

Salco Homes Limited

The Evergreens

Inspection report

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Overall summary

We carried out an unannounced comprehensive inspection of this service on 19 December 2014 and 15 January 2015. After that inspection we received concerns in relation to the food that people who used the service received. We had received concerns that food provided for people to take to day services was inadequate (mouldy bread and black bananas and on some occasions out of date.) We were told that people were losing weight. We were told that vegetables were rarely served with meals provided at the service. These safeguarding concerns have been reported to the local authority. The local authority will manage safeguarding concerns raised in line with their lead role and safeguarding procedures. We undertook a focused inspection to look into concerns raised. This report only covers our findings in relation to this topic. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for (The Evergreens) on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

The Evergreens is a complex of purpose built properties on the outskirts of Hemlington. The service comprises five self-sufficient bungalows, Aspen, Redwood, Pinewood, Maple and Juniper. Each accommodates between four and ten people who have physical and / or learning disabilities.

The home had a manager who started working at the service in January 2015. The manager was in the process

of completing their application to apply to be registered manager. 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.

We spent time in each of the five bungalows and spoke with staff and people who used the service. We also looked in kitchen cupboards, fridges and freezers. Staff told us how they and people who used the service did their own shopping and cooking. Staff told us that the food budget had been increased and that this enabled them to buy all the food that was needed.

In four of the five bungalows we visited, staff and people who used the service had been for their weekly shop. Staff in one of the bungalows told us that they did their weekly shop each Friday. We looked in fridges and saw cooked and uncooked meats, cheese, yoghurts, vegetables and other snacks. Food was found to be fresh and in date. There was a plentiful supply of dried and tinned products. In each of the bungalows we saw a large bowl of fresh fruit. We saw people who used the service eating fruit during the day.

Summary of findings

Staff we spoke with during the inspection told us that new menus that had been introduced by the manager and included fresh and / or frozen vegetables at least four times during the week.

We observed the lunch time of people on Aspen unit. The meal time was relaxed. People and staff ate their food and chatted together. We saw that one person who used the service needed encouragement to eat and staff provided this.

Staff told us that for some people at risk of weight loss they provided fortified food for people who needed extra nourishment. Fortified food is when meals and snacks are made more nourishing and have more calories by adding ingredients such as butter, double cream, cheese and sugar. This meant that people were supported to maintain their nutrition.

We saw that people who used the service had undergone nutritional screening to identify if they were malnourished, at risk of malnutrition or obesity. The manager told us that they were aware that up until recently people who used the service were not always weighed on a monthly basis. We saw some gaps in the taking and recording of weights, however all people had been weighed in February / and / or March. On Redwood

we saw some fluctuations in people's weights; however this was thought to be due to faulty scales. People were to be weighed again and the scales calibrated to ensure that they were accurate. We found people's weights to be stable.

During the inspection we spoke with the regional support manager who told us that menus were to change again in the very near future. Menus were to be analysed for their nutritional content, discussed with people who used the service and introduced over the coming weeks.

We spoke with the relatives of eight people after the inspection. We asked for their opinion on the quality and quantity of food served. Relatives did not raise any concerns in relation to the food served. One relative thought that staff needed to be more aware of ensuring a healthy diet by offering more fruit rather than biscuits.

We spoke with representatives from day centres that people attended. We found that some people had chosen to have their meals at the day centre and some people had chosen to take a packed lunch. Representatives from two of the seven day centres told us that previously there had been some concerns with the food that people who used the service had brought, however improvements had now been made.

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 effective?

People were provided with a choice of nutritious food. Staff involved in food preparation helped to produce food to help facilitate a healthy balanced diet.

Nutritional screening was carried out to identify people at risk of poor nutrition and dehydration; however there were some gaps in the recording of weights.

The Evergreens

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We undertook an unannounced focused inspection of The Evergreens on 12 March 2015. We had received concerns that food provided for people to take to day services was inadequate (mouldy bread and black bananas and on some occasions out of date.) We were told that people were losing weight. We were told that vegetables were rarely serviced with meals provided by the service. These safeguarding concerns have been reported to the local authority. The local authority will manage safeguarding concerns raised in line with their lead role and safeguarding procedures.

The inspection team consisted of one adult social care inspector. We inspected the service against one of the five questions we ask about services: Is the service effective.

Before the inspection we reviewed all the information we held about the home. During the inspection we spoke with 10 people who used the service and one relative. After the inspection we spoke with the relatives of eight people who used the service. We also contacted seven of the main day services that people who used the service attended. During the inspection we spoke with the manager, deputy manager, regional director, regional support manager and with seven care staff.

We spent time with people in all of the communal areas and observed how staff interacted with people. We observed the lunch time in Aspen Unit. We looked in every kitchen area in each of the bungalows. We looked at food in fridges, freezers and cupboards. We looked at the nutrition and weight charts of people who used the service.

Is the service effective?

Our findings

We asked people who used the service and relatives about the food provided. One person said, "I like everything." Another person who was unable to communicate verbally with us gave us the thumbs up sign when we asked them questions about the quality and quantity of food provided. A relative we spoke with said, "The cupboards are full, the fridge is full I have never been worried. They used to have a take away once a week which they (people who used the service) had to pay for. We complained about this and now they (the provider) pay for it."

The manager told us that when they started working at The Evergreens in January 2015 they had introduced new menus for people who used the service to ensure that people received adequate nutrition. They told us that they were aware that there had been concerns regarding the food and had worked hard to improve the overall quality and quantity of food provided. Staff we spoke with during the inspection told us that the new menus that had been introduced by the manager included fresh and / or frozen vegetables at least four times during the week.

We spent time in each of the five bungalows and spoke with staff and people who used the service. We also looked in kitchen cupboards, fridges and freezers. Staff told us how they and people who used the service in each bungalow did their own shopping and cooking. Staff in each bungalow told us how they shopped each week at different supermarkets with people who used the service. Staff told us that the food budget had been increased and that this enabled them to buy all the food that was needed.

In four of the five bungalows we visited, staff and people who used the service had been for their weekly shop. Staff in one of the bungalows told us that they did their weekly shop each Friday. We looked in fridges and saw cooked and uncooked meats, cheese, yoghurts, vegetables and other snacks. Food was found to be fresh and in date. There was a plentiful supply of dried and tinned products. In each of the bungalows we saw a large bowl of fruit. We saw people who used the service eating fruit during the day.

Staff on Pinewood told us that they were having a themed night for food which was Italian. People were having pizza, chicken and bacon carbonara and tiramisu for dessert.

We saw that people were provided with a varied selection of meals of their choice. When we arrived in one of the

bungalows we saw that one relative was supporting staff with making their recipe of homemade leek and potato soup. This relative told us how staff had asked them for their recipe as they thought people who used the service would enjoy the soup. During the inspection we observed the lunch time of people on this unit. The meal time was relaxed. People and staff ate their soup and chatted together. People were also provided with bread. One person got up and left the table but was encouraged and supported to come back and finish their soup by staff. We saw that most people had juice with their meal and one person chose coffee.

After lunch we saw that both people who used the service and staff were involved in cleaning up. We heard one person who used the service offer to wash up if the staff member dried. In another of the bungalows people told us that they had eaten pasta for lunch.

Staff told us that for some people at risk of weight loss they provided fortified food for people who needed extra nourishment. Fortified food is when meals and snacks are made more nourishing and have more calories by adding ingredients such as butter, double cream, cheese and sugar. This meant that people were supported to maintain their nutrition

The manager and deputy manager informed us that all people who used the service had undergone nutritional screening to identify if they were malnourished, at risk of malnutrition or obesity. We saw records to confirm that this was the case. The manager told us that they were aware that up until recently people who used the service were not always weighed on a monthly basis. On Aspen unit we saw that we saw that people were not weighed in November 2014 and three of the seven people had not been weighed in December 2014. We saw that all seven people had been weighed in February 2015. We saw from looking back at records that people's weight was fairly stable. On Redwood people had been weighed each month from November 2014. We did see some fluctuations in weight but this was thought to be down to faulty scales. The regional support manager told us that people would be weighed again and the scales calibrated to ensure they were accurate. On Maple unit we looked at records and saw that people had been weighed in October 2014. People were not weighed in November but were weighed each month from December 2014 to February 2015. We were provided with information to show that people on Juniper were weighed each month

Is the service effective?

from October 2014 to February 2015. People's weights were stable. On Pinewood we saw some gaps in recording weight for November 2014 but all people had been weighed after that date. We found weights to be stable.

During the inspection we spoke with the regional support manager who told us that menus were to change again in the very near future. We were told that they had looked at the food that people who used the service had liked over the last few months. New menus (with two choices at each meal time) had been created and were to be analysed for their nutritional content. We were told that six staff had been on nutrition training on 11 March 2015. We spoke with one member of staff who told us that they thought the training had been useful and provided them with more knowledge on a healthy diet. They told us the importance of bringing more oily fish onto the menu.

We spoke with the relatives of eight people after the inspection. We asked for their opinion on the quality and quantity of food served. Comments made included:

"I don't see a lot of the food but X would tell me if she didn't like it." Another relative said they hadn't seen the food for some time, but thought that staff needed to be more aware of ensuring a healthy diet by offering more fruit rather than biscuits.

"The food is lovely it always has been."

"When I went on Sunday they were having Sunday lunch and it looked lovely."

"I think they do well. I saw Sunday lunch and it looked lovely. I go every Thursday and they are preparing tea. It always smells lovely. They do chops, gammon and curry."

"She is well into the stages for dementia and was losing weight, but they are encouraging her to eat at mealtimes. She's stopped losing weight."

We spoke with representatives from day centres that people attended. We found that some people had chosen to have their meals at the day centre and some people had chosen to take a packed lunch. Representatives from two of the seven day centres told us that previously there had been some concerns with the food that people had brought in their packed lunch. We were told that on one occasion the sandwich for one person hardly had any filling and that bread had been dry and with bits of mould on it. These two day services told us how they had seen an improvement in the packed lunches that people brought with them. Representatives from day services told us that people brought either a frozen ready meal or sandwiches and fruit, crisps, yoghurts biscuits and / or a cake. One representative said, "The new manager seems to be sorting things out." Another representative said, "They always bring plenty of fresh food with them."