

Mrs Trina Marie Clack

Down House Residential Care Home

Inspection report

Alum Bay New Road
Totland
Isle of Wight
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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inadequate



Is the service safe?

Inadequate



Overall summary

We carried out a focused inspection on 13 August 2015 following information about a lack of staff on duty in the home. This report only covers our findings in relation to this topic.

We undertook an unannounced comprehensive inspection at Down House on 14, 15, 17 and 26 April 2015 at which breaches of regulation were found. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for 'Down House Residential Care Home' on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Down House Residential Care Home is registered to provide accommodation for persons requiring nursing or personal care. Down House is a residential care home for up to 17 people. At the time of our inspection 6 people were living at Down House some of whom have physical disabilities or are living with dementia. The home did not have a registered manager at the time of our inspection. 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.

Whilst there were sufficient staff to provide people's care and support needs on the day of our inspection, the provider failed to plan staffing levels effectively. There was no systematic approach in place to ensure sufficient numbers of suitably skilled, experienced and trained staff were available to meet people's individual needs. The manager had been given permission by the provider to engage agency staff at short notice and therefore was able to demonstrate that staffing levels for the weekend and the following week were sufficient to enable people to have their needs met.

Summary of findings

We found one breach of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. You can see what action we told the provider to take at the back of the full version of the report.

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 staffing levels at the home were not safe.

Whilst there were sufficient staff in the home on the day of our inspection, the provider failed to plan staffing levels effectively. This meant that at times people were not supported by sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced staff.

Inadequate



Down House Residential Care Home

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 a focussed inspection to follow up on information of concern and to check whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008.

This inspection took place on 13 August 2015 and was unannounced. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors. We reviewed information from the manager of the service and the local authority before the inspection. We spoke with the manager, four care staff and one person living in the home. We observed care being provided in communal areas and reviewed records in relation to staffing levels in the home.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

The provider did not have a systematic approach to ensuring there were sufficient staff to care for people's needs and keep them safe. They failed to plan staffing levels effectively and this meant that at times insufficient staff were employed in the home to care for people's needs. The provider had not sanctioned the use of agency staff to cover staff vacancies although it was known that insufficient staff were available to cover care shifts. As a result the manager was not able to plan ahead to ensure sufficient, skilled and experienced staff were available, and spent considerable time arranging staff to cover shifts at short notice.

The manager told us they had, two hours before our arrival, been authorised by the provider to engage agency staff to cover shifts that day, over the coming weekend and the following week when regular staff were not available to work. They told us they were finding it difficult to plan ahead as the provider was not allowing them to engage agency staff as soon as it was identified they were required. One member of staff had been asked to return six weeks early from maternity leave to cover several care shifts at short notice. Some staff were working in excess of 50 or 60 hours a week, and were requested to fill care shifts at short notice. The staff rota showed that the week commencing 27 July 2015 the provider worked 67 hours and two other staff worked between 55 and 60 hours. The provider was working six nights, between 8pm and 8am, for the week commencing 10 August 2015. The manager said this was because a member of staff was on annual leave. The provider was also rota'd to cook on two days in the home. The manager was aware that the provider was working excessively long hours and that this could not be sustained. Staff rotas showed that, at times, staff not qualified to care for people's needs were employed. These included staff that were not old enough to work unsupervised in the home, who had not received training appropriate to their role, or who did not have experience or the skills required for the duties for which they had been engaged. The home did not have a member of staff to clean the home which meant care staff were required to carry out cleaning duties in addition to their care role.

The manager expressed concern that the following week, beginning 17 August 2015, they had, "potentially 20 vacant shifts to cover", and that a member of staff currently

working long hours would soon be leaving their employment in the home. The manager said that despite not being given permission by the provider they would have to use agency staff saying, "it [the shifts] has to be covered". The manager was working in excess of 50 hours and worked several care shifts each week, in addition to managing the home. They said this was preventing them from making needed changes to improve the quality of the care provided in the home.

The failure to have an effective system to ensure sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, skilled and experienced staff were deployed was a breach of regulation 18 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

On the day of our inspection when six people were living in the home; two people required two staff to support them, either to move around the home, or be assisted with continence needs. Two care staff were on duty. The senior member of staff in charge was new to the home but was an experienced care worker. They said they had completed two induction shifts in the home. They had read people's care plans and were familiar with people and their care and support needs. They had completed training in the administration of medicines but had not yet been assessed as competent to do this. The second member of care staff was employed from an agency. They told us that although they had not read people's care plans, they had been introduced to people living in the home by the manager and had been told about people's key needs. They said they took direction from the senior in charge of the shift. A third member of staff was accompanying a person to a party held in another location. In addition, a new member of staff who was not experienced in the provision of care was in the home to get to know people before beginning their training, and another member of staff was in the home to vacuum and wash up. They had not received any training and we were told they did not have a role in providing care directly to people living in the home. At night one staff cared for people's needs during the times of 8pm to 8am, with a second member of staff, usually the manager, on call.

The manager provided evidence that the agency staff employed were suitably qualified for their role in the home. Evidence of checks on their background and key training was provided and the manager said he has specifically requested experienced staff. The manager said they were

Is the service safe?

“doing all they can” to ensure the same agency staff were arranged so that people living in the home received

continuity of care. Whilst some staff were not trained in the administration of medicines, the manager was on site in the daytime on five days and the provider at night and at weekends and both were trained to administer medicines.

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where legal requirements were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We did not take formal enforcement action at this stage. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity

Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care

Regulation

Regulation 18 HSCA (RA) Regulations 2014 Staffing

The provider failed to have an effective system to ensure sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, skilled and experienced staff were deployed in the home.
Regulation 18 (1)