

South Coast Nursing Homes Limited

Fernbank Residential 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?	Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

Fernbank Residential Home, referred to in this report as Fernbank, is a care home providing accommodation and personal care for up to 46 older people, some who may also be living with dementia. There were 42 people living in the home at the time of our inspection. The service was one adapted building laid out over three floors with a new extension having recently been built.

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

People and relatives spoke highly of the service they received at Fernbank. People and relatives made comments including; "The care here is marvellous. They get nothing but praise from me", "It's good here. They are very supportive. I'm very happy" and "I am delighted. They do a wonderful job here. She is so well looked after." The service had strong person-centred values and placed people's wellbeing at the heart of their work. People received personalised support which met their needs and preferences.

Risks to people's health, safety and wellbeing were identified, assessed and acted upon. People were protected from potential abuse by staff who had received training and were confident in raising concerns. There was a thorough recruitment process in place that checked potential staff were safe to work with people who may be vulnerable to abuse and avoidable harm.

People received their medicines as prescribed by their doctor and there were processes in place to manage the ordering, storing and disposal of medicines. Incidents and accidents were investigated, and actions were taken to prevent reoccurrence. Fernbank was clean, welcoming and pleasantly decorated. Staff received training and supervision to meet the needs of the people living in the service.

Staff knew people well and worked hard to enable them to share their views, make choices and live active lives as independently as possible. People were fully involved in the planning and delivery of their care.

People's needs were assessed and care was planned and delivered to meet legislation and good practice guidance. People's support plans contained personalised information which detailed how they wanted their care to be delivered. Staff worked hard to provide people with varied activities and stimulation that met their interests.

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.

People were supported by kind and caring staff who worked hard to promote their wellbeing. Staff were proud to work for the service and treated people with respect and dignity. The service promoted equality and diversity and worked hard to meet all of people's individual needs.

There was strong leadership at the service. People and staff spoke highly of the registered manager and there was a positive culture at the service with people and staff feeling their voices were listened to.

There were effective quality assurance systems in place to assess, monitor and improve the quality and safety of the service provided.

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 Good (published March 2017).

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?

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Good ●

Is the service effective?

The service was effective.

Details are in our effective findings below.

Good ●

Is the service caring?

The service was caring.

Details are in our caring findings below.

Good ●

Is the service responsive?

The service was responsive.

Details are in our responsive findings below.

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Good ●

Fernbank Residential 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 consisted of one inspector.

Service and service type

Fernbank Residential Home is a 'care home'. People in care homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as 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

Before the inspection we reviewed the information, we held about the service and the service provider. The registered provider completed a Provider Information Return (PIR). This is a form that asks the provider to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We looked at the notifications we had received for this service. Notifications are information about important events the service is required to send us by law. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

During the inspection we observed how staff interacted with people. We spoke with six people who used the service and two relatives about their experience of the care provided. We spoke with three members of care staff, the registered manager and the managing director. We reviewed a range of records. This included three people's care records and medicine records. We looked at three staff files in relation to recruitment and staff supervision. We reviewed a variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures.

After the inspection

We continued to seek further information from the provider to inform our judgements. We looked at training data and quality assurance records.

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 Good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- The service was managed in a way that protected people from abuse. People told us they felt safe living in Fernbank. Comments included; "I feel very safe here. I feel unsure about my walking and they make me feel safe with that" and, "I feel safe here. If I have an incident they are here at once." A relative made comments including; "She is very safe. They are so on the ball. They have responded well in an emergency and have always rung me."
- Staff and the registered manager were aware of their responsibilities to protect people and to report concerns over people's safety and wellbeing. We saw evidence of the staff and management having taken action in the past to ensure people were safe.
- The provider had safeguarding policies in place and the registered manager worked with the local authorities' safeguarding teams and reported concerns promptly.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People were protected from risks associated with their care needs. Risks had been identified and action had been taken to minimise these. Staff were knowledgeable about identifying risks to people and knew how to raise this with the management and healthcare professionals.
- People were fully involved in their own risk management wherever possible. Plans to minimise risks had been drawn up with their input and agreement wherever possible.
- Where necessary, specialist advice from external healthcare professionals was sought. For example, to best support people at risk of choking.
- The provider had a system to record accidents and incidents, we saw appropriate action had been taken where necessary to minimise the risk of reoccurrence.

Staffing and recruitment

- Recruitment practices were safe and included pre-employment checks to ensure staff were suitable to work in a care setting before starting work.
- There were enough staff to ensure people had access to care that met their needs and protected them from risks. The service was in the process of recruiting more staff due to the number of people living in the service having increased. The registered manager was having to use agency staff at the time of the inspection, but they assured us they worked hard to ensure continuity of these staff.

Using medicines safely

- Medicines were managed safely and people received their medicines as prescribed by their doctor.
- Only staff who had been trained in the safe management of medicines administered them to people. Staff

competency was regularly assessed through tests and spot checks.

- Where possible people were encouraged to participate in and take control of their medicine management. Secure medicine trolleys were used for most people. However, where people wanted to manage their own medicines, they used lockable cabinets in their own bedrooms to store their medicines.
- Processes were in place for the timely ordering, storing and returns of medicines.
- Regular audits were conducted alongside reviews of people's medicines and medication administration records. Any issues identified were investigated and responded to appropriately.

Preventing and controlling infection

- All staff received training in the prevention and control of infection and we observed staff using appropriate protective equipment when performing care tasks.
- People told us the service was always clean, fresh smelling and welcoming. Our observations during the inspection confirmed this. People made comments including; "It's always very clean" and "It's always nice and clean."

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The registered manager ensured they reflected when unexpected events occurred where lessons could be learnt. The service was part of a group of homes and learning was shared between these to ensure people received the best possible care.
- Staff knew how to report accidents and incidents and told us they received feedback about changes and learning as a result of incidents at team meetings, handovers and on an individual basis.

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 as 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.

Assessing people's needs and choices; delivering care in line with standards, guidance and the law; Staff working with other agencies to provide consistent, effective, timely care

- People spoke highly of the care they received at Fernbank. Comments included; "The care here is marvellous. They get nothing but praise from me" and "It's good here. They are very supportive. I'm very happy." One relative said, "I am delighted. They do a wonderful job here. She is so well looked after."
- People's care needs had been assessed and support plans had been created to guide staff on how best to meet people's needs.
- The staff and management at Fernbank were focused on achieving best outcomes for people and improving and maintaining their independence. For example, people were supported to maintain their mobility for as long as possible. On the day of our inspection we observed one person being supported by staff to walk with an aid instead of a wheelchair. The staff praised the person for their efforts and provided them with support when this was needed.

Staff support: induction, training, skills and experience

- Staff undertook a thorough induction to the organisation and staff new to care work completed the Care Certificate, which is a nationally recognised course in Induction for care workers. There was a comprehensive training programme to ensure staff had the necessary skills to meet people's individual needs.
- Staff knew people and their needs well and were skilled in caring for people. People told us they had confidence in the staff who supported them. Comments included, "The staff know what they're doing. They know me well. They've taken the time to get to know me and talk to me."
- Staff received regular training and told us they felt skilled to care for people well. Comments from staff included, "You get lots of training here."
- Staff had the opportunity to discuss their training and development needs at regular supervision and appraisals. Staff felt supported and made comments including; "There's a lot of team work and everyone gets on" and, "It's a lovely place to work. So supportive."

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

- People spoke very highly about the food at the service. Comments included; "The food is great here. The puddings are particularly good" and, "The food is marvellous."
- People were supported to eat a varied and nutritious diet. People were given choices which met their individual needs and preferences. For example, one person enjoyed a spicy curry and on the day of our inspection which was made for them specially.
- Where people had specific needs relating to swallowing, staff had involved external healthcare

professionals such as Speech and Language specialists to create personalised plans for people.

- The dining environment was very pleasant, and people chatted and laughed over the meal periods. During a recent residents' meeting people had commented on one part of the dining area being a little cramped. The registered manager had listened to this feedback and was organising for some dining tables to be added to the sun lounge area to give people an alternative place to eat their meals.

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

- Fernbank was adapted to meet the needs of people living in the service. Corridors were wide enough for easy wheelchair access. At the time of our inspection there was no signage displayed to assist people living with dementia to navigate their way around the service. We asked the registered manager about this and they informed us nobody currently living in the service would benefit from this. However, they would be looking into procuring some signage for potential future use.
- The communal areas were decorated to a high standard and were clean and welcoming. People's bedrooms were personalised and reflected people's interests and preferences.

Supporting people to live healthier lives, access healthcare services and support

- Staff had good working relationships with other professionals who had contact with the service.
- People were supported to live healthier lives through regular access to healthcare professionals such as their GP, dentist or optician.
- Guidance and advice from healthcare professionals was incorporated into people's support plans and risk assessments and these were followed by staff.

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 take 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, and whether any conditions on authorisations to deprive a person of their liberty had the appropriate legal authority and were being met.

- We found the service was acting within the principles of the MCA and appropriate recording of whether people had capacity to make decisions was evidenced. Where people had legally authorised decision makers this was also clear from the records.
- Where having been assessed as required, appropriate DoLS applications had been made for people.
- Staff and the registered manager had good knowledge of the MCA framework and encouraged people to make choices wherever possible.
- People told us they were in control of their lives and enabled to make as many decisions as possible. Comments included; "They always ask me for my permission before doing anything." A relative said, "They involve me and mum and ask for our opinions. They always ask her for her opinion. She likes to get dressed herself and they support her to do that. They want her to be as independent as possible."

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 as 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 were supported by staff who knew their needs, personalities, likes and dislikes well.
- People told us they enjoyed the company of staff with comments including; "The staff are all very nice and very courteous" and "I think the staff are lovely." One relative said, "The staff are so lovely. They all are. People are always coming in and out of mum's room. Everybody is always smiling and happy."
- Records showed people's views and needs were considered. The diverse needs of people using the service were met. This included individual needs relating to disability, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and faith.

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

- People were fully involved in all decisions about their care and support wherever possible.
- Where people had difficulties with verbal communication they were provided with alternative methods of communication in order to gain their views and involve them in decision making. For example, some people used large print.
- People attended regular meetings to share their views and the service listened to these and took action where appropriate. One person said, "They encourage you to share ideas about how they can do things better. I've been appointed spokesperson. Everything I have raised they have listened to."

Respecting and promoting people's privacy, dignity and independence

- People's right to privacy and confidentiality was respected. We observed staff knocking on people's bedroom doors before entering and giving people privacy.
- People's independence was encouraged and promoted. Support plans highlighted what people could do for themselves and how staff should assist with this. Specialised equipment was used to ensure people could be as independent as possible.

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

Planning personalised care to ensure people have choice and control and to meet their needs and preferences

- People received care and support in a way that was flexible and responsive to their needs.
- People's support plans contained detailed routines for staff to follow to ensure people had the personalised support they needed.
- Support plans provided staff with descriptions of people's abilities and how they should provide support in line with people's preferences. Support plans were regularly reviewed with people and their relatives to ensure they remained current and provided accurate information.

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 identified and guidance for staff was provided to ensure they could understand people and be understood. The service was able to provide information in different formats for different people, such as large print or pictures.

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 were supported to take part in a wide range of activities to provide them with stimulation, entertainment, socialisation and ensure they were part of the local community. The service employed two activity coordinators who provided people with a variety of entertainment and stimulation.
- During our inspection we saw people taking part in reminiscence sessions, have their nails painted and taking part in games. A relative told us how much their loved one had enjoyed a recent day trip the service had undertaken. They said, "They went on an outing. They loved it so much. It was wonderful. They went to an airport to look at the old planes. My [family member] absolutely loved it."
- People spoke highly of the activities available at the service. Comments included; "We have games. There's always something, every afternoon. And on Tuesdays we have our hair done in the little salon. That's lovely to have your hair done" and, "The entertainment has been very good and varied. Some musicians came the other day and that was very good. Some carers also came and gave a display of their dancing talent and that was a joy, an absolute highlight."

Improving care quality in response to complaints or concerns

- The management team took complaints seriously, investigated and provided a timely response. They also kept a record of any

minor concerns or issues discussed with them and the action they had taken in response. This ensured potential reoccurrence was minimised.

- People told us they knew how to make a complaint. Relatives told us their views and concerns were taken seriously and acted upon.

End of life care and support

- People's care wishes at the end of their lives were recorded in their files wherever possible.

- Staff received training on how best to support people at the end of their lives. Staff respected people's religious beliefs and preferences.

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 Good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. 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

- People told us the service was well managed and spoke highly of the registered manager. People made comments including; "(Name of the registered manager) is the manager. She is lovely and I would have no concerns raising any concerns at all" and, "(Name of registered manager) is really nice. She's lovely."
- The service had a clear, positive and open culture that was shared amongst the management team and care staff. Staff told us how passionate they were about providing a high quality and personalised service to people. Comments included; "I love working here. We're able to do our job well" and "It's a lovely place to work."
- People spoke highly of the culture at the service. Comments included; "The ethos is kindness and support here."
- The registered manager, provider and all the staff we spoke with put people at the heart of everything they did. Staff talked about the satisfaction they gained from making a positive difference to people's lives.

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 CQC sets out specific requirements that providers must follow when things go wrong with care and treatment. This includes informing people and their relatives about the incident, providing reasonable support, providing truthful information and an apology when things go wrong. The registered manager and provider understood their responsibilities.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements

- Fernbank had a registered manager in post. The registered manager oversaw the running of the service and undertook audits to monitor the safety and quality of the care provided. Where actions were identified these were acted on.
- Staff spoke positively about the registered manager and the wider management team.
- The registered manager spoke highly of the support they received from the senior management team. They made comments including; "The director is very involved and is in most days to provide support. We get a lot of support from the directors and head office."

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

- The registered manager was committed to involving people in the running of the service. They regularly sought views from people, their relatives, staff and external healthcare professionals. One person told us how they were regularly asked for their views and these were taken on board. They said; "I suggested they make a specific place for a library and (name of registered manager) is going to do that."
- The provider held regular residents meeting and sent out surveys in order to gain people's views and look for ideas for improvement.
- Regular staff meetings and handovers took place in order to ensure information was shared and expected standards were clear.
- Staff told us they felt listened to, were supported by the management and had an input into the service.

Continuous learning and improving care; Working in partnership with others

- The registered manager was continually working towards improvements and looking for new ideas. The managing director said; "We are always looking to evolve and progress. At the moment we are looking for new electronic medicine management systems. We also belong to care forums and networks to find new ideas and continue improving."
- We found an open and transparent culture, where constructive criticism was encouraged. The provider, registered manager and staff were enthusiastic and committed to further improving the service delivered for the benefit of people using it.
- The service worked in partnership and collaboration with a number of key organisations to support care provision, joined-up care and ensure service development.