

Willow Tower Opco 1 Limited

Signature at Virginia Water

Inspection report

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22 February 2022

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Signature at Virginia Water is a residential care home providing accommodation and personal care for up to 92 older people, some of whom may be living with dementia. At the time of the inspection, there were 50 people living at the service.

We found the following examples of good practice.

The registered manager had put systems in place to book visitors in at a time that suited people and required visitors to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) in order to reduce the risk of potential infection transmission. People who used the service and their relatives had access to a visiting room with a clear separating screen and a microphone system. This meant that when there were cases of COVID-19 in the service, people were still able to continue seeing their relatives and friends.

There were systems in place to check staff working in the service and visiting professionals had received their COVID-19 vaccinations before being deployed. The service had managed workforce pressures to ensure people were supported by a consistent staff team that was effectively deployed.

The premises were clean and well-maintained. Staff had increased the frequency of cleaning at the start of the pandemic including frequently touched points such as door handles, pendants and remote controls. The registered manager had allocated care staff to work on particular floors to reduce the risk of potential infection transmission.

The management team had ensured there was sufficient PPE available in the event of an outbreak. There was PPE available throughout the premises along with appropriate waste disposal facilities. PPE in the home was stored in creative ways to ensure staff had quick access, to reduce the risk of contamination and to reduce the aesthetic impact of standard PPE stations on people who used the service. The registered manager had ensured regular 'spot checks' and a daily walkaround were undertaken to ensure staff were using the appropriate PPE.

The registered manager had liaised with appropriate agencies such as the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) when people tested positive for COVID-19. We saw posters across the home reminding staff of best practice guidance in relation to infection prevention and control.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

Inspected but not rated

Signature at Virginia Water

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.

As part of CQC's response to the COVID-19 pandemic we are looking at how services manage infection control and visiting arrangements. This was a targeted inspection looking at the infection prevention and control measures the provider had in place. We also asked the provider about any staffing pressures the service was experiencing and whether this was having an impact on the service.

This inspection took place on 22 February 2022 and was announced. We gave the service 24 hours' notice of the inspection.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Staffing

- The provider told us they had measures in place to mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19 related staff pressures.

How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?

- We were assured that the provider was preventing visitors from catching and spreading infections.
- We were assured that the provider was meeting shielding and social distancing rules.
- We were assured that the provider was admitting people safely to the service.
- We were assured that the provider was using personal protective equipment (PPE) effectively and safely.
- We were assured that the provider was accessing testing for people using the service and staff.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises.
- We were assured that the provider was making sure infection outbreaks can be effectively prevented or managed.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.

- The provider's approach to visiting was in line with current government guidance on care home visiting. Visitors were required to undertake a rapid test for COVID-19 and return a negative result before entering the service. Visitors were required to use PPE and wash their hands prior to entering in order to reduce the risk of infection to people who used the service and staff. PPE was readily available throughout the service and was stored in creative ways.

From 11 November 2021 registered persons must make sure all care home workers and other professionals visiting the service are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless they have an exemption or there is an emergency.

- The government has announced its intention to change the legal requirement for vaccination in care homes, but the service was meeting the current requirement to ensure non-exempt staff and visiting professionals were vaccinated against COVID-19.