

Elm Tree Care Home Limited

Elm Tree

Inspection report

Elm Tree Avenue
Frinton-on-Sea
Essex
CO13 0AX

Website: www.elmtree.hunthealthcare.com

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10 March 2021

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14 April 2021

Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inspected but not rated

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Elm Tree is a care home providing personal and nursing care to people aged 65 and over at the time of the inspection. The service can support up to 30 people.

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

Medicines were not being managed safely which placed people at risk of harm. Quality assurance and governance systems were not effective and had failed to identify poor medicines management at the service. Measures to manage infection control were in place, however, further improvement was needed to ensure systems were robust.

We made a recommendation about infection control practice.

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 inadequate (17 February 2021) and there were multiple breaches of regulation. At this inspection we found some improvements had been made but the provider was still in breach of regulations.

Why we inspected

We undertook this targeted inspection to check whether the Warning Notice we previously served in relation to Regulation 12 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 had been met in regards to safe management of medicines and infection control practice. The overall rating for the service has not changed following this targeted inspection and remains inadequate.

CQC have introduced targeted inspections to follow up on Warning Notices or to check specific concerns. They do not look at an entire key question, only the part of the key question we are specifically concerned about. Targeted inspections do not change the rating from the previous inspection. This is because they do not assess all areas of a key question.

Enforcement

We will continue to discharge our regulatory enforcement functions required to keep people safe and to hold providers to account where it is necessary for us to do so.

We have identified breaches in relation to the safe management of medicines at this inspection.

Please see the action we have told the provider to take at the end of this report.

Follow up

We will request an action plan for the provider to understand what they will do to improve the standards of quality and safety. We will work alongside the provider and local authority to monitor progress. We will 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?

At our last inspection we rated this key question inadequate. We have not reviewed the rating at this inspection. This is because we only looked at the parts of this key question we had specific concerns about.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Inspected but not rated

Elm Tree

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

The inspection

This was a targeted inspection to check whether the provider had met the requirements of the Warning Notice in relation to Regulation 12 (safe care and treatment) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

As part of this inspection we looked at the infection control and prevention measures in place. 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

The inspection team consisted of one inspector and one assistant inspector

Service and service type

Elm tree 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 did not have a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that the provider is 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 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. The provider was not asked to complete a provider information return prior to this inspection. This is information we require providers to send us to give some key information about the service, what the service does well and improvements they plan to make. We took this into account when we inspected the service and made the judgements in this report. We used all of this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with eleven members of staff including the provider, manager, assistant manager, senior care workers, care workers and administration staff. We observed how people were cared for at the service by staff.

We reviewed a range of records. This included one persons care plan and multiple medication records. We looked at a variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures and audits.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found.

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 inadequate. We have not changed the rating of this key question, as we have only looked at the part of the key question we had specific concerns about.

The purpose of this inspection was to check if the provider had met the requirements of the warning notice we previously served. We will assess all of the key question at the next comprehensive inspection of the service.

Using medicines safely

At our last inspection the provider had failed to implement effective and safe management of medicines. This was a breach of regulation 12 (Safe Care and Treatment) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Not enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was still in breach of regulation 12

- Medicines were not being managed effectively or safely. This placed people at risk of harm.
- Medicines had not always been given as per the prescriber's instruction and were not always available in sufficient stocks.
- Staff were not always completing medicines administration records [MAR] correctly. We found where people had not received their medicines, staff had not always documented fully the reason or what action had been taken to follow this up.
- The auditing process was not clear. Staff were required to complete a daily stock count on MAR's, a daily audit and a monthly audit. We found staff were not always completing the daily stock count and had been completing the daily stock check once a month. The manager was unaware of this demonstrating they did not have good oversight of the medicines auditing process.
- Audit process had failed to identify any of the errors we found during the inspection. For example, there was a discrepancy with a stock level in the controlled drugs register. This had not been accounted for which demonstrates staff were not carrying out regular stock checks and auditing processes were ineffective.

We found no evidence that people had been harmed however, systems were either not in place or robust enough to demonstrate medicines was effectively managed. This placed people at risk of harm. This was a continued breach of regulation 12 (Safe Care and Treatment) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Preventing and controlling infection

At our last inspection the provider had failed to robustly assess the risks relating to infection control. This was a breach of regulation 12 (Safe Care and Treatment) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

Enough improvement had been made at this inspection and the provider was no longer in breach of regulation 12.

- The provider had made some changes and improvements to infection control practices at the service since our last inspection. However, there were still areas that required further improvement.
- Staff had received infection control training, however, one staff member told us they had not received this training. We discussed this with the provider who could not confirm if the training had taken place. Evidence the training had taken place after the inspection was provided by the manager.
- We could not be assured staff were practicing good hand hygiene to minimise the spread of infection. Staff were not observed sanitising their hands between contact with people and did not always carry their hand sanitiser with them.
- COVID-19 risk assessments for people living at Elm Tree had been completed. However, these did not identify where people had underlying health conditions which may put them at more risk of contracting COVID-19.

We recommend the provider takes further steps to ensure they are following government guidance for infection control and that all risks to people are fully assessed.

- Staff were observed following government guidance in the use of personal protective equipment [PPE].
- Suitable arrangements had been put in place to admit visitors to the service safely. These included, lateral flow tests, temperature checks and PPE.
- Changes had been made to the environment to ensure social distancing rules could be implemented effectively to reduce the risk of people contracting COVID-19.
- The provider had not taken any new admissions since the previous inspection. A contingency plan to manage outbreaks at the service had been put in place to manage any future outbreaks of COVID-19.

This section is primarily information for the provider

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows where regulations were not being met and we have asked the provider to send us a report that says what action they are going to take. We will check that this action is taken by the provider.

Regulated activity	Regulation
Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care	<p>Regulation 12 HSCA RA Regulations 2014 Safe care and treatment</p> <p>Systems were either not in place or robust enough to demonstrate medicines were effectively managed. This placed people at risk of harm.</p>