

Mr & Mrs L Arrowsmith

The Ferns Residential Home

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 21 April 2017 and was unannounced.

The Ferns Residential Home is registered to accommodate up to 36 older people who need help with personal care. On the day of our inspection 33 people were living at the home.

The home has a registered manager in post who is also one of the providers. They were present for our inspection. 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.

At the last inspection in March 2015, the service was rated Good. At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

People continued to be safe because they were supported by staff who understood how to identify and report potential harm and abuse. Staff were aware of any risks to people and what they needed to do to help reduce those risks, such as helping people to move safely around the home.

People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible; the policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

People continued to be supported by staff who had the skills to meet their needs. Staff had received training relevant to their roles and were supported in their roles by the manager and their colleagues. Checks had been completed on new staff to make sure they were suitable to work at the home.

People continued to receive food they enjoyed and were supported to eat and drink enough to keep them healthy. When they needed it, people continued to be supported to access other healthcare professionals to make sure their health needs were met. People's medicines were managed and stored in a safe way, and they had their medicines when they needed them.

People said staff treated them with kindness and compassion and they felt involved in their own care. Staff respected people's dignity and privacy and supported them to keep their independence.

People continued to receive care that was personal to them because staff knew what their individual preferences and needs were. People told us they received their care when they needed it and were not kept waiting by staff.

People lived in a home where they felt confident to express themselves and felt comfortable to speak with staff and managers about concerns and issues that affected them. The provider encouraged people and

their relatives to give their opinions of the home through surveys and feedback forms.

The registered manager had developed an established and strong staff team. The registered manager and staff had created an environment that was welcoming and friendly and the home's positive values and culture were seen during our inspection. Staff were clear on their roles and spoke about the people they supported with respect.

We saw that systems were in place to monitor and check the quality of care and to make sure the environment was safe. The provider continued to involve people in the running of the home by providing opportunities for them to make suggestions for improvements. People felt their views were respected.

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 remains safe.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service remains effective.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service remains caring.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service remains responsive.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service remains good

The Ferns Residential Home

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 checked 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.'

This comprehensive inspection took place 21 April 2017 and was unannounced.

One inspector completed the inspection.

Before the inspection we spoke with the local authority and Healthwatch to gather information they held about the home. We reviewed information we held about the home and looked at statutory notifications we had received from the provider. A statutory notification is information about important events which the provider is required to send us by law. We used this information to help us plan our inspection of the home.

As part of our inspection we spoke with nine people and three visitors. We also spoke with three healthcare professionals who were visiting the home at the time of our inspection. We spoke with four care staff, the kitchen assistant and the registered manager. We spent time observing how people spent their time and how staff interacted with people. We looked at one record which related to consent, people's medicines, assessment of risk and people's needs. We also looked at other records which related to the management of the home

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People were protected from avoidable abuse and discrimination. Everyone we spoke with told us they felt safe living at The Ferns and trusted the staff that supported them to keep them safe. One person told us, "I used to fall at home so I came here. I have not fallen once while living here. I have improved my confidence because the staff gently support me to walk. I feel very safe now."

Risks to people were managed in a way that protected them and kept them safe from avoidable harm. The support people needed was provided in a way that enabled them to live their lives safely, as they chose and to maintain their independence. We spoke with a group of people who told us that they were able to do what they wanted. One person told us, "The staff check to make sure we don't trip over things." Another person said, "We can go out into the garden when we want. The manager has made sure it is safe for us to be out there."

People were supported safely and their needs met by sufficient numbers of staff. People told us that they never had to wait for support from staff. All staff we spoke with felt there were enough staff working at the home. We spoke with one staff member about the checks the provider had completed before they started work. They confirmed the provider had requested their previous employers to provide references for them. They told us they had not been allowed to start work until criminal checks on their background had been completed to ensure they were suitable to work with people who lived at the home. These checks are called disclosure and barring service checks.

People's medicines were managed safely. We saw people received their medicine safely and staff checked they were happy to take them. Staff checked each person's medicines with their individual records before administering them and records were completed correctly. Staff told us they were not allowed to administer people's medicine's until they had received the training they needed to do this safely, and their competency had been checked.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People received effective care and support from staff who had the skills and knowledge to meet their needs. People told us they thought staff knew what they were doing and that they understood how to support them. Staff told us they received training and support that was specific to the people they supported and their individual needs. Staff told us they had plenty of opportunities to attend training and understood how developing their skills benefitted people living at the home. For example, one staff member told us about how they had been supported to undertake higher levels of training. They said, "The manager supported me to do the training to be a senior, then I was promoted. I feel very valued by the manager."

Staff told us they had opportunities to reflect on their practice through regular one to one meetings with the manager. They told us that during these meetings they received feedback on their practice and discussed their training requirements. One staff member said, "[Manager's name] is fantastic. They listen to us and always bring out the best in us."

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. The manager took the required action to protect people's rights and ensure people received the care and support they needed. People told us and we saw that staff ensured they had people's permission before they supported them with anything. Staff and the registered manager confirmed that everyone living at The Ferns was able to consent to their own day to day care. Staff understood the importance of obtaining people's consent. The registered manager understood their responsibilities in monitoring people's ability to give informed consent in line with the MCA. People who lack mental capacity to consent to arrangements for necessary care or treatment can only be deprived of their liberty when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). The procedures for this in care homes and hospitals are called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). No one at the home was subject to a DoLS authorisation.

People had access to sufficient food and drink. People told us they could choose what they wanted to eat each day even though there was a menu planned. A group of people we spoke with all agreed, "The food is excellent, of restaurant quality." We saw people had access to fresh fruit and drinks which were available in all areas of the home. One person was very happy that they had access to a 'chocolate trolley.' They said, "We love it when the chocolate lady comes – what can be better?" Some people required special diets, which staff were aware of. They told us everyone was encouraged to eat a well-balanced diet.

People were supported by staff to maintain good health. They had access to healthcare services when they needed them, such as community physiotherapy and referrals were made in a timely manner. Staff supported people to visit their doctors, consultants and other professionals and their on-going medical conditions, such as diabetes, were monitored appropriately. Outcomes of medical interventions were shared with staff and care records updated to reflect any changes in needs.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People were supported by staff they had positive and mutually respectful relationships with. We saw that people were treated with kindness and the staff knew each person, their personal histories and interests well. People were comfortable around staff and we heard friendly and courteous interactions between them when they spent time together. One person said, "All the staff are superb, they have been well trained by the manager to be kind and caring." Another person said, "I was very lucky to get a place in this home. I had heard about its excellent reputation and now I am here, I agree with it." We joined in conversations with a group of people who were enjoying each other's company. All agreed that they were supported with kindness and courtesy. One person said, "I feel thoroughly spoiled here. Nothing is too much trouble." Another person said, "I have been in four other places, this is the best home I have ever been in, I am so happy." Another person told us, "I used to visit people here – now I live here! It is that good."

People expressed their wishes and opinions about the care and support they wanted and needed. They told us they felt they were listened to by staff and they felt involved in their own care. One person told us the manager and staff discussed what they wanted and what their hopes and aspirations were for the future. They said, "My care is what I want, when I want it. My views are respected all the time."

Staff respected people's dignity and privacy. One person told us they were able to spend time in their room whenever they wanted. They said, "Sometimes I just want to have some time alone. The staff respect that always." Another person said, "When my family come, we can be private in another lounge or my room. The staff always support us and understand about us sometimes wanting private space. Visitors we spoke with told us they were welcomed by staff who were friendly towards them and always offered refreshments. One visitor said, "Nothing is too much trouble when we come. My young children are also welcomed."

Staff were knowledgeable about the importance of supporting people's individuality. One staff member said, "We are all different and want different things. That does not change when you move to a care home. We are here to help people be themselves."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

People received care and support that was individual to them. All the people we spoke with told us they enjoyed living at The Ferns because they were supported the way they wanted to be. People said staff asked them about how they wished to be supported to meet their personal and social care needs and they felt staff knew them and their wishes. One person said, "The staff don't do anything I disagree with. They just wouldn't consider it." People's care needs, preferences, wishes and what was important to them was recorded in their care plans and staff were aware of these. These records were reviewed and updated as required. People, staff and healthcare professionals were involved in these reviews.

People were encouraged to maintain their interests and links with their local community. Family and friends were actively encouraged to visit and take their relatives out whenever they wanted. Throughout our visit we saw staff involved people in making choices about what they would like to drink or how to spend their time. The manager and staff also spent time with people to get to know what kind of pastimes they enjoyed within the home.

People were encouraged to give their opinions on the care and support they received and told us they were always listened to. There was a complaints procedure in place, which people had access to although they preferred to speak directly with the manager. One person said, "I can go to any staff, but [manager's name] is always here to talk to. They would not let anything untoward happen." Another person said, "[Manager's name] knows everything that goes on. They are wonderful. I would always talk to them if I was worried, but the other staff would also sort things out if the manager was not here."

Staff told us they encouraged people to express their opinions about their experience of the support they received, including any concerns. One staff member said, "We want people to be happy. We can usually tell if someone is not happy and we will talk with them."

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

We found the home had a very positive culture which was echoed by all people, visitors and staff we spoke with. We saw that the rights of people to be and do as they wished were paramount. One staff member said, "This home is very friendly, welcoming. It's a warm, family like atmosphere".

The registered manager is one of the two owners of the home and so has responsibility as both registered provider and registered manager. As a result of this, the service had a stable management and leadership structure which people and staff understood. People told us that the registered manager was, "Hands on" and worked alongside the care staff. During our visit we saw that the registered manager was actively involved with supporting people. One person commented, "[Manager's name] is always here and never stops. They know about everything in the home, as they should." Another person said, "The manager is so kind and motivated. The staff respect them and so do we."

We also saw the manager supporting other members of staff in their work. The staff team were unanimous in their support of the manager. They told us that they found the manager to be approachable and supportive. They said they were able to speak with them openly about any concerns or issues they had. One staff member said, "[Manager] is very helpful and always here". Another staff member said, "[Manager] is brilliant, they are so supportive. I would never be afraid to approach them if I was concerned." Another staff member told us, "I am very proud to be a part of this team. The manager gives staff confidence to question things. I trust them (manager) completely."

There were regular staff meetings where staff were able to raise issues. They told us the registered manager discussed current practice and any improvements that needed to be made at these meetings.

Staff understood when they could whistleblow and who they could take concerns to outside of the home, such as the local authority, police and CQC. Whistleblowing is when a staff member reports suspected wrongdoing at work.

Systems remained in place for the manager to monitor the quality of care provided and address areas for improvement. People's care needs and records were reviewed regularly and updated. Checks on medicines, the environment and the cleanliness of the home were undertaken by the manager and senior team. One staff member told us, "Cleanliness is everybody's responsibility. We all check it, all the time."

We saw that the relationship between the team at The Ferns and other healthcare agencies was very positive. We spoke with the GP who was visiting people during the inspection. They told us, "The Ferns is one of the best homes to attend. The staff know their residents inside out. We have very high confidence and trust in the manager and their staff to care for people well." The visiting district nurses also commented, "Because of the very high standard of care, we are seldom needed. We know that, if we are asked to come here, they need our support. The manager and staff are very proactive and make timely alerts to us."