

Dr & Mrs M Crooks

The Woodlands

Inspection report

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07 October 2021

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Ratings

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

Summary of findings

Overall summary

The Woodlands is a residential care home providing personal care to 14 people aged 65 and over at the time of the inspection. The service can support up to 19 people.

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

This was a targeted inspection that considered staffing levels. Based on our inspection of the staffing levels we found additional planning was needed each shift to ensure that the right staff were delivering the right care to the right people based on their knowledge and experience of the home.

People had their basic needs met but there were insufficient staff available to ensure that people were supported to engage in meaningful activity. People did not always receive care that was personalised, people's individual risks and needs were not always managed by the most appropriate staff available.

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 19 May 2020).

Why we inspected

The inspection was prompted in part due to concerns received about the level of staffing and the ability to ensure safe staffing in the long term. The provider told us that due to the necessity for staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by the 11 November 2021, several staff would cease working on or before this date. A decision was made for us to inspect and examine those risks.

The Care Quality Commission have introduced targeted inspections to follow up on Warning Notices or to check specific concerns. They do not look at an entire key question, only the part of the key question we are specifically concerned about.

Targeted inspections do not change the rating from the previous inspection. This is because they do not assess all areas of a key question.

We looked at staffing under the Safe key question.

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.

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

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

At our last inspection we rated this key question requires improvement. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question we had specific concerns about.

Inspected but not rated

The Woodlands

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

This was a targeted inspection to check whether the provider was meeting requirements in specific areas of concern; with reference to safe levels of staffing.

Inspection team

The inspection was undertaken by two inspectors.

Service and service type

The Woodlands is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulates both the premises and the care provided, and specific aspects of these were looked at during this inspection.

The service had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are legally responsible for how the service is run and for the quality and safety of the care provided.

Notice of inspection

This was an unannounced inspection. The inspection took place on 7 October 2021.

What we did before the inspection

Our planning considered information the provider sent us since the last inspection. This included information about incidents the provider must notify us about, such as abuse or other concerns as well as information about how the provider was managing COVID-19. We reviewed information sent by the provider about specific incidents.

We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return. This is information providers are required to send us with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. This information helps support our inspections.

During the inspection

We spoke with two support staff, cook, deputy manager, registered manager and the provider. Due to people's limited communication and understanding, we could not have detailed conversations with them. However, we observed how people were supported and cared for to help us understand the experiences of people who could not talk with us .

Over the course of the inspection we reviewed the care plans and risk assessments of five people and a selection of other records including staff rotas.

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. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question, we had specific concerns about.

The purpose of this inspection was to check specific concerns we had about safe staffing.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were sufficient staff to meet people's basic needs, however there was not enough staff to provide opportunities for meaningful engagement with people. Staff were task focused and people did not participate in any activities or conversations with other people or staff.
- Rota's showed staffing levels dropped from four staff in the morning to three in the afternoon and evening. We asked the registered manager why the amount of support staff reduced in the afternoon and evening, when our observations showed people were not getting the amount of support stated in their support plans.
- Many people in the home required two people for personal care and staff told us that due to staffing pressures, they were unable to give everybody personal care that would require more time such as bathing or showering in the mornings. This increased staff pressures in the afternoons when staffing numbers reduced. Following our visit, the registered manager told us that the staff level had been increased to four staff through the afternoon and evening.
- People were not always supported by regular staff that knew their needs. During our visit there were two permanent employed support staff and two agency staff on duty who had not visited the home before. Care tasks were not always delegated to the most suitable staff. For example, at lunchtime two people were being supported by two regular staff to have their meals. There were other people in the home that required more support to enable them to have their food and drink safely. This support was being given by the new agency staff. We discussed our concerns with the registered manager and after the visit they told us they would review how agency staff were deployed in the home.
- The registered manager told us about their current staffing situation. They said, "Rotas are stable - with agency, but this won't give us flexibility in case of sickness - we've used up all our resources." They said that they had staff leaving as they were choosing not to have the COVID – 19 vaccine. The registered manager was concerned about the worsening staff situation.
- During our visit the provider and registered manager made the voluntarily decision to close the home and notice was served on the fourteen people living in the home. This gave the people at the home, relatives and the funding authorities time to assess people's needs and find appropriate services to continue their care. We will continue to monitor the outcomes for people during this process.