

Mrs L Penfold

Linda Lodge

Inspection report

Date of inspection visit: 29 September & 5 October 2015

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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 

Overall summary

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 21 September and 5 October 2015. At our previous visit in July 2014, we judged that the service was meeting all the regulations that we looked at.

Linda Lodge is a service in the Sutton area, providing accommodation, personal care and support for up to 25 older people some of whom have mental health needs. At the time of this inspection there were 24 people living at the home.

The service has a registered manager in place. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) 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 the associated Regulations about how a service is run.

People told us they felt they were safe living at Linda Lodge and this was also the view of the relatives we spoke with. Staff knew how to protect people if they suspected they were at risk of abuse or harm. Risks to people's health, safety and wellbeing had been assessed and the actions taken by staff that were set out in the risk management plans had helped to minimise and manage problems that had been identified. This had helped to keep people safe from harm or injury.

Summary of findings

People and their relatives told us they thought there were enough staff to meet people's needs. We looked at staff rotas and observed care being provided for people and we found there were sufficient levels of staff available to meet people's needs. Relatives told us staff kept them well informed about people's needs and preferences about their care.

People received their medicines as prescribed and staff knew how to manage medicines safely. Some people self-medicated with minimal assistance from staff.

At this inspection we found that staff were suitably trained and supported to carry out their work effectively. The registered manager told us that a new training and support plan was introduced recently. We saw evidence of this. Staff told us this was part of the provider's plan for service improvement and to ensure staff continued to be supported and trained effectively.

People had a varied and nutritious diet and choice of meals. Staff supported people to keep healthy and well through regular monitoring of their general health and wellbeing.

During our inspection we saw people were treated with kindness and compassion. Our observations and discussions showed staff to have a good knowledge and understanding of the people they were supporting. Staff told us they enjoyed working with the people they cared for.

People were able to express their views and make decisions about their care and support. We saw that people's likes, dislikes and their preferences were considered as an important foundation of care provision and had been recorded clearly in people's care plans.

Care plans were in place which reflected people's specific needs and their individual choices. Relatives of people were involved in developing and regularly reviewing their relations' care plans and we saw people were supported to make decisions about their care and support.

People told us that there was a good range of activities provided for them. Relatives said they were always made welcome when visiting the service.

People using the service and their relatives were encouraged to give feedback to help to improve the service for people. The complaints system in place meant people's complaints were dealt with effectively and people were satisfied with the outcomes.

Staff told us they were clear about their roles and responsibilities. They understood the ethos of the service which meant people living at Linda Lodge received a good quality service.

Systems were in place to monitor the safety and quality of the service and to get the views of people about the service. Where there were concerns about quality or safety, appropriate action was taken to address the issues identified.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

The service was safe. There were safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures in place that staff knew about. Staff understood what abuse was and how to report it. This helped to ensure people were protected against the risk of abuse.

Risks were assessed and managed well, with care plans and risk assessments providing clear information and guidance for staff to help keep people safe.

There were enough staff to support the people in the home and to meet their individual needs.

The service had effective arrangements for the management of medicines to protect people against the risks associated with medicines.

Good



Is the service effective?

The service was effective. Staff were suitably trained and supervised and they were knowledgeable about the support people required and about how they wanted their care to be provided. A new training and supervision plan was being implemented to ensure standards were continually improved.

People and their relatives said staff sought their consent before providing care.

People were supported to have a varied and balanced diet and food that they enjoyed. They were enabled to eat and drink well and stay healthy.

Good



Is the service caring?

The service was caring. People were treated in a caring and positive way by staff who understood their needs.

Staff worked with people and their relatives to understand people's individual needs so that they could be actively involved in their care and support.

Staff treated people with respect, dignity and compassion, and were friendly, patient and discreet. People and their families were included in making decisions about their care and relatives told us they were made welcome when they visited their relatives living at Linda Lodge.

Good



Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive. Care and support was centred on people's individual needs and wishes. People were fully involved in developing and reviewing their care plans. Staff demonstrated a good understanding of people's individual needs and choices.

People, their relatives and friends were encouraged to give feedback about the service they received. There was an appropriate complaints procedure in place which people and relatives were familiar with.

Good



Is the service well-led?

The service was well-led.

Good



Summary of findings

Staff told us they were clear about their roles and responsibilities. Staff had a good understanding of the ethos of the service and they provided good quality care for people.

Systems were in place to monitor the safety and quality of the service and to get the views of people about the service.

Linda Lodge

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.

This inspection took place on 21 September and 5 October 2015 and was unannounced.

This inspection was carried out by a single inspector. We reviewed the information we had about the provider prior to our visit and we looked at notifications that the service is legally required to send us about certain events such as serious injuries and deaths.

We gathered information by speaking with eight of the people living at Linda Lodge, six relatives, a community psychiatric nurse, four staff, the registered manager and the deputy manager. We observed the provision of care and support to people living in the home. We looked at six people's care records and five staff records and we reviewed records related to the management of the service.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

People told us they felt safely supported by staff at Linda Lodge and this view was supported by relatives we spoke with. One person said, “They look after us well here, I’ve been here a long time and the staff are good to me.” One relative said, “I visit every week and I can see they are well looked after and safe. Importantly people look happy.” At our inspection we observed a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. From our observations we could see that people felt safe with staff.

Staff helped people to be protected from abuse. Staff had received training to do with safeguarding adults and this had helped them carry out their safeguarding roles and responsibilities effectively. They were able to describe how they would recognise the signs of potential abuse and what they would do to prevent and report it. The registered manager told us they would report any concerns they might have to the local authority and to the CQC. We looked at records that showed what training had been received. We saw certificated evidence for safeguarding adult’s training that showed staff had all received the training in the last 18 months.

We saw the provider had appropriate policies and procedures to help safeguard people, which included; staff whistle blowing, how to make a complaint, and reporting accidents and incidents. The registered manager showed us a copy of the Pan London safeguarding policy that was available for reference - “Protecting adults at risk; London multi-agency policy and procedures to safeguard adults from abuse”. We saw evidence that staff were required to read the policies and procedures and sign to say they understood them and were prepared to work within them.

Risks to people were being managed by staff so that people were protected and supported. People told us they had been involved in their care plan reviews and their risk assessments. We saw they had signed both to demonstrate they had been consulted in the process. Relatives told us they were invited to care plan reviews. One person told us they attended the last review. The community psychiatric nurse told us they had been to a review of one person’s care plan and risk assessment together with the person concerned, their relatives and the registered manager. They told us the risk assessment and care plans were appropriate to meet the person’s needs. The care plans we

looked at contained individualised risk assessments which identified the hazards people might face. The risk management plans we saw provided detailed guidance for staff about how to support people to keep them safe.

The service had other risk assessments and risk management plans in place that staff followed to ensure identified risks were minimised so that people were helped to keep safe and staff protected. There was an up to date fire risk assessment, an environmental risk assessment and a monthly health and safety checklist to monitor the identified risks. We saw that the checklist was monitored by the registered manager and appropriate actions taken where needed.

People and their relatives said there were enough suitably qualified and experienced staff to keep people safe and to meet their needs. One person said, “I’ve always had help when I needed it. I think there are enough staff here to help us.” One relative said, “Whenever I visit there seem to be enough staff on duty. I’m always kept well informed and there’s always someone available if I have a question.” We looked at the rota and we saw there was sufficient staff cover to meet the needs of people. The registered manager said if the needs of people increased additional staff support would be provided as required.

Staff files we inspected showed that recruitment checks had been used to ensure that all the necessary steps had been carried out before staff were employed. These included criminal record checks, proof of identity and the right to work in the UK, declarations of fitness to work, suitable references and evidence of relevant qualifications and experience. We saw the provider had taken steps to protect people from the risks of being cared for by unfit or unsuitable staff.

People’s medicines were managed so that they received them safely. We found that there were appropriate arrangements in place in relation to obtaining, storing, administering and the recording of medicines which helped to ensure they were given to people safely. All the medicines were safely stored away in a locked medicines cabinet. We looked at medicine administration records (MAR) for six people. We saw that staff had maintained these records appropriately. People received their medicines as prescribed. The registered manager told us four people were responsible for their own medicines with

Is the service safe?

some support from staff. We spoke to two people and they confirmed this. They told us they were pleased to be able to do this for themselves. We saw the records for these people had been signed by themselves.

The registered manager told us they would always consult the pharmacy if they had any concerns about the

medicines they received for people. We saw records to show that staff had received medicines training and that there were monthly audits of medicines to help to ensure the safe management of medicines.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

We observed care being provided to people and we saw both staff and people knew each other well. We saw that people received effective care because of this and because staff had received appropriate training and supervision and had the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the needs of the people they supported. We looked at staff records and found training information on all the staff files. There was a list of all training that had been completed, together with certificated evidence. The training provided covered the essential areas of knowledge, skills and competencies that the provider had decided staff needed to do their jobs effectively.

The registered manager told us that a new training programme was being introduced for all staff based on the government's newly introduced Care Certificate workbook. This is a comprehensive national training programme especially devised for care staff to raise practice standards in care homes. The registered manager told us a member of staff had responsibility for implementing this with all the staff over the next year. We spoke with that member of staff and they showed us the training programme and the plan for implementing all the elements of the training plan with staff.

We were told that additional training was provided for staff on the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and dementia, all useful additions to the training programme. Staff said the training they had received had helped them to work more effectively with people.

We saw supervision notes for the staff whose files we inspected and we can confirm these records showed that staff received supervision and support. Staff said they found this helpful and supportive with their work. A member of staff told us that a new supervision format was introduced with a supervision agreement implemented for each member of staff and detailed supervision notes provided, including an action plan, signed by the supervisor and supervisee and copied to staff after each of their supervision sessions. Each member of staff whose file we inspected had received an annual appraisal of their work. This set out their accomplishments over the year, their training needs and the aims and objectives for the year ahead. This meant people received effective care from staff who were appropriately supported and their work monitored.

People were able to make decisions about their everyday life and were asked for their consent. It was clear from speaking with people and their relatives that they were consulted about making complex decisions to do with their care and support needs. Records showed people were involved in making decisions about their care and support and their consent was sought and documented. The registered manager told us that all the people at Linda Lodge had the capacity to make decisions about their care and support at the time of this inspection. The registered manager said that people's capacity to make important decisions was always discussed at their six monthly care plan reviews so everybody was aware of the person's ability to decide on what was in their best interests. This was confirmed by the care plan meeting minutes we saw.

People were supported to have a healthy and balanced diet. People said they enjoyed the food that was provided for them. One person said, "I enjoy the food here; we do get a choice." Relatives told us people got a varied diet that they seemed to enjoy. One relative said, "My family member enjoys their meals as far as I can tell. I know they get asked what they want to eat, because I've been there at the time they were asked. They seem happy with it all."

We saw from our observations that people were given a choice over what they ate at meal times. A food record was also used to record what people had eaten. This helped to ensure people's meals were varied. We saw from the records that there was a variety of healthy food on offer and that different people had different things to eat at each meal, demonstrating that choices were offered. People told us they were consulted by the cook in the process of drawing up menus and their care plans included information about their nutritional needs and preferences. The registered manager said they tried to accommodate people's wishes as well as trying to ensure people had a varied and nutritious diet.

People were supported to maintain good health and have appropriate access to healthcare services. Care files confirmed that all the people were registered with a local GP and had regular annual health checks. People's health care needs were also well documented in their care plans. We could see that people had regular appointments with health care professionals such as dentists, chiropodists and opticians. This information was always recorded in their health care plan.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

The service was caring. People and their relatives told us that the registered manager and the staff were very caring of the people living at Linda Lodge. One person said, "I've never been happier here after I couldn't live at home anymore." Another person said, "I think the staff are very caring indeed." People and relatives said staff worked hard to maintain positive and caring relationships with them. A community psychiatric nurse told us they thought the home was excellent and people's needs were catered for. They said they thought the registered manager and all the staff were caring about the people living there.

During our inspection we saw people were treated with kindness and compassion. Our observations and discussions showed staff to have a good knowledge and understanding of the people they were supporting. Staff told us they enjoyed working with the people they cared for. We observed that people received one to one attention from staff who demonstrated their concern and interest in them. We saw staff patiently spending time supporting people where they needed it, talking to them kindly, explaining when necessary what they were doing or about to do.

People were able to express their views and make decisions about their care and support. Relatives told us

staff always listened to what people said they wanted and staff respected their wishes. Relatives said they thought this helped people to feel that they mattered and were understood by staff.

We saw that people had the privacy they needed and they were treated with dignity and respect at all times. Staff knocked on people's bedroom doors before they went in. We observed that staff asked people what they wanted to eat and what they wanted to watch on television. Relatives told us that staff enabled people to decide for themselves about every aspect of their lives, such as with their personal care and the activities they wanted to do.

Relatives were given appropriate information regarding the care and support their relations received. One relative said, "They keep me really well informed about what's going on." Another said, "Really good communication with us."

Relatives said they were always made welcome when visiting. Staff told us, and records evidenced that people were supported and encouraged to keep in contact with their relatives and friends. We heard how special events, such as birthdays, were celebrated, and families and friends were invited. From our observations we could see staff were welcoming and supportive to relatives who wanted to make a visit.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

The service was responsive. People told us they had contributed to their care plan and they said they felt central to it. They said their care plans reflected their wishes. Care plans we inspected reflected people's contributions and were signed in agreement by them. All the care plans we saw had been reviewed in the last month together with people. We saw that care plans had been updated and revised and were responsive to people's changing needs. People said they were happy with the care they received. They said staff were responsive to their needs and if they needed help with things that were not in their care plans such as going out for an unplanned walk, they got the assistance they needed. One person said, "The staff are friendly and kind and they help me with what I need." A relative agreed with this and said, "All the staff here are brilliant, they are so helpful to us all."

The community psychiatric nurse told us that information from care programme approach reviews was taken into account in the care planning process for people in the home. We saw that care plan objectives agreed at these reviews had been integrated with people's care plans. This has helped to ensure effective and more integrated care in meeting people's needs

People told us that there was a good range of activities provided for them. One person said, "The activities we can

join in with if we want to. They are quite varied and enjoyable. We also have parties that our friends and families can come too and that's nice. We had one recently, it was a beach party." Relatives said there was a wide range of social activities that people could join in with if they wanted to. One person said, "It has helped to keep people happy and interested in life."

People told us they knew what to do if they were unhappy about something and they felt they were able to talk to the registered manager or staff about anything. We were shown the provider's complaints policy and procedure. We inspected the home's policies and procedures and this included the complaints process and what people could do if they were not happy with the quality of service they received. From the complaint records that we inspected we saw that they had been resolved with the complainant satisfactorily and the process followed was within the policy and procedures for complaints. The registered manager told us they reviewed any complaints or concerns made and this had provided them with the opportunity to improve the service appropriately.

We saw in the care records we inspected and from the conversations we had with staff, relatives and people that their likes, dislikes and their preferences were considered as an important foundation of care provision and had been recorded clearly in people's care plans.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

The service was well led. Relatives of people told us the registered manager encouraged their involvement with the care and support of their family members and to provide feedback about the service. They said where they had made comments the registered manager had listened to them and taken action to address the issues. One person said, “The manager knows what’s going on in the home and always has time to talk.” Another person said, “They are very caring and supportive, they encourage us to tell them what we think of the service.” People told us the registered manager and staff made people feel welcome. They said they thought the social activities and parties that were arranged by the registered manager and staff were a great way to involve people such as the relatives, friends and families together with the people living at Linda Lodge.

We found staff were positive in their attitude and were committed to giving their best in the support and care of people. Staff told us the registered manager encouraged a positive and open culture by being supportive to people and by making themselves approachable with a clear sense of direction for the service. We thought this reflected fairly what we had seen at this inspection. We saw the service was forward looking and the registered manager was keen to consider ways people could be provided with improved standards of care and support. An example of this was the new training and support programme just implemented for all staff.

One staff member told us, “We can discuss any issues and the manager listens.” Relatives and the community psychiatric nurse said they were able to raise issues and make suggestions about the way the service was provided and these were taken seriously and discussed. For example a suggestion was made to provide some gardening opportunities for some people who had said they would appreciate the chance to do this. Raised flower beds were provided in the back garden and people told us they enjoyed the chance they had had this year, as a result, to grow some vegetables.

Daily handover meetings helped to ensure that staff were always aware of people’s care needs and of upcoming events, meetings and reviews that were due. This helped to ensure continuity in the service.

Systems were in place to monitor and improve the quality of the service. We saw records to show that the registered manager carried out a monthly audit to assess whether the home was running as it should be. For example the audits included a room check to ensure they were clean and tidy and safe. The registered manager told us in September 2015 there was a satisfaction survey distributed to people and their relatives and to visitors so that they could provide feedback about the services offered to people living at Linda Lodge. The registered manager told us they analysed the responses and prepared an action plan where necessary to address areas that required improvements. We saw the responses were all positive in the feedback that was given so no action plan had been drawn up as a result of this last feedback survey.