

Hicare Limited

Meadow's Court

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

Meadows Court Care Home is a registered care service providing personal care and support for up to 60 older people. There were 47 people using the service when we visited and some were living with dementia.

At our last inspection we rated the service good. At this inspection we found the evidence continued to support the rating of good and there was no evidence or information from our inspection and on going monitoring that demonstrated serious risks or concerns.

This inspection report is written in a shorter format because our overall rating of the service has not changed since our last inspection.

At this inspection we found the service remained Good.

Assessed risks to people regarding any area of their lives were reduced or eliminated to support the safety of people using the service. Staff understood their responsibilities about reporting any seen or suspected abuse. Staff were employed, after robust recruitment procedures, in sufficient numbers. Medicines were administered by appropriately trained staff. These methods supported the safety of people using the service.

People are supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff do support them in the least restrictive way possible. Policies and systems in the service also support this practice. Staff understood and followed the Mental Capacity Act 2005 guidance. Staff asked for people's consent before providing any support.

Staff had completed required training and this was updated to ensure people's needs were met appropriately. People's cultural choices were observed in the development of individual support plans.

People we spoke with told us that staff were always caring and respected people's privacy and dignity at all times. Staff supported people's choices and fully included and encouraged independent choices to enable full involvement in daily routines and activities.

People's support plans reflected their individual choices and goals. People were then supported to achieve their aims and potential. People expressed their confidence about raising any concerns, should they have any. People felt that these would be handled correctly and that they had the information they needed to contact external agencies.

There was a registered manager in post. There were audits and spot checks in place to make certain staff worked correctly and that people received the appropriate support at a good standard. People using the service and their relatives had various ways of sharing their views and this was encouraged by staff.

Further information is in the detailed findings below.

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 remains Safe

Good ●

Is the service effective?

The service remains Effective

Good ●

Is the service caring?

The service remains Caring.

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

The service remains Responsive.

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

The service remains Well Led.

Good ●

Meadow's Court

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.

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This inspection took place on 16 March 2018 and was unannounced. This inspection was carried out by one inspector and one inspection manager.

Before the inspection visit we looked at the information we held about Meadow's Court including any concerns or compliments. We looked to see if we had received any statutory notifications from the provider. A statutory notification is information about important events which the provider is required to send us by law. We considered this information when planning our inspection to the home.

During the inspection we spoke with eleven people who received support at Meadow's Court. We also spoke with six members of staff, with a district nurse, the registered manager, the operations manager and one director of the company. We met and spoke with three family members and friends who were visiting people using the service.

We looked at four support plans to see how these were developed and to ensure these contained the choices and wishes of people using the service. We looked at additional records that showed us how Meadow's Court supported people; these included such records as recruitment files, medicine records, daily records, reviews of support plans, risk assessments and any activities that had been undertaken. We also looked at staff recruitment and training.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

The families of people using the service told us that they felt staff did make certain that people were safe. They confirmed that they were contacted if there were any issues that affected the person receiving support. People told us that they had confidence in the registered manager and other staff to keep people safe. One person said, "I cannot fault the staff, they are always available when needed." Three people using the service confirmed, without hesitation, that they felt safe when we asked them directly.

Staff were recruited after all required checks and full recruitment processes were satisfactorily completed. Where any gaps or concerns arose from previous employment, we saw that records contained risk assessments and appropriate monitoring and planning. This make certain that only suitable members of staff were able to provide support or work in any area of the service. There was a low turnover of staff and one staff member told us, "I like working here, we all work together and I feel supported."

Staff confirmed that they had training relating to the safety of people, including awareness of various types of abuse; all training was regularly updated to ensure practices were meeting current standards. Staff knew their role and responsibilities to safeguard people receiving support and of the authorities to contact if needed. Staff also described different types of abuse and said that they would have no hesitation in speaking out if they witnessed anything unacceptable. People using the service told us that they felt any concerns would be addressed by staff, but people said they had no issues.

Any incidents were reviewed and fully recorded. Any adjustments were then made to procedures and training as necessary. This showed that lessons were learnt from incidents and the service further developed practices to protect people using the service.

There were sufficient numbers of staff on duty and the rota showed that this was the normal routine. The staffing levels provided enough staff to support the needs of people using the service and our observations at this inspection showed that staff were readily available when needed.

We saw risk assessments on support plans and any action needed was clearly detailed for staff to follow. These had been regularly reviewed to make certain these were still appropriate to the person's routines and needs, again supporting the safety of people.

We saw organised records that showed us robust recruitment procedures were implemented for all new members of staff. All legally required checks were completed before any new staff started work. This meant that people could be assured that only appropriate staff provided their support. The registered manager told us that agency staff were not used as permanent staff covered any absences. This again meant that staff were fully aware of individual needs and that people using the service knew who was providing their support at all times.

Records showed that medicines were stored safely and appropriately. The medication administration

records were fully completed and up to date, providing evidence that people received their medication at the prescribed time. We undertook a mini audit and found that the number of medicines stored matched the records. We also observed a medication round being completed. We saw that two members of trained staff dealt with the medicines in a safe way, with due consideration for the dignity and privacy of people receiving medicines. One visitor said, "Staff always ask if [relative] needs pain relief. They are very good, they seem to listen." Staff were also able to talk us through the routines used to safely administer, store and rotate medicines. Up to date medication policies and procedures also ensured the safe handling of medicines.

Infection control procedures were in place to protect people. We saw that staff used protective clothing that was readily available in suitable areas such as bathrooms. Staff regularly completed training to ensure that their knowledge was current and relevant to their job role.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

People using the service told us that they thought staff did their job very well. One person said, "All the staff know what help I need and exactly how I want things." We were also told, "They [staff] are wonderful, it is the best thing to be here." People felt that staff did provide support in the way they chose. One person undertaking an activity said, "Staff are always ready to get me here [activity room] when I want to do something."

The registered manager told us that the service had been working closely with external agencies and into research for the most suitable environment, particularly to support people in the area used for those living with dementia. Staff had worked closely with people using the service and their families and visitors to obtain personal choices for colours and wall features. Displays and pictures contained such tactile material features as apples and cherries that were dimensional and people could feel shapes at a touch. This supported long term memories being prompted and childhood experiences.

We saw displays and colour variation throughout our tour of the premises. The lighting adjusted in certain areas as we toured the building. The registered manager told us that this again was to support people's needs. Research had shown that bright lights can have an adverse effect on people, particularly those with a diagnosis of dementia. There was also an aviary in one lounge area, where indoor planting was also available. This encouraged people to participate in planting even throughout the winter months. There were a variety of seating areas, each with specific colours and décor providing a choice for people and visitors. One visitor said, "This is a really good place, so clean and bright."

Staff told us that they had regular training that was updated to provide them with the appropriate skills and knowledge to support people appropriately. This was also discussed at supervision to ensure people had the opportunity to ask for any training they felt would support their role.

Staff undertook a full induction that covered the expected standards of the organisation; policies and procedures were available to support them in their role. New members of staff also worked with more experienced staff members to observe what was expected of them. This also meant that people using the service were given time to get to know new members of staff before that staff member carried provided support alone.

We observed a handover discussion with experience and new members of staff. There was an exchange of informative and helpful information for all. A new member of staff said that they were enjoying their time at the service and that everyone was friendly. We noted that an experienced member of staff checked the shadowing book to ensure this was updated, showing an awareness of procedures and recording processes.

We checked that the service was working within the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). Discussions with staff and our review of records showed that staff knew and understood their responsibilities regarding the MCA. Regular training was also completed by staff to ensure this knowledge remained current and appropriate.

We observed a midday meal and saw that this was a relaxed and unhurried experience. Tables were brightly set with juice available on each table. Staff brought people into the dining room one at a time and asked where they wanted to sit. Staff waited for the person to decide and assisted with details of who was sitting at which table already. Staff gently helped the person decide by providing information of who they had sat with the day before. One staff member then asked, "Do you want to chat with them again, or do you want somewhere different today?" People using the service were chatting, saying for some people to join their table. Only when everyone was comfortable, seated at a table and had everything they needed did staff start to serve meals. This meant that food was hot when served and everyone ate without a long wait for others to arrive.

The kitchen staff were efficient and calm, asking what each person had chosen. Staff worked together to sit with those needing support while the remaining staff served meals. We saw that there was a variety of meals offered and taken to people to see the food, to assist with choices at their tables; people changed certain parts of their meals as they were served. Staff dealt with such choices calmly and quietly, all the time chatting and checking people had what they wanted. One person was offered ketchup for their chips to encourage a bit more eating. One person ate a little and said they were going to their room. Support staff and catering staff discussed this, saved the remaining meal in case the person returned and made a note to check on this person later.

We saw staff who worked in other areas of the service interacting and supporting people on their way to the dining room. This conversation and discussion demonstrated the commitment and values of members of staff at Meadow's Court.

Healthcare services were accessed when needed. Records showed that people attended their appointments and had regular checks when staff had any concerns. Records showed clear details of any treatment and also of the outcomes of appointments. One family member told us, "They look after [relative] well. They keep me informed with any changes. They called me about the GP needing to see [relative], it really reassured me." A visiting healthcare professional told us that staff were always readily available when they visited. Staff were aware of the health needs of people using the service and always followed any instructions given.

We were told by members of staff that they worked together to make certain each person received support at the time they preferred and in a way the person had chosen. Our observations during the visit to Meadow's Court supported this.

Our discussions and review of records confirmed that people were constantly asked for their choices and wishes. These were clearly recorded and then developed further where needed in people's support plans. One person told us, "Staff always ask if I need help, they never just rush me." We saw staff taking time to provide assistance and chatting with people using the service as they carried out various tasks throughout this inspection.

Is the service caring?

Our findings

People we spoke with who were using the service told us that staff were always caring and considerate. We received comments that included, "They [staff] are so kind," and "Everybody is lovely" and "They look after me," and "Can't fault it." People told us that staff supported their independence. When we spoke with visiting family members one told us, "[Relative] is really enjoying it here, I was surprised but they've made her feel really welcome."

Care plans showed that each person using the service was fully involved in any decisions about how they wanted to live their lives. There were details of people's life to help staff get to know what activities people may enjoy. It also helped staff to remind those with memory loss of family members and what was once important to them. This information was then used to plan activities and daily routines that fully suited each person.

We saw that staff gently and quietly asked if people had any pain and if they needed pain relief. Staff crouched down to speak with people who were seated, showing that staff respected the person's privacy and dignity. Records showed that any change in choices by a person was recorded, then this was part of their ongoing support plan. This showed a person centred culture within the service. Staff were seen to be constantly looking around as they undertook any task. They were not task driven, but clearly had the wellbeing of people using that service at the centre of their actions. During the inspection we saw that this was the same reaction from all members of staff. Throughout the inspection we noted that staff laughed and spoke with people, even if they were just walking by a person. People using the service were relaxed, smiling and talking in various areas of the service. This showed us that they were comfortable speaking with staff and we heard staff responding in a kind and compassionate manner at all times.

There were boxes outside each room that contained a person's choice of things for them to remember, such as photographs, items they had made or reminders of certain events. This not only supported orientation for those with memory loss, but also personalised areas of the service to promote a sense of ownership and belonging.

We saw that people using the service were clean, dressed appropriately and confident and comfortable when speaking with staff. We heard one staff member ask a person if the sun was in their eyes and if they wanted the curtains closed slightly. Throughout the inspection we noted that staff were looking to check if people were comfortable and gave time for the person to respond. We heard staff quietly discuss the actions of one person who they thought was becoming a bit unsettled. One staff member walked over to this person and gently sat next to them, speaking with consideration for their feelings and making certain not to be overheard. This showed us that staff anticipated people's feelings and did not just wait to be called over. They were observant and attentive throughout our observations in a variety of areas within the service.

Visitors told us that staff made them feel welcome at any time. One person told us that refreshments were regularly offered and that they could also eat with their relative at meal times if they wished. Another said, "I visit regularly, staff are always helpful and seem to genuinely enjoy their job. My [relative] loves it here. One

person using the service said, "Oh they're really, really good here. If I can't be in my home, this is the next best thing. I would not choose anywhere else."

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Our discussions with staff showed that they understood what their role was and their responsibilities within that role. People we spoke with told us, "Staff do know what [person's name] like to do, they are very good and things are always calm."

Support plans were regularly reviewed, to make sure these contained up to date information and reflected any change in a person's needs. These included such areas as a person's personal history, communication needs, any specific y be triggers that may lead to accelerated behaviours. There was clear instruction for staff to follow in such incidents to help to deal with such events or to avoid these occurring.

There was evidence that support plans were regularly reviewed and signed by staff and the appropriate family member for confirmation. People we spoke with confirmed that reviews took place regularly. They said that they were contacted by staff whenever the need arose and people felt fully informed. This made certain that people had the chance to discuss any issues or worries they may have.

The recording of daily records showed regular routines and daily activities that staff supported. They clearly reflected the mood of the person as well as the choices for each day, including any changes to their place for the day. One person told us that staff always followed the daily choices of their family member and that this person was always "very happy" when staff arrived.

Staff told us that the registered manager encouraged them to read care plans. They said that information changes for people was communicated immediately. All staff felt that they worked well together to make certain that people had the support they needed and in the way they chose. Out discussions with families also confirmed this was the case.

Staff explained how they listened to choices and had regular meetings with people receiving support. These meetings enabled everyone to voice their aims and discuss activities they would like to undertake. In this way people heard about different activities and talked about the chance that they may like something new. This information was then used to develop a variety of outings and opportunities for people to achieve their goals and wishes.

We discussed the new accessible information requirement. The Accessible Information Standard is a framework put in place from August 2016 making it a legal requirement for all providers to ensure people with a disability or sensory loss can access and understand information they are given. Staff told us that they had always had policies and procedures to ensure that this had been carried out with all support plans.

People we spoke with said they had no reason to complain or raise issues as there was constant contact with staff and any issues were dealt with quickly. They also had information about who to contact if they needed to speak to authorities about anything and were confident in the procedures in place within Meadow's Court.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

There was a registered manager in place. 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.

There were satisfaction questionnaires sent out for people to give feedback on their experiences and on the quality of care, any concerns or ideas. We saw that this information was quickly actioned if needed, plus used to assess the quality of the service provided. We saw that the most recent responses to questionnaires contained comments such as, "Thank you for providing the reassurance we need to live here," and "Manager and staff very helpful," also "Thoughtfully designed."

All members of staff we spoke with told us that they could approach the manager about any issues. Staff said that they had regular staff meetings and supervision where they were encouraged to discuss any issues. All staff said that they were able to speak openly to colleagues and the registered manager. Staff told us that they worked together as a team and that they felt included and listened to. They said that the registered manager had an open door policy and was readily available when needed. They also told us that they would not hesitate to speak out if they had any concerns regarding any areas of the service. All staff we spoke with confirmed that they felt they were part of the continued development of the service and were always included in decisions.

There were systems in place to monitor and check that the quality of the service being provided met with the aims of the organisation. These checks included regular audits of records, spot checks on medication, training and risk assessments. The registered manager actively encouraged suggestions and feedback to adjust or amend service delivery where necessary. Members of support staff confirmed that they were regularly observed by the registered manager during their practices and daily routines. This meant that staff followed procedures that were in place and that they provided support in an appropriate manner.

These all showed that Meadows's Court had systems in place to protect the welfare of people using the service. The registered manager and staff also actively sought ways to improve and develop the service delivery. This showed that the ethos was to make certain it fully supported people using new and innovative ways that provided a comfortable, suitable and enjoyable experience.