

Methodist Homes

MHA Care at Home - Wesley Branch

Inspection Report

Pilgrims Court
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Summary of findings

Overall summary

MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch is registered to provide personal care to older people living in their own flats at Pilgrims Court. Pilgrims Court has 41 self contained flats, some of which are suitable for two people. At the time of our inspection there were 45 people living at Pilgrim Court.

Our inspection team was made up of an inspector and an 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. Below is a summary of what we found. The summary is based on observations during the inspection, speaking to people who used the service and the staff supporting people.

Everyone we spoke with told us that they were happy living at Pilgrims Court and spoke positively about the service and care they received from MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch. We saw that staff had a good rapport with the people using the service.

We saw that individuals were involved in making decisions about all areas of their care. People told us that they had talked about their end of life wishes, as well as their personal and care needs and they had been supported by staff to document everything in a care plan.

We noted that the people at Pilgrims Court organised a lot of communal activities and this was important to people who used the service. People told us they felt like a family unit and that the registered manager and staff supported them to organise events.

People told us and we saw that there was sufficient staff on duty at all times.

At the time of our inspection there was a registered manager in place. We saw that the service had a positive culture and that there was a strong element of support and clear leadership. We were confident that all members of staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities and were supported in their roles.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

People told us that they felt safe living at MHA Care at Home, that they got their own private space in their flat but they were reassured in knowing that staff would be there within minutes if they needed someone. One person said, "It's given my family a real peace of mind since I moved here, they know I'm safe."

We saw that the service had made one safeguarding referral in the last 12 months. We saw that whistleblowing and safeguarding policies were easy accessible for all staff members.

There had been no requirement for mental capacity assessments or best interest decisions for anyone that the service currently supported, however the manager talked us through the processes they would follow, should any concerns be raised.

Each person had their needs assessed prior to receiving support from the service. Each assessment contained information from the person and their families about their needs, choices and health problems.

Are services effective?

People we spoke to, who were receiving care and support from MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch, told us that they were involved in all of their initial care assessments and regularly discussed with staff any updates or changes.

We saw that risk assessments and care plans were in place to ensure people maintained their independence, for example, the use of walking frames or mobility scooters.

People told us that staff had discussed with them their end of life preferences. One person said, "I've written a little poem to thank everyone for looking after me. I've picked it all." Staff told us they had received training in end of life care and how they could support people to make advanced decisions but also how they would care for them as the time approached.

Most of the people receiving the service did not need any support with eating or drinking. however, each persons preferences were clearly documented. We saw that the service had a communal dining area called 'The bistro' which offered lunch time meals Monday to Friday. We saw that fresh vegetables were offered with all meals and an option of fruit salad for pudding. We concluded that this supported people to make nutritious choices.

Summary of findings

Are services caring?

People we spoke with at the service described the staff as “first class”, “excellent and friendly” and they said the registered manager “goes the extra mile.” One of the staff members we spoke with said, “I’ve got to know all the residents, it’s home from home, it’s like a family.”

People said that their privacy and dignity was respected and staff listened to them and respected their choices. People told us that if they preferred to stay in their flat or eat alone, then these choices were respected.

People told us that staff never ‘took over’ or did anything without asking. One person said, “They know I’m independent and want to do things myself so they stay while I do it, in case I need a hand, it’s good that way.”

People told us they had been involved in planning for their end of life care. We saw where these discussions had taken place, staff had supported people to record this in an end of life care plan, titled ‘future wishes and final lap’.

Are services responsive to people’s needs?

People told us that they liked how the registered manager rang each flat every morning to check they were okay. People using the service told us they liked this as they felt that someone was always there to help them and it reminded them they were not alone.

We saw that a lot of people who lived at Pilgrims Court liked to socialise and therefore there was a lot of activities and events organised. One person told us that, due to so many people coming from a musical background, they had organised an event where people sang and played musical instruments.

We noted that there was a wide range of activities organised by the service which offered variety for people using the service. We saw that one person put together a monthly newsletter for Pilgrims Court which included poems, word searches, information on local events and those organised within the service.

People told us that changes had been made following their feedback and that they were always asked for their opinion.

We noted that the complaints policy was advertised in the reception of the home and people told us they received a copy when they had moved in to their flat. The registered manager told us they had not received any formal complaints.

Summary of findings

Are services well-led?

People told us that the staff and registered manager were very supportive of their needs and they were encouraged to share their views. Staff told us that they felt supported in their roles and that they received regular updates on an organisational level.

We noted that the manager audited the service monthly, quarterly and met with each person using the service on a yearly basis. We saw that emergency plans were in place and staff were confident they would be able to support people in emergency situations.

People told us they thought there were sufficient staff to meet their needs. Staff told us that they had previously raised concerns about staffing levels on a weekend and that the rota had since been changed to include a new four hour shift each Saturday and Sunday morning.

Summary of findings

What people who use the service and those that matter to them say

People who lived at Pilgrims Court using MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch were very positive about the service they received. Their comments included:

“I would heartily recommend this place”

“I love it, it’s the best move I’ve ever made.”

“I had not intention of coming to a place like this but I’m glad I did, it’s lovely here.”

“I feel safe as houses.”

“It’s nice to have the option to eat with other people.”

People commented on the staff and the support they received and said, “They are marvellous, they can’t do enough for you”, “they are very helpful and very lovely” and “they can’t do enough for you.” In addition they said, “they are first class”, “excellent and friendly” and the manager “goes the extra mile.”

MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We visited the home on 8 May 2014. We carried out the 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 regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and to pilot a new inspection process under Wave 1.

We last completed a scheduled inspection in June 2013 and identified a breach in regulation 20. We followed this up in August 2013 and found the service was meeting all regulations inspected.

We spent time observing care in the communal area and used the Short Observational Framework (SOFI), which is a specific way of observing care to help us understand the experience of people who could not talk with us. We looked at all areas of the building, including people's flats (with their permission), the communal areas and central facilities and the bistro. We also spent time looking at records, which included people's care records, and records relating to the management of the service.

The inspection team consisted of a Lead Inspector and an Expert by Experience. This is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Before our inspection, we reviewed the information we held about the service and contacted the local safeguarding authority and local contracts.

On the day of our inspection there were 45 people living in 41 flats at Pilgrims Court supported by MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch.

Throughout the inspection we observed how staff supported and interacted with people who used the service. We saw staff were friendly and supportive at all times. During the inspection we spoke to six staff members and 12 people who lived at MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch.

Are services safe?

Our findings

During our inspection we spoke with six members of staff. Everyone we spoke with had a good understanding of safeguarding people from abuse and were confident the training the company had provided them had prepared them in knowing what to look out for and what to do should they suspect abuse. We spoke to the registered manager who told us that in the last 12 months the service had made one safeguarding referral. We noted that the service had followed their policy and alerted the local safeguarding authority as soon as they suspected concerns.

The training records showed that all staff received regular safeguarding training. We saw that policies about whistleblowing and safeguarding people from abuse were available and accessible to all members of staff. One staff member we spoke with said, "The training covered so many areas, financial abuse, how to spot things, self neglect. We have all the telephone numbers for the local safeguarding team so we can always call them if we are unsure." She added, "To be honest if anyone has any concerns they would always go to the registered manager, she's always there to help."

We saw the organisation produced two leaflets called "No secrets here", one for people using the service and a separate one for staff. We noted that the leaflets advised people that some things should not be kept secret and that it was everyone's responsibility to protect service users, staff and volunteers. Each leaflet contained information on what to look out for and who to contact if they suspected abuse or anything of concern.

The registered manager had a good understanding of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005. We noted that at present the service did not support anyone who required mental capacity statements or best interest assessments. The registered manager was able to talk us through the process she would follow if she suspected anyone was deprived of their liberty or were in need of Mental Capacity assessment.

Each person had their needs assessed prior to receiving support from the service. Each assessment contained information from the person and their families about their needs, choices and health problems. Where applicable, information was also provided by health and social care

professionals such as district nurses and social workers. This meant that staff at the service had the appropriate information about people's health and wellbeing prior to supporting them.

We spoke to people who used the service who told us that since moving to Pilgrims Court they had never felt safer. One person said, "It's so safe and secure here, knowing that you have your own private space, but staff could be there in minutes to help you is such a reassuring feeling." Another person said, "It's given my family a real peace of mind since I moved here, they know I'm safe." We spoke to one relative who had two family members staying at Pilgrims Court over a 10 year period, who said, "I would heartily recommend this place."

Pilgrims Court is made up of 41 self contained flats. However it does have a communal lounge, laundry, hair salon and bistro for people who live at the service. We noted that all communal areas were kept clean and tidy. The areas were well decorated and were free from any unpleasant smells. One staff member we spoke with said, "We like the place to look smart and tidy. The night shift do a lot of cleaning in the communal areas to keep it nice." Staff told us that some people received cleaning as part of their care package, therefore dedicated time was built in to supporting them with this. Other people living at Pilgrim Court completed the cleaning for their own flat themselves. We noted that the service offered extra services for people to purchase as and when they required. One person we spoke with said, "I like to do my own cleaning but I struggle to do the floors in my bathroom so I pay for someone to come and clean that for me once every other week."

The registered manager showed us the service's infection control policy and we noted quarterly audits were carried out on infection control in communal areas. This included the lounge, bistro, hairdressers room, all staircases and the staff room.

We observed members of staff wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when necessary. Members of staff we spoke with demonstrated their knowledge of infection control procedures. We spoke to the domestic staff who said, "I have everything I need to do the job and anything extra I want I just say and they would get it for me."

We saw that all flats at Pilgrims Court had emergency buzzers installed in each room and an intercom system

Are services safe?

that linked them to the main office. We noted that people using the service were also offered a wrist strap or pendant alert, if they wanted it, which meant they could alert staff of any concerns or accidents as they were walking between the flats or if they were in the communal areas of the building.

We noted that each communal corridor had automatic lighting which came on as anyone entered the area. We concluded that this helped keep people safe as it minimised the risks of accidents and incidents due to poor or restricted lighting. We saw that the communal lifts all

had call bells installed and that each person living at Pilgrims Court had fobs provided which they used to open doors to access the corridors leading to their flats. This meant that unknown visitors were not able to access areas of the service without the permission of a person who lived there or a staff member. One person we spoke with said, “I feel as safe as houses living here.”

We spoke to the maintenance person who said, “It’s a real team effort here. If anything was needed for the tenants or anything safety related it would be done straight away, no hesitation.”

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

We looked at the care plans for five people currently receiving support from MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch. People told us that they had been involved in the assessment of their care planning and were regularly asked to review their care documentation and update their preferences or any changes.

We saw that care documentation included people's individual preferences. MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch, supported people of varying needs and abilities, therefore we noted that people only had risk assessments and care plan documentation in place that was relevant to their individual needs. For example, we saw that a number of people living at Pilgrims Court had walking frames to support them in their mobility whilst maintain their independence. We noted that this was documented in each individuals file with the appropriate risk assessment.

We saw the each person supported by the service had a document in their care file indicating their preferences for access arrangements to their flat. Staff had spoken to each person and documented in what circumstances was it acceptable for staff to access their flat. We noted that everyone who currently lived at Pilgrims Court had completed this form following discussions with a staff member.

People we spoke with told us that their end of life wishes had been discussed with them. We spoke to one person who said, "Oh yes they spoke to me about it, I filled in the form to say I don't want to be resuscitated. We talked through everything I want and they documented it all so it's exactly as I've planned." Another person said, "I've written a little poem to thank everyone for looking after me, they've got it all recorded, I've picked everything."

We saw that people who had chosen to discuss their end of life preferences had a final wishes care plan in place. We noted that the care plan had been filled in, where possible, by the individual and it noted that the plan was designed to inform people's loved ones as to their wishes regarding the atmosphere and environment as their life draws to a close. We saw that a number of areas had been discussed with each person, including what kind of things they would like around them, what they would like to wear and whether they had a living will or advanced directive.

The registered manager told us that the service employed a Chaplin who was also available to discuss end of life wishes with anyone. We noted that when people completed their end of life wishes care plan they also documented as to whether they wanted to receive a visit from the Chaplin. The registered manager told us that on a number of occasions the Chaplin had been able to discuss people's wishes with them and then go on to deliver the funeral service. She explained that this had been a particular preference for some people, as the Chaplin was a staff member; they had got to know them and felt this was appropriate.

One person we spoke with said that a member of staff had offered to discuss their end of life wishes but they did not want to and that they had received no pressure to do so.

During our inspection we observed a number of people who lived at Pilgrims Court discussing end of life care over their lunch at 'The Bistro'. We saw that they were discussing their individual preferences and what things they had selected. We noted that everyone seemed happy to openly discuss this difficult subject.

Staff told us that they had received training in end of life care, how it covered the emotional support needed and how to have difficult conversations. One staff member said, "The end of life plan is a good idea if people are interested as it makes it easier from them once it gets nearer the time." Another staff member told us the organisation had an article about end of life care in their staff magazine and how the organisation had an initiative called "seize the day" where they supported people to achieve things they wanted to do when they were at end of life.

People living at Pilgrims Court had the option to get their lunch time meal at the service's Bistro Monday to Friday. Staff told us that if people didn't want to eat at the Bistro they could deliver the food to their flat.

We spoke to the cook at the Bistro who told us that all food was prepared with fresh vegetables or salad and that the menu was regularly changed and devised by people who lived at the service. During our visit we noted that eight people chose to eat at the Bistro. One person said, "It's nice to have the option to eat with other people."

We saw that as part of the assessment of needs, staff discussed with people whether they required support with their dietary needs. We noted that where one person received support to prepare food and drinks a care plan

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

had been created to include their individual dietary needs but also their preferences. We saw that another person required support with eating therefore a risk assessment had been complete and a detailed care plan had been created so staff knew the best way to support the person and what they had agreed to.

We noted that where people's dietary needs had involved discussions or support from external health care professionals, such as dietitians or community nurses. We

saw this was clearly documented so staff knew who was also involved in supporting the person and who they should contact if they identified any on-going concerns regarding people's nutrition or hydration.

We noted that a large proportion of the people who received support from MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch did not need support with their eating and drinking and that this had been discussed and documented as part of their assessment of care.

Are services caring?

Our findings

During our inspection we spoke to 12 people who were supported by the service. Everyone was keen to tell us that the staff were “very helpful and very lovely” and “can’t do enough for you”. People described the staff as “first class”, “excellent and friendly” and they said the registered manager “goes the extra mile.”

Although MHA Care at Home – Wesley Branch is a domiciliary care service, we saw that all of the people who lived at Pilgrims Court did a lot of activities together which was supported and encouraged by the staff. One of the staff members we spoke to said, “I’ve got to know all the residents, it’s home from home, it’s like a family.”

People said that staff listened to them and respected their choices. One person told us how she preferred to remain in her flat and not participate in any of the communal activities; she said her choice to do this was always respected. We observed one person had difficulty in remembering and therefore needed guidance on what to do next. We saw that the person was provided advice and guidance in a supportive and compassionate manner.

We saw that each person’s care file included information about their background, social history and past significant events. Staff told us that this was used so they could get to know the people that they supported better.

We noted that faith had a high profile in the service and was the focus of a number of the activities that were planned by the people who lived at Pilgrims Court. We saw however that those without a faith or with a varying faith had a clear choice of whether to participate or not. People

also told us that although the Chaplain was of a different religious belief to themselves they still felt supported and that they could talk to the Chaplain or any member of staff about their preferences.

Every person we spoke with told us that their privacy and dignity was respected. They told us that they could do what they wanted, when they wanted and that if they were not in the mood to be with people they could stay in their flat. However if they wanted to socialise but not go out they could go to the communal lounge. One person said, “I had no intention of coming to a place like this but I’m glad I did, it’s lovely here, it’s been over a year since I moved in and it’s the best decision I’ve ever made.”

People told us that staff never took over or did anything without asking or offering support. One person said, “They know I’m independent and want to do things myself so they stay while I do it, in case I need a hand, it’s good that way.” Another person said, “Growing old is a personal experience, they really respect that here. You have a peripheral around you that’s what you can achieve and it gets smaller with age, the staff understand that, they respect your abilities and support when you need it.” Another person said, “It’s good as it feels like my home, it is my home.”

People told us they had been involved in planning for their end of life care. We noted that people had discussed their preferences with the staff and these had been recorded. For example, one person told us that they had all the plans for their funeral and that they were in their room. We noted that the person’s care plan recorded this information and where staff could locate the detailed information when it was required. We noted that where people had made preferences for their end of life care, these were documented in a ‘future wishes and final lap’ care plan.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

The registered manager told us that they rang each flat every morning as a courtesy call to check people were okay. People using the service told us they liked this as they felt that someone was always there to help them and it reminded them they were not alone.

We saw that a lot of people who lived at Pilgrims Court liked to socialise and therefore there was a lot of activities and events organised. The registered manager told us that predominantly these were organised by people who lived there although the service and the staff always supported people in areas such as planning or getting transport.

One staff member told us that they made the most of people's talents. They said, "So many people have talents, everyone has a background. X is teaching people how to make cards and Y used to do line dancing so she's doing that with some people."

One person told us that due to so many people coming from a musical background they had organised an event where people sang and played musical instruments. They said, "As the date we picked was pancake day we called it pancake event and the manager cooked us all pancakes too. We had a great night."

People told us that there was a wide variety of activities available which included things such as a monthly trip out, weekly bingo sessions, board games and coffee mornings. One person told us that every afternoon they played a film in the communal area for people to watch. They said, "It's funny because quite a lot of people fall asleep but actually that's nice, it's just nice not to wake up alone. We all take it in turn to pick the films as well."

We saw that one person put together a monthly newsletter for Pilgrims Court which included poems, word searches, information on local events and those organised within the

service. We noted that the newsletter also had a "health corner" which included tips for staying healthy. For example for the month of May the health tip was how to reduce the amount of salt in your diet. The registered manager told us that one person pulled it all together and came up with the content with the support from the staff and that the service, then printed copies for everyone.

We noted that as the communal bistro which served lunch Monday to Friday was a paid service this encouraged family members and visitors to join people for lunch or refreshments. This meant that where possible the service was encouraging people to maintain relationships with their friends and family.

Two people we spoke to told us that they had talked to the registered manager the previous year about the garden becoming neglected. They advised that they had raised this at a residents meeting and the end result was an increase in the maintenance persons contracted hours. We spoke to the registered manager who confirmed that the comments from people who used the service were what led to the changes.

People told us they were always asked for their opinions, whether that be on the service they received or an idea for change or a new activity. One person said, "It's very open here, we can always share our views and influence things, that's what makes it good."

The registered manager told us that they had not received any formal complaints regarding the service however they recorded all concerns raised verbally and welcomed any feedback on areas they could improve. We noted that the complaints procedure was advertised clearly in the reception area and people told us they had received a copy of the policy when they moved in to their flat. Everyone we spoke with said the registered manager and staff were all approachable and they had "no qualms" in raising any concerns or complaints if it was needed.

Are services well-led?

Our findings

People told us that living in one of the flats at Pilgrim Court was like being part of a big family with everyone “looking out for each other.” We saw that staff and management had a good working relationship with the people who used the service. One staff member said, “The manager is excellent, I couldn’t ask for a better manager.” Another staff member said, “I could go to the manager with anything.”

Staff told us that the organisation produced monthly updates and newsletters so they were kept involved. They said that the regional manager visited regularly so they had lots of different points of contact if needed. One staff member said, “We get an internal magazine called ‘Staff Matters’, it’s really good, it has everything from what’s happening in the company to reminders of staff benefits.”

One person we spoke with said, “I don’t think I could have picked better staff or a better manager, the standard of care and the family feeling is exceptional.”

We saw that the registered manager met with each person using the service on a yearly basis to complete a ‘Managers annual resident care and support review.’ We saw that these meetings were documented and any action points were noted and agreed with the person using the service.

We noted that the registered manager also completed monthly checks of care plans and a review of the care plans every six months.

We noted that the complaints procedure was clearly displayed in communal areas of the service. The registered manager told us that everyone also received a copy when they moved in to their flat. We noted that although no formal complaints had been received that the registered manager and the staff noted all areas of concern and documented what action had been taken. One staff member said, “The manager encourages us to document any concerns and complaints, that’s how we learn what needs to change.”

Staff told us that they felt they could influence changes in the service and whether it be people or staff, all comments would be listened to. One staff member told us that concerns had been raised to the registered manager about the need to increase staffing levels over lunch time on a weekend due to the bistro not being open. We looked at the staffing rota and spoke to the registered manager and noted that since the feedback had been received the registered manager had increased the staffing on a weekend so that there was an extra four hour shift each morning so that another staff member was available to support people when cooking.

People told us they thought there were sufficient staff to meet their needs. One person said, “I’ve had two nasty falls, I pressed my buzzer and they were there straight away.”

We looked at all recorded accidents and incidents within the home and noted that the manager had analysed the information for any trends or future learning.

During our inspection we noted that there was effective levels of communication between the company and the staff, and also with the people who used the service. We noted that the reception area had been populated with information for people using the service. We saw information relating to the next residents meeting, adverts for advocacy as well as the previous years residents survey results and what action had been taken since.

We saw that each person living in a flat at Pilgrim Court had a Personal Emergency Egress Plan (PEEP); this included key information for staff on awareness of the evacuation procedures and also whether any designated assistance was required. We spoke to staff who said they received training and updates on emergency procedures so felt confident they would know what to do.