

Jutrad Limited

Conifers Nursing Home

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?

Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

The Conifers Nursing Home is a nursing and residential home that provides accommodation and personal care for adults with a range of care and support needs, including adults who are living with dementia. The home can accommodate up to 33 people in one adapted building over two floors. At the time of this inspection there were 21 people using the service.

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

People received a good standard of care and we saw examples where people had achieved better health outcomes after moving to the home, made possible due to the dedication and skill of the staff team. People received care from a knowledgeable staff team who had access to a wide variety of training and support.

The service was safe. Risks to people's health and safety were assessed and mitigated. Medicines were managed in a safe and proper way. Incidents and accidents were logged and investigated and learnt from where appropriate. The service was safely staffed, although interactions with people tended to be task-led.

The management team was supportive, responsive and promoted a culture of person-centred care at the service. The registered manager recognised that further work was needed to the environment to ensure the home remained a nice place to live and was suitably adapted to meet the needs of people living there. The service used a number of methods to ensure people and relevant persons involved in their care had a voice, which was valued and listened to most of the time. We felt the provider and registered manager had not adequately listened to people's feedback about the provision of activities available at the home and saw long periods at the home which lacked stimulation.

Throughout the inspection we saw very caring interactions between staff and people who used the service. Everyone involved in the service provided positive feedback about the overall quality of the service. There was a person-centred culture with the management and staff team and all were highly involved in people's care and support.

Staff encouraged people to make their own decisions and they obtained consent from people before care was delivered. People were supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff supported them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests. The policies and systems in the service supported this practice.

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

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was requires improvement (published 28 February 2019).

Why we inspected

This was a planned inspection based on the previous rating.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we 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?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Is the service effective?

Good ●

The service was effective.

Details are in our effective findings below.

Is the service caring?

Good ●

The service was caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Is the service responsive?

Good ●

The service was responsive.

Details are in our responsive findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Requires Improvement ●

The service was not always well-led.

Details are in our well-Led findings below.

Conifers Nursing Home

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.

Inspection team

The inspection team comprised of one inspector and one expert by experience. 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

The Conifers Nursing Home 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 CQC. This means the manager and the provider are both legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

Notice of inspection

This inspection was unannounced.

What we did before the inspection

Prior to the inspection we reviewed information and evidence we already held about the home, which had been collected via our ongoing monitoring of care services. This included notifications sent to us by the home. Notifications are changes, events or incidents that the provider is legally obliged to send to us without delay. We also sought feedback from partner agencies who work with the service.

Due to the timing of this inspection, the provider was not asked to complete a provider information return prior to the inspection. This is information we require providers to send us annually, to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make.

During the inspection

We spoke with eight people who used the service and four relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with 6 members of staff including the registered manager, clinical lead, care staff and other ancillary staff.

We reviewed a range of records. This included three people's care records and selected documents from one other care record. We checked multiple medication records and a variety of records relating to the management of the service.

We spent time observing the daily life in the home and we looked around the building to check environmental safety and cleanliness.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found.

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. At this inspection this key question has improved to good. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People were protected from the risks of abuse. Staff understood what adult safeguarding meant and what action to take if they became aware of an incident of abuse. All staff felt confident the manager would act quickly and appropriately. One staff member said, "I wouldn't let any abuse occur, I'll whistle blow before anything happens. I'm confident the manager would act if I raised concerns."
- People felt very safe living at The Conifers Nursing Home.
- The service had a safeguarding policy and staff confirmed they had read this.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management; Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Staff and the management team had a very good understanding of each individual risk and how to support them safely.
- People had a range of risk assessments and care plans in place, which provided relevant guidance for staff to follow.
- Systems for monitoring people who were at risk of skin breakdown were very good and we saw a number of positive examples where the service had supported people to maintain their skin integrity whilst being cared for predominantly in bed or had recovered from significant pressure related injuries acquired prior to admission.
- The registered manager had robustly addressed our concerns from the previous inspection about the quality of information contained in people's mobility support plans. We found these were consistently detailed and reviewed regularly to ensure information was accurate and reflective of people's assessed needs.
- Staff completed a record each time they provided a person with support or when an aspect of their health needed to be monitored for safety reasons, such as a person's weight or skin integrity. Records were up to date and contained relevant information to facilitate effective monitoring of people's health and wellbeing.
- Accidents, incidents and untoward events were monitored by the management team. The registered manager's system to analyse incidents and assess future risk at the home were effective. This information was used to help reduce the risk of repeat events and to make improvements to the safety of the service.
- Staff completed regular checks of the premises and the equipment they used, to ensure the environment remained safe.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were enough staff deployed to ensure people were safe and their support needs were met.
- Staffing levels were calculated according to people's individual needs and feedback from people and staff was considered as part of this process. Most people we spoke with said there was enough staff around to

meet their needs in a timely manner. During the inspection we identified one instance where staff support was not timely. Immediately after the inspection the registered manager submitted evidence to the CQC showing they had investigated our concerns and took all reasonable steps to ensure in future people received consistently timely support.

- People living at The Conifers Nursing Home were supported by the same core group of staff, which meant they consistently received good continuity of care.
- Processes for recruiting staff had improved since the last inspection. We found staff were recruited safely and all the appropriate checks were carried out to help protect people from the employment of unsuitable staff.

Using medicines safely

- People's medicines were managed in a safe way and all feedback from the previous inspection had been addressed.
- All staff had completed training before they were able to administer medicines and received an annual review of their knowledge, skills and competence to administer medicines.

Preventing and controlling infection

- People were protected from the risks of infection and the home was clean and tidy. One person commented, "It never smells, the home is cleaned every day, bedrooms all cleaned for us, bedclothes changed."
- Staff had access to the appropriate cleaning materials and equipment.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

Effective – this means we looked for evidence that people's care, treatment and support achieved good outcomes and promoted a good quality of life, based on best available evidence.

At the last inspection this key question was rated good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people's outcomes were consistently good, and people's feedback confirmed this.

Adapting service, design, decoration to meet people's needs

- The registered manager had worked with the provider to develop a refurbishment and repair plan for the home. Some areas of the home had been re-decorated since we last inspected and works to refurbish the home were ongoing.
- Some adaptations had been made to support people living with dementia. However, further improvements were required in this area. For example, people's rooms were labelled using a small font; a mirror was situated in the upstairs corridor, which is known to sometimes cause agitation; and, corridors were poorly lit in places.
- The registered manager acknowledged improvements were needed to the environment and confirmed they were in communication with a local organisation who promote best practice for people living with dementia.
- Despite our observations about the environment none of the people we spoke with raised any concerns during the inspection. People had been supported to personalise their bedrooms with items that were familiar to them, to support them to feel comfortable and safe. People had access to a secure garden and numerous communal areas.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law

- The registered manager used effective systems, based on good practice guidance, to ensure people's needs were assessed and kept under review. As people's needs changed, their care records were updated so staff had clear, up to date guidance to follow.
- People and their relatives were happy with the care they received at The Conifers Nursing Home.

Supporting people to eat and drink enough to maintain a balanced diet

- People were supported to eat and drink enough and maintain a healthy diet.
- There were systems in place to ensure people's eating and drinking preferences were known and respected. Most people told us they enjoyed the food on offer.
- Staff monitored how much people were eating and drinking to help reduce the risk of malnutrition and dehydration.
- Staff had easily accessible information about people's dietary requirements, including when people needed food and fluids with modified textures.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff were competent, knowledgeable and skilled. They received support to carry out their roles effectively. New staff completed an induction which involved shadowing more experienced staff.

- Staff completed regular training to ensure they had the right skills to deliver effective care. Staff were happy with the training they received.
- Staff received regular support and supervision to review their competence, discuss areas of good practice and to consider ways they could continue to improve. Staff told us they felt very well supported by the management team.

Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care; Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- Staff worked with other organisations to deliver effective care to people. There were clear procedures in place to support staff to proactively seek advice from community health professionals, such as the GP and district nurses.
- Staff acted on any advice given by community health professionals and this helped to achieve good health outcomes for people. People's care records contained clear information about the advice given and the actions taken by staff to meet people's health needs.

Ensuring consent to care and treatment in line with law and guidance

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides a legal framework for making particular decisions on behalf of people who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The Act requires that, as far as possible, people make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When they lack mental capacity to make particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible.

People can only be deprived of their liberty to receive care and treatment when this is in their best interests and legally authorised under the MCA. In care homes, and some hospitals, this is usually through MCA application procedures called the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).

We checked whether the service was working within the principles of the MCA, whether any deprivations of liberty had the appropriate legal authority and whether any conditions on authorisations to deprive a person of their liberty were being met.

- We were satisfied the service was working within the principles of the MCA. People's capacity to make their own decisions had been assessed and best interest decisions were recorded, when necessary.
- Suitable systems were in place to ensure restrictions on people's liberty were correctly authorised. The registered manager submitted DoLS applications to the local authority. When authorisations were granted or were made subject to conditions, people's care records were updated so all staff were aware.
- Staff obtained consent from people before they delivered care.

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 good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people were supported and treated with dignity and respect; and involved as partners in their care.

Ensuring people are well treated and supported; respecting equality and diversity

- People and their relatives were complimentary about the care they received. Relatives commented, "I can't praise this place enough for what they've done for [service user], the carers are good and you can ask them anything" and "We couldn't wish for better care for them, the staff are lovely." People commented, "They're pretty good the staff, we're lucky here, we're like a family here" and "Staff genuinely try their hardest."
- People, relatives and staff all thought the management team were very approachable and caring.
- The service complied with the Equality Act 2010 and ensured people were not treated unfairly because of any characteristics that are protected under the legislation, such as gender and race.

Supporting people to express their views and be involved in making decisions about their care

- People, their relatives and representatives were involved in devising care plans to ensure these fully involved people in making decisions about their care.
- People's choices in relation to their daily routines were listened to and respected by staff.
- People and relatives were supported to give feedback about the service.

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- Staff were respectful of people's privacy. Through discussions with staff we were satisfied staff had the practical knowledge and skills of how to promote people's dignity and independence.
- Staff understood the need to respect people's confidentiality and not to discuss issues in public or disclose information to people who did not need to know. Any information that needed to be passed on about people was discussed in private.
- Staff promoted people's dignity and they spoke about people with genuine respect. People's relatives told us staff made sure people were always well-presented and their family member's dignity was maintained.

Is the service responsive?

Our findings

Responsive – this means we looked for evidence that the service met people's needs.

At the last inspection this key question was rated good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people's needs were met through good organisation and delivery.

Supporting people to develop and maintain relationships to avoid social isolation; support to follow interests and to take part in activities that are socially and culturally relevant to them

- People's access to organised activity was limited. The service employed an activities coordinator for three days per week and each month the home hosted an event with singers or entertainers. These events were very well attended, and people told us they enjoyed them a lot. Although carers were encouraged to facilitate social interaction and activity outside of planned events and protected time for activities, our observations and feedback showed this was not always taking place.
- People commented, "Nobody tries to come and get me on my feet. I went into the sitting room, but no one was chatting as everybody was asleep, so I came back to my room", "Staff don't chat, I get a paper every day, they always have a word when they come" and "Depends how busy staff are, I have my door open, they give me five minutes because they're with another patient, if they have time they'll talk about anything."
- Staff welcomed people's relatives and friends into the home to support people to maintain important relationships.

Planning personalised care to meet people's needs, preferences, interests and give them choice and control

- People, relatives, staff and visiting health professionals all said the service provided good quality care and people consistently experienced positive outcomes as a result of living at The Conifers Nursing Home.
- People's care needs were assessed, and clear and detailed plans of care put in place. Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of people's personalities, individual needs and what was important to them. People's care plans contained information about their life history, and this supported staff to build positive relationships with people.
- Staff were responsive to people's changing needs. Senior staff promptly updated people's care plans, as people's needs changed. This meant all staff had access to current information about each person's care and support needs.

Meeting people's communication needs

Since 2016 onwards all organisations that provide publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard (AIS). The standard was introduced to make sure people are given information in a way they can understand. The standard applies to all people with a disability, impairment or sensory loss and in some circumstances to their carers.

- People's communication needs were recorded and staff knew how to communicate with them and meet their needs. This included the use of aids, and bespoke communication techniques. We saw these used to good effect during the inspection to provide comfort and reassurance to people.

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- The provider had systems in place to log, investigate and respond to complaints. Since we last inspected, we saw the provider had followed their complaints procedure.
- People and their relatives told us they felt able to raise any issues or concerns with staff and the registered manager.
- Information on how to complain was clearly displayed in the home.

End of life care and support

- The provider had systems in place to support people at the end of their life to have a comfortable, dignified and pain-free death. People were supported to make decisions about their end of life care, where they were able to do so.

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. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant the service management and the culture they created did not always support the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements; Continuous learning and improving care

- Safety issues raised at the previous inspection were robustly addressed and we saw clear evidence of continued improvements to the provider's quality monitoring systems to ensure people were consistently safe. For example, the registered manager had expanded observed practices to assess staff competency in a greater range of caring responsibilities, such as medicines, hygiene and moving and handling.
- During the inspection we identified improvements were needed to the environment and the provision of activities available at the home. Discussions with the registered manager showed refurbishment to the building was done on a more ad hoc basis with no clear plans in place or a timeline for completion. This meant we had limited assurances our concerns about the environment would be addressed in a timely manner. The provider's analysis of the January 2020 resident survey showed they identified 33% of respondents were not interested in the activities available at the home but this did not lead to an action plan.
- The service benefitted from a stable leader who had worked at the service from the position of carer up to registered manager. They knew the people and staff well and the systems for monitoring the quality and safety of their service were well-established. The registered manager told us they were well supported by the provider and they commented, "They are brilliant. If I need anything, they will help us to get it. They are spot on."
- Staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities. Staff morale was positive, and they all told us they enjoyed their jobs.
- The registered manager understood the regulatory requirements and pro-actively provided information to the CQC following significant events at the service.

Working in partnership with others

- Staff worked as a cohesive team, alongside a variety of other health and social care professionals to ensure people received effective care and support.
- With the exception of external health and social care services, we saw limited evidence to show the service had established community links in order to effectively support people to maintain their community ties for social, cultural or religious reasons. One person said, "It's a bit lonely, there are no church services."

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support with openness; and how the provider understands and acts on their duty of candour responsibility:

- Everyone was complementary about management team and said they were easy to speak with. People

and relatives commented, "The person that manages is very good, they will come and talk to us, they are 'one of us', they know what they are doing" and "There's always a senior member of staff available, they're always pleasant, nothing's too much trouble, they're very knowledgeable."

- The management team pursued information on best practice to ensure people's healthcare needs were consistently well-managed. However, there was limited evidence to show the management team were proactively pursuing opportunities to improve people's experience at the home beyond just their physical needs. The Conifers Nursing Home was a stand-alone service and the registered manager told us they linked in with registered manager forums infrequently. This meant the registered manager had limited opportunities for information sharing to find out what practices worked well at similar homes.
- The provider had a suitable policy which provided staff with guidance about how to comply with the duty of candour.
- The registered manager and provider were committed to being open and honest if anything went wrong and learning from any incidents or complaints. All staff told us they were confident the registered manager and provider would act on any concerns they raised. All staff told us they felt able to raise any concerns or questions with them.

Engaging and involving people using the service, the public and staff, fully considering their equality characteristics

- People, their relatives and staff had regular opportunities to give feedback about the home. The registered manager made themselves easily available to people using the service, relatives and staff.
- Staff and management meetings were held providing opportunity for information sharing as well as enabling staff to share their views and ideas.