

Conifers Care Ltd

Conifers Nursing Home

Inspection report

The Conifers
Hambleton
Poulton Le Fylde
Lancashire
FY6 9EP

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Conifers Nursing Home is a residential care home providing personal and nursing care to 43 people with different health and care needs, including those living with a dementia, at the time of the inspection. The service is situated within a residential neighbourhood and can support up to 55 people in one purpose built, two-storey building.

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

People were protected against the risk of abuse. Staff were recruited safely and there were enough of them to meet people's needs. People were supported to take their medicines safely. The provider had robust infection prevention and control procedures to protect people from cross infection. The provider used accidents and incidents as a learning opportunity to improve the safety of the service.

The registered manager had developed a positive, person-centred culture within the service. The staff team were committed to providing people with high-quality care that met their needs. The registered manager understood their responsibilities under the duty of candour. The provider used feedback and the results of audits to continually improve the service.

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

Rating at last inspection and update

The last rating for this service was good (published 12 February 2020).

Why we inspected

We looked at infection prevention and control measures under the Safe key question. We look at this in all care home inspections even if no concerns or risks have been identified. This is to provide assurance that the service can respond to COVID-19 and other infection outbreaks effectively. This included checking the provider was meeting COVID-19 vaccination requirements.

We received concerns in relation to staff conduct and the management of safeguarding concerns. As a result, we carried out a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only.

We found no evidence during this inspection that people were at risk of harm from this concern. Please see the safe section of this full report.

For those key questions not inspected, we used the ratings awarded at the last inspection to calculate the overall rating.

The overall rating for the service has not changed based on the findings of this inspection.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Conifers Nursing Home on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service, which will help inform when we next inspect.

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 well-led?

Good ●

The service was 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 Health and Social Care Act 2008.

As part of this inspection we looked at the infection control and prevention measures in place. This included checking the provider was meeting COVID-19 vaccination requirements. This was conducted so we can understand the preparedness of the service in preventing or managing an infection outbreak, and to identify good practice we can share with other services.

Inspection team

Two inspectors carried out this inspection.

Service and service type

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 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 inspection was unannounced.

What we did before the inspection

We reviewed information we had received about the service since the last inspection. We sought feedback from the local authority and professionals who work with the service. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return (PIR). This is information providers are required to send us annually with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make.

We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with three people who used the service and four peoples' relatives about their experience of the care provided to their loved ones. We spoke with eight members of staff including the regional manager, registered manager, deputy manager, care workers and domestic staff.

We reviewed a range of records. This included six people's care records and medication records. We looked at three staff files in relation to recruitment and staff supervision. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and were reviewed.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the registered manager to validate evidence found. We looked at staff training data.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

Safe – this means we looked for evidence that people were protected from abuse and avoidable harm.

At our last inspection we rated this key question good. At this inspection, the rating for this key question has remained good.

This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- Before this inspection we received concerns about unexplained bruising and how safeguarding concerns were managed at the service. During this inspection we analysed the provider's safeguarding systems and found no cause for concern. The provider had taken appropriate action to deal with the concerns raised.
- People were protected from the risk of abuse. Staff were trained to identify and report abuse. They told us they would report any concerns to a member of the management team and were confident action would be taken to protect people. Staff knew how to report concerns to external agencies if necessary. One person's relative told us, "I do think mum is safe. They've been diligent."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risks to people's health and safety were assessed and managed. Staff carried out a thorough initial assessment with people, to ensure their needs and preferences could be met safely. Staff followed risk assessments and received training which helped to manage risks and keep people safe.
- The provider managed risks related to the premises and environment to keep people safe. Routine inspection and servicing were carried out as required.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were enough staff to support people safely. The registered manager used a recognised tool to calculate staffing levels based upon the dependency levels of people who lived at the service. We saw staffing levels reflected this. A staff member told us, "The level of people's needs influences staffing levels." One person's relative told us, "There's plenty of staff about, popping in and out [of mum's room] all the time."
- However, staff deployment meant some people had to wait longer to be assisted in a morning. The registered manager addressed this following our visit.
- Staff were recruited safely. The provider carried out checks to ensure staff were of good character before they were employed. This included checks on criminal records and references from previous employers. Staff had to complete a probationary period at the start of their employment to show they were able to carry out their role satisfactorily.

Using medicines safely

- People received the support they needed to take their medicines. Staff supported people to have their medicines as prescribed. Staff were trained in how to support people with their medicines and had their competence assessed by management. Staff completed thorough records of the support they had given to

people. The management team audited medicines administration regularly.

Preventing and controlling infection

- We were assured that the provider was preventing visitors from catching and spreading infections.
- We were assured that the provider was meeting shielding and social distancing rules.
- We were assured that the provider was admitting people safely to the service.
- We were assured that the provider was using PPE effectively and safely.
- We were assured that the provider was accessing testing for people using the service and staff.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises.
- We were assured that the provider was making sure infection outbreaks can be effectively prevented or managed.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.
- The provider was facilitating visits for people living in the home in accordance with the current guidance.

From 11 November 2021 registered persons must make sure all care home workers and other professionals visiting the service are fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless they have an exemption or there is an emergency. We checked to make sure the service was meeting this requirement. We found the service had effective measures in place to make sure this requirement was being met.

- Managers asked for evidence of vaccination before workers entered the building.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The provider had systems to identify and learn from any incidents. Staff recorded any accidents, incidents and near misses, which the registered manager analysed for any learning. Any learning from untoward incidents was shared with the staff team, to help improve the safety of the service.

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 our last inspection we rated this key question good. At this inspection the rating has remained good.

This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- The registered manager had developed a positive culture which put people at the heart of the service. Relatives and staff members gave us positive feedback about the care people received. Staff were committed to making a difference for people and enjoyed working for the company. Comments we received included, "They've gone out of their way to keep our relatives safe. They're all pleasant and polite and smiling. They do more than the job requires. They make it a home from home." And, "It's astounding how they've coped with this pandemic. Mum hasn't suffered lack of personal contact because they have gone over and above. When mum went into a care home, I was so frightened because of what you see on the news. But the girls are professional but so kind. They have the right balance of professionalism and kindness. They are amazing."

How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong

- The registered manager and staff team understood their responsibilities under the duty of candour. The provider had notified us of significant events, as required. The notifications showed the provider had been open and honest and shared information about incidents with relevant people.

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

- The registered manager and staff were clear about their roles and responsibilities. People who used the service, relatives and staff all described the service in positive terms and told us they would recommend the service to others. One person told us, "Even the queen would be happy here. Everything [staff] do is wonderful."
- We received positive feedback about the provider, registered manager and deputy manager, their approach and how they managed the service. A person who used the service told us, "These girls are fantastic." A staff member told us, "[Provider] is amazing. I can call him day or night." Another commented, "I feel supported in my role... they are very understanding." One person's relative commented, "I'm very happy with all my dealings with [registered manager]. I think she's really good."
- The provider was committed to the continuous improvement of the service. They assessed the quality of the service to identify how it could be further improved. Methods they used included regular reviews of people's care, satisfaction surveys, regular observations of staff and audits.

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

- The provider used systems to gather people's views about the service. People and their relatives were asked for feedback during review meetings and through satisfaction surveys.
- Staff felt engaged and able to share their views of the service. Staff told us they could approach the registered manager with any views or suggestions to improve the service and were asked for feedback. A staff member told us, "We have regular staff meetings. They are good." Another staff member told us they had seen improvements due to concerns highlighted by a recent staff survey.

Working in partnership with others

- The service worked with other agencies to ensure people received the care they needed. Staff liaised effectively with other services, such as community professionals and social workers, to ensure people received the support they needed.