

# Barchester Healthcare Ltd

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329317

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## Background information

### Inspection judgements

Inspectors use a four-point scale to summarise their judgements about achievement and standards, the quality of provision, and leadership and management, which includes a grade for equality of opportunity.

#### Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Further information can be found on how inspection judgements were made on [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

### Scope of the inspection

In deciding the scope of the inspection, inspectors take account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and comments from the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or other funding body. Where appropriate, inspectors also consider the previous inspection report ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)), reports from the inspectorates' monitoring visits, and data on learners and their achievements over the period since the previous inspection.

In addition to reporting on overall effectiveness of the organisation, its capacity to improve further, achievement and standards, quality of provision and leadership and management, this inspection focused on specialist provision in:

- Health, public services and care

## Description of the provider

1. Barchester Healthcare Ltd (Barchester) is an independent company limited by guarantee. With headquarters in London and Aberdeen, it provides nursing and residential care across the United Kingdom for older people in care homes and for adults of all ages with specialist healthcare needs. It was founded in 1993 and in 2004 it purchased Westminster Health Care Ltd becoming Barchester Healthcare Limited.
2. Barchester offers training in health, public services and care, business, administration and law, and hospitality and catering. It also provides literacy and numeracy training as part of an LSC pilot programme. There are 300 learners on the health, public services and care programmes, of which 65 are advanced apprentices and 125 apprentices. One hundred and ten learners are on Train to Gain programmes. There are 27 business, administration and law, and 19 hospitality and catering learners on apprenticeship or Train to Gain programmes. Business, administration and law and hospitality and catering programmes were not included in the inspection. Approximately 46% of the total training delivered by Barchester is funded by the LSC.
3. The company employs over 16,000 staff. Training is managed by the learning and development team. One manager has overall responsibility for NVQ programme delivery and a second is responsible for the quality of training. They report to the director of learning, development and hospitality. Assessment is carried out by 252 assessors. Eleven programme co-ordinators and regional managers are responsible for day-to-day co-ordination of the programmes. The learning and development team is supported by four administrative staff.

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## Summary of grades awarded

Effectiveness of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Achievement and standards	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Quality of provision	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Leadership and management	Satisfactory: Grade 3
Equality of opportunity	Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

## Sector subject area

Health, public services and care	Satisfactory: Grade 3
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## Overall judgement

### Effectiveness of provision

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

4. The overall effectiveness of the provision is satisfactory. Achievement and standards, the quality of the provision and leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the provider's approach to equality of opportunity. Social inclusion is good. The health, public services and care provision is satisfactory.

#### Capacity to improve

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

5. The provider has demonstrated that it has a satisfactory capacity to make further improvements. The provision was previously inspected in 2004 when the contract was held by Westminster Healthcare Ltd. The provision was judged to be satisfactory overall with the exception of a contributory grade for work-based learning for young people on care programmes, which was unsatisfactory. Improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The work-based learning for young people on care programmes is now satisfactory. A number of the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been rectified and are now satisfactory. Success rates have improved from their previous low levels and are now broadly satisfactory with the exception of those for the advanced apprenticeship programmes, which remain unsatisfactory. A new post has been created with specific responsibility for quality improvement. Quality improvement systems have been developed and the arrangements for the observation of training and development activities are now in place. However, sampling of all of the key aspects of the programmes to assure the quality of provision has yet to be completed.
6. Arrangements for self-assessment are satisfactory. Many aspects of the judgements in the report have been recognised by inspectors. The self-assessment report is reasonably critical, but too descriptive and the significance of a number of strengths is overstated. The provider accurately identified most areas for improvement.

## Key strengths

- Good additional training
- Good resources to support learning
- Good strategy to promote learning and development

- Particularly good access to training and development

## Key areas for improvement

- Slow progress for some learners
- Ineffective use of individual learning plans
- Weak target-setting
- Insufficiently developed quality improvement arrangements

## Main findings

### Achievement and standards

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

7. Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Success rates for Train to Gain programmes are satisfactory and have improved from 49% in 2004/05 to 61% in 2006/07 and have risen to 64% in the current year to date. Overall success rates for apprenticeship programmes have also improved and are close to national rates. On advanced apprenticeship programmes, the overall success rates has improved from a very low rate of 5% in 2004/05 to 33% in 2006/07 and 48% in the current year, but remain unsatisfactory. Timely success rates remain low on both apprenticeship programmes. Key skills pass rates are good, with 80% of learners who have completed their apprenticeship programmes this year successfully gaining their key skills qualifications. A number of learners also gain relevant adult literacy and numeracy qualifications. Some Train to Gain learners take additional key skills qualifications that are not required by their programme.
8. Approximately a third of learners come from minority ethnic groups and a quarter are male. There are no significant differences between the achievements of learners from minority ethnic groups or learners with additional support needs. However, male learners have much lower success rates when compared with female learners.
9. Progress is slow for some learners. Approximately 15% of learners do not make the progress expected of them. Two learners who were expected to complete their training in one year have been on their programme for three years. This area for improvement was recognised in the self-assessment report. A number of learners have explained delays in assessment. Learner progress is generally satisfactory or better where assessment has been uninterrupted by staff changes. These learners make at least the progress expected of them. They develop relevant occupational and personal skills and have a clear understanding of relevant health and safety issues.

### Quality of provision

#### Satisfactory: Grade 3

10. The quality of the provision is satisfactory. Additional training is good. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report. Learners attend a wide range of additional training to supplement their apprenticeships and NVQ programmes, including dealing with challenging behaviour, diabetes awareness and customer care. Training is delivered by well qualified care home trainers and external speakers. One-to-one coaching is effective. Group sessions are well planned and delivered at a lively pace. A team of care home trainers co-ordinate in-house training. This training contributes well to the development of the background knowledge for the NVQ qualification and learners' work skills.
11. Learning resources are good. Learners benefit from a wide range of resources that effectively support their learning. The range of relevant textbooks and professional journals is good. Most care homes have a designated training room with computers that have internet access. The company has developed a virtual learning academy where learners based at care homes have access to e-learning and can manage their independent



study at times that best suit their working patterns. Learners make good use of the learning academy to access a range of clinically relevant e-learning programmes on key areas of care, for example dementia. These programmes are also provided on computer discs, which learners can use at home. Effective use is made of company designed workbooks to develop learners' background knowledge for the technical certificate and NVQ. There is a dedicated NVQ telephone helpline for learners, where an assessor is available to offer advice and support. This strength was partly recognised in the self-assessment report.

12. Assessment is satisfactory. It is effectively planned and learners receive useful advice to help them improve their work.
13. Individual learning plans are not used effectively to monitor learner progress. Short and medium targets, against which learners' progress can be monitored, are not routinely agreed. Learners do not clearly understand the progress they have made towards their qualifications. Progress reviews are carried out regularly, but do not identify or set challenging targets. Targets focus only on assessment activities. This area for improvement was partly recognised in the self-assessment report.
14. The programmes meet the needs of learners well. They meet employer needs by helping care home managers to meet their regulatory requirements. Learners' aspirations are met through the range of programmes that enables them to progress through different levels of qualifications, in addition to gaining valuable additional qualifications useful to them in their work. A clear company strategy identifies progression routes for learners to progress from Level 2 to Level 3 and onto assessor qualifications, if appropriate. Many learners gain promotion or go onto apply for nurse training.
15. Support and guidance for learners is satisfactory. Assessors, care home trainers and programme managers provide effective support for learners. Most learners receive paid study time to undertake training. Initial assessment of learners' literacy, numeracy and language skills is effective and accurately identifies their support needs. Learners with additional language needs are well supported.

## **Leadership and management**

**Satisfactory: Grade 3**

### **Equality of opportunity**

Contributory grade: Satisfactory: Grade 3

16. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The company has developed a good and very successful strategy to ensure all staff have good training and development opportunities. The provider has designed a leadership development programme and an in-house Barchester apprenticeship award for learners who are not eligible to receive LSC funded training. Staff turnover has greatly decreased from 30% to 13% amongst those staff who have undertaken qualifications. The company learning and development plan is supported by significant financial investment. This strength was identified in the self-assessment report.

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17. Operational management is satisfactory. In 2007, to improve poor success rates, managers introduced a range of effective strategies. These include better integration of the different components of the apprenticeships and improved support for learners in the workplace from mentors. A substantial investment was made in strengthening the assessor team and roles such as co-ordinators, regional programme managers and regional quality managers were created. Financial incentives are given to motivate learners to achieve their qualifications. Learner success is celebrated widely through the company's newsletters and intranet. A review of learning workbooks and other documentation was carried out along with the introduction of arrangements to share best practice across the training team. However, it is too early to fully judge the effectiveness of some of these initiatives.
  18. Internal communications are satisfactory. Programme co-ordinators and managers meet assessors regularly to discuss the progress of individual learners. On- and off-the-job training is well co-ordinated to ensure that learners effectively cover all aspects of the programme. A regular schedule of staff meetings and conferences are held. However, minutes of meetings and records of outcomes of meetings are incomplete.
  19. The provider has satisfactory management information systems that provide accurate and timely data. However, the learner progress monitoring system is not yet sufficiently developed to offer an overall view of the rate of progress learners are making.
  20. The staff appraisal process has been recently reviewed to better incorporate business objectives and targets. Staff are encouraged to identify their personal and professional development needs. However, not all assessors have had an annual appraisal. Insufficient use is made of data to identify areas for improvement in the performance of co-ordinators and assessors.
  21. Target-setting to improve the provision is weak. Business and development plans contain too few specific and measurable targets to improve learners' overall success and timely qualification completion rates. Success rate targets are not set for different programmes or geographical regions. The quality improvement plan does not contain sufficiently specific numeric targets to enable managers to measure improvement. Target-setting at learner progress reviews is not always effective. This area for improvement was not recognised in the self-assessment report.
  22. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory overall. Access to training for all staff is particularly good. Barchester employs a significant number of staff from minority ethnic groups who have not been resident in the country long enough to be eligible to receive LSC funded training. Barchester funds their training to ensure equality of access and the same development opportunities for all staff. The company employs staff with a broad range of abilities and previous learning achievement. Barchester offers a comprehensive range of training programmes to appropriately meet the needs of all staff. All staff have access to key skills training and a few who are not on apprenticeship programmes have already gained these qualifications. Social inclusion is good. All staff have access to a skills for life programme which effectively removes their barriers to undertaking further training. Equality and diversity training is satisfactory and staff access training through online learning materials.

23. The equality of opportunity policy is comprehensive. It is explained to learners during their induction. Learners have an appropriate understanding of their rights and responsibilities and they are aware of the grievance and appeals procedures. However, reinforcement of equal opportunities is insufficient during progress reviews. The procedures for safeguarding learners meet the current government requirements.
24. The company has appropriate representation of gender and minority ethnic groups from their employee population on their training programmes. However, it does not systematically monitor the level of achievement of different groups of learners. Currently, there are no actions planned to rectify the difference in performance between male and female learners.
25. Arrangements for self-assessment are satisfactory. The process is inclusive and takes sufficient account of the views of staff and learners. Many judgements in the report have been recognised by inspectors. The self-assessment report is too descriptive and the significance of a number of strengths is overstated. It is reasonably critical and is accurate in identifying many areas for improvement. Development planning following self-assessment is satisfactory.
26. Quality improvement arrangements are insufficiently developed. A number of quality improvement arrangements have recently been introduced but they are not yet complete. For example, lesson observations of care home trainers are now carried out, but no overall grades or qualitative judgements are awarded. Managers are overly reliant on informal opinions of staff performance. All key aspects of the programmes have yet to be observed. The outcomes of lesson observations have not yet been used in appraisals to accurately identify staff development and training needs. Internal verification is satisfactory. Internal verifiers visit workplaces regularly to give valuable feedback to assessors and learners.

## What learners like:

- Improving career prospects
- Enjoy returning to learning
- Becoming more closely involved in residents care
- Learning new skills
- Being challenged to think more about planning care
- Increasing confidence with work
- Being paid for learning

## What learners think could improve:

- More time with assessor
- Faster progress
- More time at work to complete study
- The difficult language in the workbook
- Fewer changes of assessors

## Annex

## Learners' achievements

Success rates on **work-based learning 'apprenticeship' programmes** managed by the provider **2004 to 2007**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**	National NVQ rate**	Provider framework rate**	National framework rate**
Advanced Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	20	40%	47%	5%	21%
		timely	20	30%	28%	0	12%
	06-07	overall	6	33%	61%	33%	50%
		timely	8	25%	37%	25%	30%
Apprenticeships	04-05	overall	46	39%	46%	15%	29%
		timely	48	19%	21%	4%	13%
	06-07	overall	47	64%	64%	57%	59%
		timely	42	26%	43%	21%	39%

\* Learners who leave later than originally planned were counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners were then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

\*\* Provider and national qualification success rates were calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

Success rates on **work-based learning 'Train to Gain' programmes** managed by the provider **2006 to 2008**

Programme	End Year	Success rate	No. of learners*	Provider NVQ rate**
Train to Gain***	2006/07	overall	57	61
		timely	49	48
	2007/08 (9 months)	overall	7	64
		timely	7	43

**Note:** 2007/08 data is 'part year' only and is representative of the first 3 months or greater of the LSC contract year

\* Learners who leave later than originally planned were counted in the year they actually leave. This group of learners were then added to the learners who planned to complete in a given year and did so or left earlier than planned

\*\* Provider qualification success rates were calculated using LSC published data derived from the 'Individual Learning Record'

\*\*\* Includes 'Train to Gain' long course NVQ provision, but not 'skills for life'