

Autonomy Life Ltd

The Willows

Inspection report

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22 February 2022

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Inspected but not rated
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Is the service safe?	Inspected but not rated
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Summary of findings

Overall summary

The Willows is a residential care home for up to 10 adults with learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection there were nine people living there.

We found the following examples of good practice.

The service had been proactive at supporting people to understand how to keep themselves safe whilst at home and in the community.

Some areas of the building had been repurposed. For example, a games room had been repurposed to a 'snug' which could be used for visiting. The room was adjacent to the main entrance and was spacious with good ventilation.

The service had introduced measures to prevent visitors from catching and spreading infections. Visitors were screened for COVID-19 and were provided with personal protective equipment (PPE).

Staff had received training on infection prevention and control measures and how to use PPE safely. PPE was available to staff throughout the service and staff were seen using it effectively. Staff competence and knowledge was regularly assessed.

Additional cleaning measures of frequent touch points had been introduced in the home. All areas of the home were clean. Weekly infection control audits were carried out.

COVID-19 testing was being carried out for people using the service and staff in line with the latest guidance.

The provider had effective systems in place to check staff and professional visitors were vaccinated against COVID-19.

The provider had updated their infection prevention and control policy to reflect the COVID-19 pandemic and additional measures that had been introduced.

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

The Willows

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 two days 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 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.

Visiting in care homes

The provider's visiting policy was in line with government guidance

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.