

Amore Elderly Care Limited

Dalton Court Care Home

Inspection report

Europe Way
Cockermouth
Cumbria
CA13 0RJ

Tel: 01900898640
Website: www.priorygroup.com

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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Inspected but not rated

Is the service safe?

Inadequate ●

Is the service well-led?

Inadequate ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

We carried out an unannounced comprehensive inspection of this service on 14 December 2015. Breaches of legal requirements were found and we issued two Warning Notices. A Warning Notice tells a registered provider or a registered manager that they are not complying with a regulation.

We issued two Warning Notices because the registered provider was not complying with Regulation 17 – Good Governance and Regulation 18 – Staffing of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

We undertook this focused inspection to check that the registered provider had complied with the requirements of these Warning Notices.

This report only covers our findings in relation to those requirements. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for (Dalton Court Care Home) on our website at www.cqc.org.uk

We could not improve the ratings for Safe and Well Led from inadequate because to do so requires consistent good practice over time. We will check this during our next planned comprehensive inspection.

This focused inspection took place on 4 May 2016 and was unannounced.

Dalton Court Care Home is a purpose built nursing home for up to 60 older people and people with complex healthcare needs. It is divided into two units: one for people with dementia on the top floor and the ground floor accommodation for people with mobility and health issues.

All bedrooms have ensuite toilet and shower facilities. There are a variety of communal lounge and dining areas and pleasant gardens for people to access if they wish.

At the time of this inspection the service did not have a 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.

The registered provider had appointed a new manager for the home. During this inspection of the service the new manager told us that they had made an application to become a "registered manager".

We found that the registered provider had met the requirements of the warning notice in relation to the concerns about the staffing levels at the home.

One of the people who used this service told us; "The staffing is much better now. There are lots of them about and they (staff) are lovely. There is new management and they are very nice and friendly too."

Another person said; "Staff seem to have more time now. They are all very nice although there has been a lot of people come and go."

The staff we spoke to also commented on the improved staffing levels and support they were receiving. One person told us; "We have more time to give people the time and care they need. It's much more relaxed here now."

We found that the service had recruited more staff and that there was less reliance on staff coming to work at Dalton Court from other homes within the organisation. We checked a sample of the recruitment records of recently employed staff. We found that proper checks had been carried out by the registered provider to help ensure only suitable people had been employed.

We found that the registered provider had met the requirements of the warning notice in relation to the concerns about the way in which quality and safety were managed at the home. However, there remained some areas where further improvements still needed to be made.

For example, we reviewed a sample of care records that belonged to some of the people who used this service. Whilst we could see that some work had been carried out to help improve the accuracy and detail of these records, there was still a significant amount of work to be done on them to ensure people received the standard of support and care they needed.

The new manager and senior staff at the home were able to provide assurances as to when this work would be fully completed.

Everyone we spoke to during this inspection, commented on the improved communication between management, staff, people who lived at Dalton Court and their relatives. Meetings had been held with these groups of people by senior managers from the organisation. Meeting minutes showed that the registered provider had been open and transparent about the poor outcomes from previous inspections and about how they were going to make improvements.

Staff told us that they were involved and aware of the improvement programme. One member of staff told us about the "long" and "short term goals for improvement" that had been set by the registered provider.

Internal quality and safety audits had been undertaken by the registered provider and where shortfalls had been identified, action plans were in place to help ensure progress and improvement. The action plans had been shared with people who used this service and their relatives so that they could see what the registered provider was doing to make improvements to the service.

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Is the service safe?

Inadequate ●

We found that action had been taken to improve safety but we could not improve the rating for safe from inadequate because to do so requires consistent good practice over time. We will check this during our next planned comprehensive inspection.

The registered provider ensured that a sufficient number of staff were on duty at all times. This helped to ensure that people who used the service received safe and appropriate support with their assessed care needs.

Safe and appropriate checks had been made when recruiting new staff to the service. This helped to make sure that people were supported by skilled and appropriately experienced care staff and nurses.

There were emergency plans in place to make sure the registered provider was able to maintain the staffing levels at the home.

Is the service well-led?

Inadequate ●

The service was not always well led. We found that action had been taken to improve leadership at the service but we could not improve the rating for well led from inadequate because to do so requires consistent good practice over time. We will check this during our next planned comprehensive inspection.

A new manager had been appointed following our last inspection of the service. However, the new manager was not registered with CQC at the time of this inspection.

We found that the registered provider had made improvements to the ways in which the quality and safety of the service was monitored.

We found that some gaps remained, particularly around people's care planning and assessments. The registered provider had a plan and timescale in place to help ensure this work was fully completed by the end of May 2016.

Dalton Court Care Home

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out an unannounced comprehensive inspection of this service on 14 December 2015. Breaches of legal requirements were found and we issued two Warning Notices. A Warning Notice tells a registered provider or a registered manager that they are not complying with a regulation.

We issued two Warning Notices because the registered provider was not complying with Regulation 17 – Good Governance and Regulation 18 – Staffing of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

We undertook this focused inspection to check that the Registered provider had complied with the requirements of these Warning Notices.

This report only covers our findings in relation to those requirements. You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for (Dalton Court Care Home) on our website at www.cqc.org.uk

We carried out these inspections under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions.

This focused inspection was planned to check whether the registered 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.

The inspection was carried out by one lead adult social care inspector. The service was inspected against two of the five questions we ask about services: Is the service safe? Is the service well led? This was because at the last inspection the service was not meeting some legal requirements.

During our inspection of this service we spoke to ten members of staff, including staff who worked at night, the new manager at the home and the regional home manager. We spoke to two of the people that used this service and we spoke to two people who were visiting relatives at Dalton Court on the day of our inspection.

We contacted the local authority and commissioners for their views on the service as part of this inspection.

We also looked at the way in which the registered provider managed and monitored the quality and safety of the service.

We sampled a selection of records, including the care files of two people who used this service, three staff recruitment records and looked at the quality and safety monitoring systems in place.

Is the service safe?

Our findings

At our last inspection of this service in December 2015, the registered provider was not meeting Regulation 18 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. This was because there were not enough staff to meet the needs of people who used this service. People were placed at risk of receiving unsafe care and support.

This had also been the case when we inspected this service in June 2015.

During this inspection visit of 4 May 2016 we found that the registered provider was now meeting this legal requirement.

One of the people who used this service told us; "The staffing is much better now. There are lots of them about and they (staff) are lovely. There is new management and they are very nice and friendly too."

Another person said; "Staff seem to have more time now. They are all very nice although there has been a lot of people come and go."

The visitors we spoke to during this inspection of Dalton Court had spoken to us at our previous visits to the home. They had previously been concerned about the standard of care and support their relative or friend had experienced.

However, on this occasion the visitors told us how "happy" and "pleased" they were with the "transformation" of Dalton Court.

One person told us; "There are more staff around now. They are happy and very respectful towards my relative. The new manager comes round and sees everyone, they know my relative very well and my relative knows who the manager is now." We would have no problems raising any concerns with the management. Dalton Court is a lovely, happy place now."

Another visitor commented; "There has been a quick turn over of staff but they are all friendly and very quick to help me or my relative when needed. I know the management at the home and would have no worries about raising concerns or questions with them. My relative has stopped losing weight now too."

We spoke to most of the staff who were on duty during our visit, including the night staff. We had found at previous inspections that the night shift had been extremely stretched at times and had involved some staff working very long hours or double shifts.

All of the staff that we spoke to were pleased and happy with the changes that had been made with regard to staffing levels and staff teams. Staff comments included the following;

"There is a better atmosphere here now. We are working well together, as a team. The new manager is very

approachable and we can talk to them any time and they listen."

"I have been working here for a couple of weeks now. The induction I received prepared me well for the work I am expected to do. We are managing well with the staff we have and the numbers of people currently using the service. I hope this continues once the registered provider starts to admit new people into the home."

"I have noticed a difference over the last few months. We have more time to give people the time and care they need. It's much more relaxed here now. There is an activities co-ordinator too and they have made such a difference to the lives of people who live on this unit."

Staff told us that the communication across all areas of the home was "very much improved" and that it was "nice to get feedback and confirmation of what we are doing is right."

One member of staff in particular said; "I feel respected now and trusted by the management. I can use my clinical skills and judgements. I am proud to work here now."

We observed some of the things the activities co-ordinator had developed to help stimulate and interest people who lived in the dementia unit. For example there were "activity boxes" with items that people could remember from the past and take an interest in. We saw some sensory stimulating items that had been knitted for the home. These were just lying around so that people could pick them up and explore them if they wished.

The new manager at the home spoke to us about the staffing levels and the new staffing arrangements at the home.

Staff recruitment had progressed and included the recruitment of care staff, kitchen staff and qualified nurses. We looked at some of the staff recruitment records and found that all the appropriate checks had been carried out. This helped to make sure people who used this service were supported safely and by appropriate people who had the necessary skills and experience.

The service had relied less and less on staff coming in to work at Dalton Court from other homes within the organisation. Contingency plans were in place in the event of staff shortages at short notice and the staff rota was being reviewed so that staff knew well in advance about their working patterns.

Is the service well-led?

Our findings

At our last inspection of this service in December 2015, the registered provider was not meeting Regulation 17 – Good Governance, of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. There were no effective systems and processes in place to ensure compliance with the regulations.

At the previous inspection in June 2015 we had asked the registered provider to take action to make improvements to the way in which quality and safety were assessed and monitored but this had not been achieved and sustained. The health, safety and welfare of people who used this service were placed at risk.

This had also been the case when we inspected this service in June 2015.

During this inspection visit of 4 May 2016 we found that the registered provider had made significant improvements to meet this legal requirement, although there were some areas where further work was needed.

One visitor said; "It is a pleasure to come here now, I can't speak highly enough of the home and the staff. Nothing is too much trouble. The atmosphere is much better; it feels like going into your own home and meeting your family. The management team are lovely and I would have no problem telling them about any concerns I may have. They are very approachable and listen. I am very happy with the place now. It's perfect and I can't fault it."

Staff told us that they had noticed and been told about "new systems of working coming in."

One member of staff thought that the home was now "working well". They said; "It seems like we are moving in the right direction now. The new manager is genuinely interested in everyone. A lot of work is going on, especially around care planning and managing people's medicines. It seems the organisation has set long term and short term goals for improvement. These are discussed with us at staff meetings."

From the sample of care records we looked at, we noted that reviews and checks on the accuracy of information recorded had started to be reviewed and updated. We saw that there remained a significant amount of work to do on these important records regarding people's personal care and support needs. The manager and senior staff at the home were able to give us an update as to how and when these records would be completed.

We found that other checks and audits around the quality and standard of the service and care provided had commenced. For example, the dependency needs of people who used this service had been reviewed for accuracy. This helped the registered provider to ensure the home was appropriately staffed to meet people's care and support needs. Audits had been undertaken to check that the nutritional needs of people who used this service were adequately monitored and managed and people had been asked about the standard and quality of the food they received. However, there was still some work to be done with regards to accurately monitoring and recording the nutritional intake of some of the people who used this service.

Dalton Court had continued to have support from the registered provider's senior management teams. We found that various internal quality and safety audits had been undertaken to help keep improvements at the home on track.

The operations director had visited monthly to carry out quality assurance checks and information from these visits had been included in action plans to help drive the improvement process.

Everyone we spoke to during our visit to the home commented on the improved communication systems in place.

Staff working at the home, people who lived at the home and their relatives all commented on the things the registered provider had done to keep them up to date with the situation at the home and how improvements would be made. We looked at recent staff and relative's meeting minutes. These recorded that the registered provider had recognised the shortfalls in the quality of the service and provided people with details of the actions they intended to take to make improvements. The information recorded in the meeting minutes was confirmed by the people we spoke to during our inspection at Dalton Court. Everyone commented on the openness and improved communication from the registered provider and management team.

A copy of the last CQC inspection report was available to people using and working at Dalton Court. The registered provider had clearly displayed their CQC rating of "inadequate" and they had also provided people with a copy of their recovery action plan, should they wish to look at this.