

Barchester Healthcare Homes Limited

Alice Grange

Inspection report

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service	Good ●
Is the service safe?	Good ●
Is the service well-led?	Requires Improvement ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service: Alice Grange is a nursing home providing personal and nursing care for older people. The service can accommodate up to 88 people. Our inspection focused only upon the units of Bluebell and Honeysuckle which is known as Memory Lane and provides personal and nursing care to people with dementia. At the time of our inspection the service was supporting 35 people on the Memory Lane unit.

People's experience of using this service:

- ☐ Since the previous inspection, the service had made improvements to the safety of people's care. The manager used a dependency tool to determine how many staff were needed to be deployed on Memory Lane over seven days a week to meet people's individual needs.
- ☐ The provider had not always identified areas of concerns and supported the leadership of the service, although actions had been taken to address those points.
- ☐ The views of relatives were mixed regarding there being sufficient staff on duty and the quality of the service provided.
- ☐ Staff informed us there were sufficient staff on duty but sometimes the needs of the people varied from day to day and hence they were far busier with personal care on some days compared to others. On the two days of our inspection the number of staff on duty matched the staffing rota and we observed there were sufficient staff to meet the needs of the people living on Memory Lane.
- ☐ People were offered baths and showers or alternative support with washing and personal hygiene but this had not always been recorded in their notes. This can cause confusion regarding whether or not people's personal hygiene needs were being achieved.
- ☐ The management of the service had deteriorated for a period of time since our last inspection. Relatives and staff informed us this had improved in the past two to three months, since the appointment of a dedicated manager, who was also a qualified nurse, to Memory Lane.
- ☐ The new manager of Alice Grange and the dedicated manager of Memory Lane had continued to arrange care reviews and relatives meetings to discuss any problems and agree the way forward with relatives.
- ☐ People's care records were being re-written to ensure they were accurate and the staff would have clear information regarding the person's needs and how these were to be met. The care records that had been completed reflected people's needs accurately.
- ☐ Relatives told us they felt their relatives were safe living at Memory Lane. There was a relaxed atmosphere between the people living there and staff. Staff knew people well and were kind, caring and attentive.

- ☐ People were protected from the risk of harm. Risks were managed safely and safe processes were in place to guide staff to deliver the care to people. Where risks had been identified the staff had worked with other professionals to resolve these matters.
- ☐ Staff had enough time to meet people's basic needs and usually spend time with them in conversation, but there were not yet organised activities for people. Staff had the skills and knowledge to meet people's needs effectively.
- ☐ Not all staff had received training in the care needs of people with dementia but training had been planned for all staff.
- ☐ Quality assurance processes had been reviewed and were in operation to determine any areas in which the service could be improved.
- ☐ The service met the characteristics for a rating of "Good" the key questions of Safe we inspected while requiring improvement in the key question of Well-Led.

Therefore, our overall rating for the service after this inspection has not altered from "good".

Rating at last inspection: Good (The report was published on 15 June 2017). All key questions were rated as Good other than Safe which was rated as requiring improvement.

Why we inspected: We received concerns about the service from Healthwatch Suffolk which had been reported to them. These matters were regarding the Memory Lane service within Alice Grange and included poor attention to personal care, insufficient staffing, lack of training in dementia care and people's care plans not being kept up to date.

Follow up: We will continue to monitor intelligence we receive about this service until we return to visit as part of our re-inspection programme. If we have any concerns, 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?

Good ●

The service was safe

Details are in our Safe findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Requires Improvement ●

The service was not always well-led

Details are in our Well-Led findings below.

Alice Grange

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. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act, to look at the overall quality of the service, and to provide a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Inspection team:

One inspector carried out this inspection.

Service and service type:

Alice Grange is a nursing home. People in nursing homes receive accommodation and nursing or personal care. CQC regulates both the premises and the care provided, and both were looked at during this inspection.

The service did not have a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. The previous registered manager had left the service and the deputy manager had been appointed as the new manager and was seeking registration with the Care Quality Commission.

Notice of inspection:

The first day of the inspection was unannounced.

What we did:

Before the inspection we reviewed the information we held about the service. This included correspondence we had received and notifications submitted by the service. A notification must be sent to the Care Quality Commission every time a significant incident has taken place.

We spoke with three people living at the service and five relatives during our inspection at the service.

We spoke with the manager of Alice Grange, the dedicated manager of Memory Lane, two qualified nurses and four care staff members.

We reviewed four people's care records, three staff personnel files, audits and other records about the management of the service.

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 in April 2017, this key question was rated 'Requires Improvement'.

We carried out this focussed inspection of the Memory Lane unit as we received concerns from Suffolk Healthwatch regarding there being insufficient staff deployed on the unit particularly at weekends and people not receiving the care they needed.

At this inspection, we found the service had taken steps to improve and the rating for this key question has improved to 'Good'.

Good: People were safe and protected from avoidable harm. Legal requirements were met.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People told us they felt safe and appeared comfortable when staff were present. Comments included, "I feel very safe here."
- A relative told us, "We are now in a honeymoon period, things have improved." The relative told us that they did have concerns for the safety of their relative but things under the new management of both Alice Grange and Memory Lane had improved. They had trust in the managers who had spoken with them to clarify and record accurately their relative's care needs.
- Staff had completed safeguarding adults training. They knew how to report concerns about people's safety. One member of staff told us, "The training is good and covers the different types of abuse."

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- People were protected from the risk of harm. Risks had been assessed and were being managed safely. Assessments relating to mobility, skin care and nutrition had been carried out and actions taken were recorded.
- Regular environmental checks were carried out. Where issues were identified, action was taken to make the environment safe. For example, the service checked pressure mattresses to ensure they were set correctly.
- Each person had a personal emergency evacuation plan which had been reviewed and updated as necessary.
- The manager had arranged unannounced fire drills at times during the year and the checking of fire safety systems on a weekly basis.

Staffing and recruitment

- There were enough staff available to support people with their personal care needs.
- The service used an assessment tool to identify the number of staff required to meet people's assessed needs. The manager compiled a weekly assessment of needs of the people living on Memory Lane to identify the number of staff and skill mix needed to be on duty.

- Relatives told us staff were usually available when their relative needed assistance. During the inspection, we saw staff attended to people's needs discreetly.
- One member of staff thought there should be more staff employed on Memory Lane but was unable to say how many. They did feel at times the staff were stretched to meet people's needs. The other staff we spoke with thought there were sufficient staff employed but were stretched at times when they were very busy because someone was unwell. They felt supported by the dedicated unit manager and overall manager to support them. One member of staff told us about the support they received from the dedicated manager of Memory Lane, they said. "The manager works alongside us and you only have to ask and they will help."
- The staffing rota covered both days, nights and weekends and the staffing deployed was consistent and related to the assessed needs of the people living on Memory Lane.
- The staffing rota agreed with the staff we saw assigned to Memory Lane during both days of our inspection.
- The staffing of the Memory Lane unit was adequate to meet people's needs safely but not always support people to take part in meaningful activities.
- The new manager of Alice Grange had appointed a dedicated qualified nurse to manage Memory Lane. In the past Memory Lane had been managed by a number of staff but not a dedicated manager.
- There was a policy and procedure designed for the safe recruitment of staff. Checks such as a disclosure and barring service check had been carried out before staff were employed. This was to try to ensure only suitable staff were employed to care for people living on Memory Lane.
- Nurse' professional registration was checked to ensure it was up-to-date.
- The new manager of Alice Grange had assigned staff to work in all of the service units. This had the effect that all staff when assigned to Memory Lane would know the people living there and their personal needs and choices.
- The dedicated manager for Memory Lane had commenced reviewing the care plans and supporting staff to record accurately when baths and showers were offered and if declined the steps taken to support people with their personal hygiene.

Using medicines safely

- People received their medicines as they were prescribed.
- There were systems for the recording of medicines received into the service and returned to the pharmacy.
- Each person had a medicines protocol for the administration of medicines as necessary and the staff we spoke with were aware of this information.
- The service was sufficiently stocked with equipment and items such as dressing packs.

Preventing and controlling infection

- The service was clean and smelt fresh throughout.
- There was a dedicated housekeeping team working systematically to clean all areas of the service on a managed basis and they were available to respond to any occurrence as needed.
- Systems were in place to prevent and control the risk of infection. Staff had completed infection control training and were provided with personal protective equipment such as gloves and aprons.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- Accidents and incidents were reviewed monthly to identify themes or increased risks.
- After concerns were raised at the previous inspection a dependency tool was introduced to record the assessed needs of the people living at the service and staff were assigned in line with the number of staff identified as necessary to provide care.
- As part of continual improvement of the service, the care of people was reviewed to learn any lessons of

how the service could develop.

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 in April 2017, this key question was rated 'Good'.

We carried out this focussed inspection of the Memory Lane unit because of the concerns we had received from Healthwatch Suffolk. We received information that care plans were not kept up to date, relatives feeling that they needed to supplement the care provided to people, insufficient dementia training for staff and little activity or stimulation was offered to the people living on Memory Lane.

Although we found improvements had been recently implemented, alongside developments with care planning, staff training and auditing, the above concerns had not been fully addressed by the service. The improvements were not yet fully embedded in the service and as a result we have rated the service in this key question as requiring improvement.

RI: Service management and leadership was inconsistent. Leaders and the culture they create did not always support the delivery of high-quality, person-centred care.

Planning and promoting person-centred, high-quality care and support with openness; and how the provider understands and acts on their duty of candour responsibility

- The new manager of the service was committed to providing high quality care for people in an environment where people could feel at home.
- The dedicated manager of Memory Lane had assessed people's daily care needs and worked with staff to respond to those needs and record accurately in people's care plans the care which was provided. Information was added from the daily notes and the plans checked weekly with regard to the person's dependency.
- The dedicated manager of Memory Lane had commenced a full review of people's care plans with them and their families and intended this to be completed for June 2019.
- The care plans which had been reviewed had provided many further details with regard to what staff were to do and what worked well should the person become upset as a symptom of dementia or action to be taken should they be unwell due to diabetes. Staff were aware of this information so although this information had not all been recorded staff knew what care was needed.
- The dedicated manager had commenced arranging meetings with families and relatives and had further reviews planned to discuss people's needs and how these would be achieved. One relative told us, "Recently whenever we come we have been able to speak with the manager whenever we have wished about [our relatives] care." The relative had sometimes experienced difficulty finding a manager to speak with in the past.
- People's basic care needs were being recognised and addressed but the staff were not always supporting people to enjoy their hobbies and interests. Although activity staff were present on Memory Lane at times during the day we did not see people were always engaged with meaningful activities.

- Staff had received, or training had been arranged, for staff to increase their understanding of the needs of the people living on Memory Lane such as dementia and diabetes.

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

- The manager of Alice Grange was supported by a team of nurses and care staff. They had introduced a system that the vast majority of staff worked on all of the units each week. Hence when the staff were working on Memory Lane the staff knew the people they were assigned to care for. Each staff member knew their responsibilities and there were clear lines of accountability. One member of staff told us, "The handovers are clear about what we are to do and the manager checks with us during the shift how we are."
- Each person living at Memory Lane was having a key worker from the staff assigned to them in order to assist with overseeing their care.
- Staff told us they worked as a team and were able to work through any issues together. A member of staff considered this had not always been the case and hence on busy days things had become highly stressed in the past.
- Until February 2019 the Memory Lane unit had not had one dedicated manager and inconsistencies were reported to us which were now being addressed by appropriate staff having clear roles and responsibilities.
- Quality assurance and governance systems were in place to assess, monitor and improve the quality and safety of the service. However, these systems had not identified gaps in people's care reviews and that people's care plans had not always been updated, this included the dependency assessment not always being completed weekly. We also noted information, such as when people chose not to have a bath or shower but had been supported with an alternative wash, had not always been recorded. We noted that the daily records of the past month were better detailed to capture this information. A member of staff told us, "The manager ensures we do have time to record information."

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

- People and their relatives were now being encouraged to share their views. A relative told us about how the manager of Memory Lane frequently spoke with them about their relative's health.
- The managers were further developing positive working relationships with other professionals to ensure good outcomes for people. One relative was not content with the care provided at times for their relative and we asked for these matters to be discussed with the manager to determine how matters could be improved. The manager of the service informed us they would record meetings with the professionals involved in people's care and ensure this information was shared with relatives so that everyone was clear and could refer to the written records in the future should the need arise.

Continuous learning and improving care

- Since our previous inspection, the manager had put further checks in place regarding auditing of medicines and care plans. They had worked with healthcare professionals to develop an overview and analysis of incidents and accidents.
- The new deputy manager commenced working at the service on the second day of our inspection.
- The manager reported to us they had been well supported by their managers.

Working in partnership with others

- The new manager told us, "We welcome the input from anyone to help us and I want this service to be become excellent."
- The new manager had asked for the local mental health team to review the care of a person and was

determined to involve other professional' sooner rather than later to support the service to meet people's needs.