

Mrs M Mather-Franks

The Conifers Residential Care Home

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Requires improvement 

Is the service safe?

Requires improvement 

Is the service well-led?

Requires improvement 

Overall summary

During our inspection in April 2014, we found that people were not protected from the risks of infection, as there were ineffective cleaning processes in place. Communal areas within the service, and people's bedrooms had not been cleaned effectively. We found that cleaning within the service was not satisfactory or robust. This was a breach of Regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Following the inspection the provider sent us an action plan detailing the improvements they were going to make, and stating that improvements would be achieved by 22 June 2015.

This report only covers our findings in relation to the outstanding breaches of regulation. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for 'The Conifers' on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

This inspection was unannounced and took place on 25 June 2015.

During this inspection, we found that improvements had been made to the systems in place within the service, to ensure that appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene had been maintained. New cleaning schedules

Summary of findings

had been implemented to ensure that cleaning regimes were effective. Staff had reviewed their practice in respect of cleaning, and had worked hard to ensure this was now more thorough.

We also reviewed the audit systems in place, which in the past inspection had failed to identify the issues we found

in respect of poor hygiene. We found that these had been strengthened and had more managerial oversight which meant that any issues could be identified and addressed in a timely manner.

While improvements had been made we have not revised the rating for this key question; to improve the rating to 'Good' would require a longer term track record of consistent good practice. We will review our rating for safe at the next comprehensive inspection.

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 safe?

We found that action had been taken to improve the safety of the service.

Cleanliness and hygiene standards were now more effectively maintained.

While improvements had been made we have not revised the rating for this key question; to improve the rating to 'Good' would require a longer term track record of consistent good practice. We will review our rating for safe at the next comprehensive inspection.

Requires improvement



Is the service well-led?

This service was not always well-led.

We found that monitoring of quality assurance and audit systems had improved since our last inspection but required further time to become embedded.

Requires improvement



The Conifers Residential Care Home

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this 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 legal requirements and regulations associated with the Health and Social Care Act 2008, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

We undertook a focused inspection of The Conifers on 25 June 2015. This inspection was completed to check that improvements to meet legal requirements planned by the provider after our comprehensive inspection on 15 April 2015 had been made. We inspected the service against two of the five questions we ask about services: is the service safe and is the service well- led. This is because the service was not previously meeting legal requirements in relation to the safe domain.

The inspection was unannounced and the inspection team consisted of one inspector.

Before our inspection we reviewed the information we held about the home, this included the provider's action plan, which set out the action they would take to meet legal requirements. We checked the information we held about the service and the provider and made contact with the local authority to obtain additional information.

During our inspection, we observed how the staff interacted with the people who used the service and reviewed the cleaning taking place within the service. This was so that we could corroborate our findings and ensure the care being provided was appropriate to meet people's needs.

We spoke with two people who used the service and observed a further five. We also spoke with the registered manager and one member of care staff.

We looked at records relating to the management of the service, including cleaning schedules, and quality audits to ensure that action had been taken to make required improvements.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

During our inspection on 15 April 2015, we identified that the systems in place for cleaning were not satisfactory. Communal toilets and bathrooms had not been cleaned and effectively and posed a risk of cross infection to people who used the service. This was a breach of Regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010.

At this inspection, we found that the provider had followed the action plan they had written, to meet shortfalls in relation to the regulatory requirements as described above.

People told us that their bedrooms were cleaned to a good standard and were clean and smelt fresh. Our observations confirmed this, and we found that all through the service, improvements had been made to the cleaning systems since our last inspection. Communal toilets and bathrooms had been cleaned to a good standard. We found that there was on-going cleaning in operation, and that a more robust system had been implemented to ensure that areas of the home had been cleaned. There was a cleaning schedule to document the last time that communal areas had been cleaned. The registered manager also showed us new forms that had been implemented to record when people's equipment had been cleaned, for example, mattresses, hoist slings and commodes. We found that these records had been completed with no gaps since their implementation.

The registered manager told us that as a result of our last inspection, staff were now more vigilant to infection control

and standards of cleanliness throughout the whole service. We observed that rather than one member of staff cleaning the service, all staff on duty were undertaking cleaning and wore protective equipment to do so. Staff had access to a good supply of protective equipment for the tasks they were carrying out, for example, disposable gloves and aprons when assisting with personal care. We found that there were good supplies of cleaning equipment, with mops and cloths for use within different areas.

The registered manager told us that they intended to implement a more robust method of infection control audit. As part of this spot checks on the service would be undertaken. Managers from sister services would also undertake quality monitoring visits to each other's homes, so that an independent view of the cleanliness of the service could be given. This would ensure the on-going maintenance of appropriate standards of cleanliness and hygiene within the service.

The registered manager also confirmed that a schedule for required maintenance work across the service was being compiled. This would take into account repainting of people's bedrooms, communal areas and attending to any required maintenance issues. It was hoped that this would also enable the service to be more easily cleaned, in conjunction with the other changes. The registered manager said that the areas that were currently difficult to clean, for example, the grouting around sinks or the sealant around the base of toilets, would be easier to maintain if they were new. We have asked for confirmation of when this work will commence and a copy of the action plan for our records.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

During our inspection we discussed with the registered manager the improvements that had been made since our last visit. The registered manager told us, “We have worked hard to make the changes; we want things to be better.”

Staff wanted to ensure that the service was kept clean to make it a welcoming and homely place for people to be. Our observations confirmed that staff were more robust in their actions; they were aware of the issues that had been identified and wanted to improve.

We were shown more robust audit systems for the monitoring of infection control and cleaning within the service. For example, daily checks on the cleanliness within

the service were now being completed by staff and these were overviewed by management. Although these had been implemented at the beginning of June, they required more time to fully embed into staff practice. The registered manager told us that these changes had been embraced by staff.

The registered manager confirmed that issues that had been highlighted by the local authority and Care Quality Commission (CQC) had been discussed across all provider services, so that lessons could be learnt by them all. They appreciated that further improvements could still be made within all quality monitoring processes in place, so that the service could drive future improvement and provide quality care for the people who used the service.