

Atlas Care Homes Limited

Aster Care

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inspected but not rated

Is the service caring?

Inspected but not rated

Is the service well-led?

Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Aster Care is a care home which provides nursing and residential care for up to 102 people. The service supports younger people, older people and people assessed as requiring a period of recovery in its residential reablement unit. People are supported in three separate units, each of which has separate adapted facilities. At the time of this inspection 55 people were using the service.

People's experience of using this service and what we found

Medicines were not always managed safely. Risks to people were not always effectively assessed. Quality assurance processes had not identified or resolved the issues we found during our inspection. Effective infection prevention and control systems were in place.

Staff treated people with dignity and respect. People spoke positively about staff and the support they received. We received positive feedback on the management of the service.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection and update

The last rating for this service was requires improvement (published 17 May 2019) and there were three breaches of regulation. The provider completed an action plan after the last inspection to show what they would do and by when to improve. At this inspection enough improvement had not been made and the provider was still in breach of some regulations.

Why we inspected

We undertook this targeted inspection to check whether the breaches of regulation and other concerns identified at the last inspection had been addressed. The overall rating for the service has not changed following this targeted inspection and remains requires improvement.

CQC have introduced targeted inspections to follow up on Warning Notices or to check specific concerns. They do not look at an entire key question, only the part of the key question we are specifically concerned about. Targeted inspections do not change the rating from the previous inspection. This is because they do not assess all areas of a key question.

As part of CQC's response to the coronavirus pandemic we are also conducting a thematic review of infection control and prevention measures in care homes. The Safe domain also therefore contains information around assurances we gained from the registered manager regarding infection control and prevention.

Enforcement

We are mindful of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our regulatory function. This meant we took

account of the exceptional circumstances arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic when considering what enforcement action was necessary and proportionate to keep people safe as a result of this inspection.

We have identified continuing breaches of regulation in relation to safe care and treatment and good governance. Full information about CQC's regulatory response to the more serious concerns found during inspections is added to reports after any representations and appeals have been concluded.

Follow up

We will meet with the provider following this report being published to discuss how they will make changes to ensure they improve their rating to at least good. We will work with the local authority to monitor progress. We will return to visit as per our re-inspection programme. If we receive any concerning information we may inspect sooner.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

At our last inspection we rated this key question requires improvement. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question we had specific concerns about.

Inspected but not rated

Is the service caring?

At our last inspection we rated this key question requires improvement. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question we had specific concerns about.

Inspected but not rated

Is the service well-led?

At our last inspection we rated this key question requires improvement. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question we had specific concerns about.

Inspected but not rated

Aster Care

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (the Act) as part of our regulatory functions. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

This was a targeted inspection to check whether the breaches of regulation and other concerns identified at the last inspection had been addressed.

Inspection team

Three inspectors (including a medicines inspector), a member of CQC support services, a specialist advisor nurse and an Expert by Experience carried out this inspection. An Expert by Experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Service and service type

Aster Care is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided, and both were looked at during this inspection.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

Notice of inspection

We gave the provider 24 hours' notice of the inspection. This allowed the provider time to let people know we would be contacting them for feedback and provide us with records for review as part of the inspection.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we held about the service, including the notifications we had received from the provider. Notifications are changes, events or incidents the provider is legally obliged to send us within required timescales. We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection.

We sought feedback from the local authority and professionals who work with the service.

The provider was not asked to complete a provider information return prior to this inspection. This is information we require providers to send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We took this into account when we inspected the service and made the judgements in this report. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with three people and two relatives about their experience of the care provided over the telephone. We used the Short Observational Framework for Inspection (SOFI). SOFI is a way of observing care to help us understand the experience of people who could not talk with us.

We reviewed a range of records. This included 12 people's care records and seven medication records. We spoke with six members of staff, including the nominated individual, registered manager, a team leader and care staff. The nominated individual is responsible for supervising the management of the service on behalf of the provider.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found. We looked at medicine records the provider sent us.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm.

At the last inspection this key question was rated as requires improvement. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question we had specific concerns about.

The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the breaches of regulation identified at the last inspection had been addressed. We will assess all of the key question at the next comprehensive inspection of the service.

Using medicines safely

At our last inspection the provider had failed to manage medicines safely. This was a breach of regulation 12 (Safe care and treatment) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Not enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was still in breach of regulation 12.

- Medicine records did not always contain current or consistent information.
- Medicines had not always been administered in line with prescriber instructions.
- The reasons for using medicines were not always fully recorded.

We found no evidence that people had been harmed however, systems were either not in place or robust enough to demonstrate safety was effectively managed. This placed people at risk of harm. This was a continued breach of regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- At our last inspection we found that risk assessments and plans relating to mental health required further detail. At this latest inspection we found the documents still did not always have sufficient detail.
- Assessments were not always in place where people had identified mental health risks.
- Care plans did not always contain information on how people could be supported to stay safe.

We found no evidence that people had been harmed however, systems were either not in place or robust enough to demonstrate safety was effectively managed. This placed people at risk of harm. This was a breach of regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Preventing and controlling infection

- The provider was using personal protective equipment effectively and safely.
- The provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises.
- People and staff were meeting shielding and social distancing rules.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

Caring – this means we looked for evidence that the service involved people and treated them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect.

At the last inspection this key question was rated as requires improvement. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question we had specific concerns about.

The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the breaches of regulation identified at the last inspection had been addressed. We will assess all of the key question at the next comprehensive inspection of the service.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity; Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

At our last inspection people were not always treated with dignity and respect. This was a breach of regulation 10 (Dignity and respect) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 10.

- People were treated with dignity and respect by staff who knew them well. A relative told us, "They (staff) are most respectful."
- Staff were attentive to people's needs and offered reassurance when supporting them.
- Staff had professional but caring and friendly relationships with people. One person said, "They are exceptionally caring looking after me."

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

Well-Led – this means we looked for evidence that service leadership, management and governance assured high-quality, person-centred care; supported learning and innovation; and promoted an open, fair culture.

At the last inspection this key question was rated as requires improvement. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question we had specific concerns about.

The purpose of this inspection was to check whether the breaches of regulation identified at the last inspection had been addressed. We will assess all of the key question at the next comprehensive inspection of the service.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

At our last inspection the provider had failed to ensure good governance processes were in place. This was a breach of regulation 17 (Good governance) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Not enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was still in breach of regulation 17.

- The provider had not met the requirements of the requirement notice we served following the previous inspection.
- Audit systems were in place but they had not identified or addressed the issues we found during this inspection.

We found no evidence that people had been harmed however, systems were either not in place or robust enough to demonstrate safety was effectively managed. This placed people at risk of harm. This was a continued breach of regulation 17 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Regulation 17 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Good governance Quality assurance systems did not effectively assess, monitor and improve the quality and safety of the service. Regulation 17(2)(a)

This section is primarily information for the provider

Enforcement actions

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have taken enforcement action.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	Regulation 12 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Safe care and treatment Medicines were not always managed safely. Risks to people were not always effectively assessed or addressed. Regulation 12(1)

The enforcement action we took:

We issued a warning notice against the provider.