Stepping Out improve the quality of its service. The CQC Report can be accessed via the link provided at the bottom of this document.

The inspection was based on the following outcomes, set by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Highlighted outcomes are those that the CQC felt Stepping Out could improve upon. Stepping Out have below, explained how they have sought to improve on these outcomes based upon the recommendations made by the CQC.

### **Outcome 1: People should be treated with respect, involved in discussions about their care and treatment and able to influence how the service is run.**

**CQC Opinion:** *Overall, we found that Stepping Out **was meeting this essential standard**. People have information about their care and support plans, can express their views and are supported towards independent living.*

### **Outcome 4: People should get safe and appropriate care that meets their needs and supports their rights.**

**CQC Opinion:** *Overall, we found that **improvements were needed** for this essential standard. The service prepares comprehensive care plans for people who use services which reflect the requirements set out in referring documentation from social services. Many of the people using services present challenging behaviours, and had also experienced previous placement breakdowns. Information received from some of the social workers who placed people at the service, and the service's own notifications to the CQC suggest that the staff members have struggled to engage people in their agreed support plans.*

**Stepping Out's Opinion:** *We felt the recommendation was very much generalised and did not take in to consideration the client's needs and requirements and or the issues they may have had at the time of inspection. Importantly the recommendation did not take in to account the clients past history. Many of our clients are placed with us due to regular placement breakdowns and or due to certain behaviours the client may display. Stepping Out's main priority is to ensure the placement does not breakdown and of course ensure the safety of the clients. After discussing this recommendation with*

*the CQC in further detail, Stepping Out have decided to document all meetings/discussions held between our operations manager and the client within a "engagement record" form. This will act as further proof of engagement, in addition to this, Stepping Out has decided to amend their "daily contact logs," these logs will record information in a more outcome focussed manner and will provide evidence of higher levels of engagement. We believe our recording documents did not provide enough information pertaining to engagement and needed to be further enhanced. The above improvements have now been made.*

**Outcome 7: People should be protected from abuse and staff should respect their human rights.**

**CQC Opinion:** *Overall, we found that **improvements were needed** for this essential standard. Staff members have appropriate training in safeguarding adults and children, but potential safeguarding concerns were not always being reported to the local authority safeguarding team. We also found that the arrangements for managing people's money were not accurately maintained.*

**Stepping Out's Opinion:** *In relation to the above Stepping Out can confirm that all potential safeguarding concerns were reported to relevant social workers and duty teams both in and out of hours. However it is understood that although the clients we support have severe challenging behaviour and that the likelihood of incidents occurring are higher than clients whose behaviour is less challenging, Stepping Out should communicate with Local safeguarding teams more often and according to the CQC seek to build an understanding with these teams. With regards to the arrangements around client's finances, Stepping Out understands that at the time of inspection a staff member was in the process of carrying out an audit of "petty cash" and that at the time there was a mistake made. It is also understood that when checking back, the CQC inspector noticed an error where Stepping Out may have overpaid a client. It has been agreed that our current petty cash log system is far too complicated and needs to be amended in order simplify the process. This has now been implemented.*

**Outcome 9: People should be given the medicines they need when they need them, and in a safe way.**

**CQC Opinion:** *Overall, we found that Stepping Out **was meeting this essential standard**, but to maintain this we have suggested some improvements are made. People were supported to take their medication safely. However, we found that one person's medication was not appropriately stored.*

**Stepping Out's Opinion:** *Stepping Out acknowledges that although one medication cabinet was not a commercially made retail medication cabinet, the Medication was labelled and stored in a locked cabinet. However we have now purchased a dedicated made for purpose, medication cabinet. Improvement implemented.*

**Outcome 14: Staff should be properly trained and supervised, and have the chance to develop and improve their skills.**

**CQC Opinion:** *Overall, we found that **improvements were needed** for this essential standard. Whilst the service has training and supervision arrangements in place, essential training such as how to support people with challenging behaviour had not taken place at the time of our inspection. Along with competence in other areas, training in managing challenging behaviour is needed to keep the staff members and people using services safe. In addition, regular supervision sessions were not taking place for staff members supporting people with complex needs and a concerning proportion of staff members had been subject to formal hearings.*

**Stepping Out's Opinion:** *At the time of inspection and thereafter the CQC had confirmed that our current training arrangements were in line with national minimum standards. Stepping out can confirm that staff members did receive training in challenging behaviour. However the CQC recommended that we carry out additional training sessions around challenging behaviour as Stepping Out were deemed to be a specialist provider to clients displaying challenging behaviour and so our training should include excess sessions on managing challenging behaviour. Stepping Out can confirm that at the time of inspection our staff supervision sessions were officially taking place once*

*every three months. In reality our manager visits our staff members and projects on a daily basis and provides supervision and guidance exceeding that found by the CQC (once every three months). After further discussions with the CQC, Stepping Out have decided to document all forms of engagement, discussion and guidance offered to staff members and therefore process more regular official "supervision documents." In relation to our staff members being subject to formal hearings Stepping Out can confirm that all our staff members are hired directly by our organisation and are not hired through third party agencies. Because of this our relationship with our staff members are thorough and communication regular. It has been agreed that we will reduce our formal investigatory meetings and in fact implement these meetings in to supervision documents. The majority of our formal hearings are based around general human resource matters and or minor issues that do not lead to formal disciplinary hearings. The above recommendations have now been implemented. Stepping Out can confirm that all members of staff received additional training on topics covering Challenging Behaviour, Child Protection and Autism. The training programme was held over two days (8th & 9th of December 2011.) In addition to the above the frequency of staff meetings have already been increased and implemented. Our group staff meetings are now being held at least once every two months Our staff meetings are held within our head office and usually consists of a group session of 20- 24 staff members. We have already increased the occurrence of these events to at least once every two months.*

**Outcome 16: The service should have quality checking systems to manage risks and assure the health, welfare and safety of people who receive care**

**CQC Opinion:** Overall, we found that Stepping Out **was meeting this essential standard**. Stepping Out has suitable monitoring arrangements in place to ensure that people who use services are protected against the risks of inappropriate or unsafe care.

**Outcome 20: The service notifies the Care Quality Commission about incidents that affect the health, safety and welfare of people who use services.**

**CQC Opinion:** Overall, we found that Stepping Out **was meeting this essential standard**. Whilst at the time of our inspection appropriate notifications were not being made to the CQC this is now taking place. The service keeps records of incidents in relation to people who use services and where appropriate now makes notifications to the CQC.

We hope you have found this report based on the CQC's recent review of compliance informative. Stepping Out feel the report has highlighted areas of improvement and are grateful for the recommendations made by the Care Quality Commission. Stepping Out can confirm that all recommended improvements have been implemented. Stepping Out will continue to build upon its reputation of providing high quality care and support and will regularly seek ways in which to improve its service. If you require further information or would like to discuss the above, please feel free to contact us on 0208 342 7217.

To view the full report please use the following link: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/directory/1-123920318>

Kind Regards

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