

Mears Homecare Limited

Mears Homecare Limited - Southsea Court

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service effective?

Good ●

Is the service caring?

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

This inspection took place on 17 May 2017. 24 hours' notice was given for the visit to make sure the registered manager would be present for the inspection. This was the first inspection of the service following registration with CQC in June 2016.

Southsea Court provides personal care for up to 39 people living in one bedroom flats. There were 37 people using the service at the time of this inspection.

The home had a registered manager in post. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service. Like registered providers, they are 'registered persons'. Registered persons have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated Regulations about how the service is run.

People told us they liked living at Southsea Court and said staff were respectful, kind and caring towards them. There was a relaxed and friendly atmosphere when we visited.

Staffing numbers were sufficient to help make sure people were kept safe. People were supported by a staff team who were trained and well supported in their job roles. Staff members had been safely recruited and had received a full induction to the service. Staff we spoke with were confident that they provided a good service to people and said they would recommend Southsea Court to their family and friends. They had access to supervision and additional support when required.

Staff understood how to help protect people from the risk of abuse. The service had procedures in place to report any safeguarding concerns to the local authority. People and staff were protected from potential risk of harm as the service had identified and assessed any risks to them and reviewed these on a regular basis. People had assessments which were individual to the person and their strengths and needs.

Medicines were administered in a safe way. Staff received training and a competency framework was in place to make sure they understood and followed safe procedures for administering medicines.

Staff had received training in the MCA (Mental Capacity Act) and understood the importance of gaining people's consent before assisting them.

The service completed a detailed personalised care plan for each person. They kept people's needs under review and made changes as required.

People and their relatives felt able to raise any concerns or complaints. There was a procedure in place for people to follow if they wanted to raise any issues.

The service was well led. The registered manager monitored the quality of the service and made changes to

improve the service provided when required. Staff and people who used the service said he had an open door policy and responded promptly to any concerns.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Any risks to individual safety and welfare were being identified and managed appropriately.

People were supported to take their medicines safely.

There were appropriate numbers of care staff allocated to help keep people safe.

Robust recruitment procedures were in place to help keep people safe.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Training and supervision was provided to staff to help them carry out their role and provide effective care.

Staff had an understanding of, and acted in line with, the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

People were supported by staff who were caring, kind and respectful. Their dignity and right to privacy was upheld by the staff at Southsea Court.

Relationships between staff and people receiving support were positive.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

People received care and support that met and responded to their individual needs.

People had information about how to complain and felt able to raise any issues of concern with the registered manager.

Is the service well-led?

The service was well led.

There was an experienced registered manager in post who was supportive and approachable.

Quality assurance checks included regular audits by the provider, medicines audits, feedback surveys and quality reviews.

Good 

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Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Prior to our inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service. This included any safeguarding alerts and outcomes, complaints, previous inspection reports and notifications that the provider had sent to CQC. Notifications are information about important events which the service is required to tell us about by law.

This inspection took place on 17 May 2017. The inspection was carried out by one inspector and an expert by experience. An expert by experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service. We spoke with 11 people using the service during our visit.

We also spoke with the registered manager and four members of staff. We observed care and support in communal areas, spoke with people in private and looked at the care records for seven people. We reviewed how medicines were managed and the records relating to this. We checked three staff recruitment files and the records kept for staff allocation, training and supervision. We looked around the premises and at records kept for the management of the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People said they liked living at Southsea Court and felt safe there. One person said, "Yes, I do feel safe, when I first moved in I couldn't settle but now everything is OK and I've managed to settle pretty well." Another person told us, "Me and my wife, we feel very safe here and we couldn't return home at this stage in life, everything is OK, we don't have any problems or concerns here, it is really peaceful, we couldn't ask for a better place." A third person commented, "I definitely feel safe here and I am very independent too so it works out for me." Other comments included, "I feel very happy and safe here" and "Yes I am alright here, and I feel safe because only people I know can come in."

Staff were aware of safeguarding procedures and confirmed they had completed training in this important area. Policies about safeguarding people from abuse and whistleblowing provided staff with clear guidance on how to report and manage suspected abuse or raise concerns about poor practice. We saw there was information displayed for staff to follow should they need to report any concerns regarding abuse. One staff member told us, "I'd go straight to the manager." Another staff member said, "I would go straight to the manager. Any concerns and he is on top of it straight away."

People using the service said that there were enough staff on duty to meet their needs. One person said, "They do have enough staff, they come every morning." Another person commented, "Yes, I think they have enough people working here, I see them in the morning before breakfast." Other people told us, "They manage really well I have to say" and "I think they are well staffed because they manage to do everything I suppose."

Staff told us there were enough staff on duty to keep people safe. One staff member said, "Yes we have enough staff, the work is getting more and more but it's a nice little service for people." Another staff member said, "Enough staff most of the time, other staff are always happy to cover."

Care records seen included risk assessments to help keep people safe addressing areas such as health, medicines, mobility and the physical environment. Each assessment included the actions required to reduce the identified risk. For example, helping the person take their medicines or to have enough to eat and drink each day to help keep them well.

We saw people received their medicines safely and at the right time. One person said, "Two pills every morning, I just need to wash it down with water or tea, I take them myself and of course I know why I need it." Another person told us, "They bring the pills over to me every Friday and I know how to take them." Care records addressed the level of support required by each person. For example, people who required their medicines to be administered by staff and those people requiring prompts to take their medicines themselves. Administration records were kept when medicines were given to people and these showed that they had received all of their medicines as prescribed. Staff received appropriate training to give medicines and records were audited regularly.

Safe recruitment practices were in place to help protect people from the employment of unsuitable staff. We

looked at the personnel files for four members of staff. Completed application forms included references to their previous health and social care experience and documented their employment history. Each file contained evidence that criminal record checks had been carried out along with right to work checks where applicable and proof of identity.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People using the service told us that staff were trained and able to meet their needs. One person using the service told us, "Yes I think so; they do have the right skills to help me." Another person said, "They seem alright yes, they know what they are doing and how to support me." A third person commented, "They are quite skilled, I am sure they received training."

Staff told us they received the training they required to help keep people safe and to meet people's individual needs. One staff member said "We go for a lot of training." Another staff member told us, "We get all the training – yearly and two yearly updates." A third staff member commented, "I've done all the training, all the updates."

The training and development programme included a structured induction and mandatory learning for all new staff. This was a five day programme addressing important areas such as medicines, moving and handling, safeguarding and confidentiality. The service had implemented the Care Certificate as part of their induction training for all new staff. This is a set of standards that have been developed for support workers to demonstrate that they have gained the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to provide high quality and compassionate care and support. It covers 15 topics that are common to all health and social care settings and became effective from 1 April 2015. New staff shadowed more experienced staff members on shift when they commenced employment.

The training programme for existing staff consisted of regular updates to make sure mandatory training was kept up to date. Training sessions addressed medicines, infection control, safeguarding and moving and handling amongst other topics. Workbooks were used to underpin the learning and competency was checked, for example, around administering medicines.

Staff confirmed they were supported by the registered manager through regular staff meetings, one to one supervision meetings and annual appraisals. We saw records to support this. One staff member told us, "We have meetings and supervision. Any concerns I go straight to the manager." Another staff member said, "The manager is always open, we can talk to him, his door is open."

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that as far as possible people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

We saw many people using the service were independent and came and went as they pleased. People told us they were able to make choices about the day to day care they received. They confirmed that staff checked if they were happy for their care to be given and said their decisions were respected by staff. People's comments included, "Yes I am able to make my own decisions", "I make my own decisions" and, "Yes, I am able to make my own decisions, I don't need any help here, I can still do things myself."

People's nutritional needs were supported with staff supporting people with meal preparation in their flats or delivering the meals provided by the local authority commissioned meals on wheels service.

Records showed that staff were provided with information on people's health needs so they could monitor these effectively. One person using the service said, "Yes they are knowledgeable of it and if I ever needed a Doctor it would be provided right away." Another person told us, "Doctor comes every Monday; you just need to put your name down." We observed staff and the registered manager liaising with a GP during our inspection to help make sure people's health needs were met.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People using the service told us they were supported by staff who were kind and caring towards them. One person told us, "Oh yes, they are very caring and kind you know. Another person commented, "People who work here are very kind and caring, they always come to my room knock on the door and see if I am alright, that is quite caring." A third person said, "Yes they have never disrespected me at all."

Other people talked about how they were treated with dignity and respect. One person using the service said, "They are very professional, I have never had a problem with them because they are here to help us." Another person told us, "Oh yes they do talk to me nicely and they always knock on my door. "

Staff respected people's privacy. A staff member told us, "We always knock, make sure the bathroom door is shut." Another staff member said, "I give assistance to people. I don't force them to do anything, it's their choice." Other care staff gave us examples of how they ensured privacy and dignity including knocking on doors and closing doors whilst providing personal care.

People using the service spoke positively about the support they received from staff. They told us that a group of consistent staff knew them well and provided care in the way they wanted it. One person told us, "I know some staff for quite some time, I mean they are like friends to me." We spent time observing the interactions between people and the staff who provided their care and support. People popped by the open office throughout the day. The registered manager and staff clearly knew people very well and there was great familiarity between them and people using the service.

Individual support plans gave good information about the person and their background. For example, where they were born, where they lived during their life and their connections to the local area. Other parts of the plan addressed the person's hobbies and pastimes, friends and family and any religious or cultural needs. The plan detailed how the person wanted their support to be given, their preferred routines and any other information they wanted staff to know about them.

Regular meetings were held with people using the service. One person told us, "Yes we have these meetings on occasion." Another person said, "They come regularly to make sure we attend those meetings and ask what we want to talk about." A third person commented, "If the manager calls a meeting then I would go downstairs you know, and also on a Thursday of every week we have coffee mornings, Saturday and Sundays we have tea and biscuits." Minutes of meetings included discussion about repairs to the building, activities and staffing of the service.

The service had a confidentiality policy and procedure that helped protect people's privacy. Confidentiality was included in the induction training for new staff.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People using the service told us that staff provided them with the care and support they required and it was responsive to their needs. One person told us, "Yes, they do listen to us, depends if you are nice to people too, people are going to be nice to you too, it works both ways." Another person commented, "Yes, I feel very much listened to." A third person said, "Very much so yes."

People's individual needs were assessed before they came to live at Freeman Court. Referral information and assessments were provided by the local authority. Familiarisation visits were arranged so the person could come to see the service where possible. An individual support plan and assessments were completed by senior staff that were used to discuss with the person and / or their representatives about how they wanted to be supported. Some people we spoke with were aware of their care plan and said staff spoke to them about it. Comments included, "Yes very much so" and "A lady came here and explained it all, but all those papers are kept in the office."

Care plans addressed the support required by each person around areas such as their personal care, nutrition and health needs. All of the information we saw contained a good level of detail about the person's needs and the support they required. The information was written in the first person stating the level of support the person wanted. For example, I would like help to get up early each morning or I am very independent. We saw that the care plans were up to date and had been reviewed regularly.

We found that staff employed at the service were knowledgeable about the needs of the people they supported. Staff told us that they received a daily handover and read the notes and care plans kept for each person using the service to make sure they were up to date. One staff member said, "We always read the care plan and go from them." Another staff member commented, "I know the tenants well and they know me."

Some activity sessions were held at Southsea Court for people to enjoy and the people using the service we spoke with said they would welcome more of these sessions. One person commented, "We have music once a month." Another person told us, "I normally go out every day, just today I have stayed in because you were coming, I don't do any activities with staff here." A third person said, "They have an entertainer once a month, but not much apart from that." Activity records showed that regular groups took place including social groups, fish and chip suppers, exercise sessions and coffee mornings. A monthly Church service also took place.

A copy of the complaints procedure was displayed on noticeboards on each floor. People told us they felt able to talk to a member of staff or the registered manager if they had a concern or wanted to raise a complaint. We saw records were kept of any complaints with timescales and action taken clearly recorded. One person told us, "I just go to the manager and he would sort it out." Another person said, "Never made a complaint, I don't think I need to make any complaints, things here are going as planned." A third person commented, "We are able to complain yes, but there is no need, we don't have a problem here, the staff have been here for a long time, he is a good manager, he sorts out any problems people might have and he

can be strict with staff too but he treats people here like family." Another person told us that they had never had to make a complaint saying, "No never, this place is really good, but if I had a problem I would speak to the manager or [named carer], they are both people who I can rely on."

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

A registered manager was in post at the time of our inspection. People using the service said they were happy with the service provided and how it was managed. One person told us, "I think it is organised and the manager is also very nice, he's a good manager and he gets on well with everybody, they are all very helpful and do what they can." Another person commented, "This place is first class, the manager is also a very nice man and he tries hard to please everybody." A third person said, "The manager is very nice and sorts out what needs to be sorted, he cares for us and he treats us like human beings." Other comments included, "It is well organised" and "He's good, if he needed to be strict he would, that's it".

Feedback about the registered manager and staff was positive. Compliments were recorded by the service and we saw recent feedback from people using the service and their relatives. Written comments included, "Thank you for your hard work – nothing is too much trouble" and "Thank you for taking good care of my relative."

Staff told us that they found the registered manager to be approachable and supportive. One staff member said, "He's lovely, fair, that's the main thing." Another staff member said, "He is committed. He will tell us if we are doing it wrong." A third staff member commented, "There is a good relationship, he listens to you."

The staff members spoken with said that they felt the quality of care for people was of a high standard and they had no concerns about the service being provided. They said they would recommend it to their own friends and family. One staff member said, "I did recommend it." Another staff member told us, "It's an excellent service, all the staff go the extra mile, good teamwork here."

Care files included quality reviews held with people using the service. These gave opportunity for the person to feedback on the support provided, for example, asking if they were treated with respect, if the staff were always polite and helpful and were they given choice in their day to day life. The quality review documents were signed off by the registered manager making sure they were aware of any issues raised.

An organisational quality assurance exercise was in place with regular surveys being sent to people using the service and the staff employed there. Regular quality returns were supplied to the senior managers who were able to monitor aspects of the service delivery electronically. For example, complaints, safeguarding alerts and incidents or accidents. Organisational audits regularly took place looking at the same key areas as CQC inspections.