

Bedford Citizens Housing Association Limited

Bedford Charter House

Inspection report

Charter House
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Bedfordshire
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Ratings

Overall rating for this service

Good ●

Is the service safe?

Good ●

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

Summary of findings

Overall summary

About the service

Bedford Charter House is a residential care home providing personal care to 53 people aged 65 and over at the time of the inspection. The service can support up to 72 people. Bedford Charter House has three separate floors, each of which has separate adapted facilities. One floor specialises in supporting people living with dementia. People had their own bedrooms with en-suite facilities and shared communal areas such as dining rooms, lounge areas and a large garden.

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

People and their relatives were happy with their care and support. One relative told us, "[Staff] are so lovely and treat [family member] so well. My family member is so happy living at the service and if they are happy then we are happy."

People were safe living at the service and staff had a good understanding of safeguarding and what to do if they had any concerns. Risks to people were assessed and measures were put in place to mitigate risks as far as possible. There were enough suitably trained staff to support people safely. People were supported safely with their medicines. Staff were trained and knew how to promote good infection control. Incidents and accidents were reviewed for any lessons that could be learned and these were shared with the staff team.

The provider and registered manager promoted a positive culture at the service. People, their relatives and the staff team were encouraged to feed back about the service and felt their suggestions were listened to. The management team completed audits to monitor the quality of the service and took action if areas for improvement were found. The staff teams worked with external professionals to promote good outcomes for people. People and their relatives were positive about the way the service was managed and the support that they received.

For more details, please see the full report which is on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk

Rating at last inspection

The last rating for this service was Good (report published 07 December 2019). We also inspected the service to look at IPC assurances and found no concerns (report published 09 March 2021).

Why we inspected

We received concerns in relation to staffing levels and the way in which people using the service were being supported to have their needs met. As a result, we undertook a focused inspection to review the key questions of safe and well-led only.

We reviewed the information we held about the service. No areas of concern were identified in the other key questions. We therefore did not inspect them. Ratings from previous comprehensive inspections for those key questions were used in calculating the overall rating at this inspection.

We found no evidence during this inspection that people were at risk of harm from these concerns. Please see the safe and well-led sections of this full report.

We looked at infection prevention and control measures under the Safe key question. We look at this in all care home inspections even if no concerns or risks have been identified. This is to provide assurance that the service can respond to COVID-19 and other infection outbreaks effectively.

You can read the report from our last comprehensive inspection, by selecting the 'all reports' link for Bedford Charter House on our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

Follow up

We will continue to monitor information we receive about the service until we 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?

Good ●

The service was safe.

Details are in our safe findings below.

Is the service well-led?

Good ●

The service was well-led.

Details are in our well-led findings below.

Bedford Charter House

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. We checked whether the provider was meeting the legal requirements and regulations associated with the Act. We looked at the overall quality of the service and provided a rating for the service under the Care Act 2014.

Inspection team

This inspection was completed by three inspectors and an Expert by Experience. An Expert by Experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Service and service type

Bedford Charter House 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 had a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission. This means that they and the provider are 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 the 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. We used the information the provider sent us in the provider information return. This is information providers are required to send us with key information about their service, what they do well, and improvements they plan to make. This information helps support our inspections. We used all this information to plan our inspection.

During the inspection

We spoke with 17 people who used the service and one relative about their experience of the care provided.

We spoke with 13 members of staff including the provider, registered manager, care managers, senior care workers, care workers, domestic care workers, the head of human resources and the chef. We spent time observing staff supporting people using the service.

We reviewed a range of records. This included four people's care records and multiple medication records. We looked at two staff files in relation to recruitment and staff supervision. A variety of records relating to the management of the service, including policies and procedures were reviewed.

After the inspection

We continued to seek clarification from the provider to validate evidence found. We looked at training data and quality assurance records. We spoke with a further six relatives over the telephone about their experience of the care provided.

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 good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant people were safe and protected from avoidable harm.

Systems and processes to safeguard people from the risk of abuse

- People told us they felt safe. People's comments included, "I feel very safe. [Staff] keep an eye on me and they come and see me every hour, including at night. They never disturb me though." and, "I am safe because the building is secure, and all locked up at night. There are always staff around."
- Relatives also felt that their family members were safe. One relative said, "My family member appears much happier and safer at Bedford Charter House. [Staff] understand and can support them with their needs really well."
- Staff received training in safeguarding and had a good understanding of what abuse may look like. Staff were confident to report any concerns both to managers of the service and externally to local authorities or the CQC.
- The provider and management team reported safeguarding concerns appropriately to the relevant authorities.

Assessing risk, safety monitoring and management

- Risks to people had been assessed and measures had been put in place to ensure people were safe. These assessments covered areas such as moving around the service, eating and drinking, the way people expressed their feelings and leaving the service. One person said, "I have to use [piece of equipment] and the staff are very good helping me with this. I am safe to go out in the garden and around the service and have never been stopped from doing what I want."
- The management team ensured that the service and the equipment used by people and the staff team were checked and serviced regularly. This included fire safety equipment. People had plans in place for evacuating the service if there was an emergency.
- Relatives felt that risks relating to their family members were managed well. One relative told us, "[Family member] used to refuse [type of personal care] as they were worried and felt unsafe. Thanks to the staff team they have now had [type of personal care] and felt safe doing this which has made them feel so much better."

Staffing and recruitment

- People, relatives and the staff team told us that there were enough staff to safely support people. During the inspection, people did not have to wait a long time to be supported and staff had time to talk to people as well as complete their other duties. People's comments included, "There are enough staff here and there is no difference in the evenings or at weekends." and, "There is a good system here to make sure that we don't have to wait for staff for a long time. [Staff] always answer my call bell quickly."
- Staff had the right skills and training to support people safely. One person said "[Staff] certainly seem to know what they are doing, and this makes me feel very safe."

- We discussed the concerns which had led to us completing this inspection with the provider and registered manager. They spoke to us about the work they were doing with senior and care staff, looking at staff deployment and how to continually improve this to support both people using the service and the staff team.
- The provider completed recruitment checks in line with legal requirements to help ensure that staff were suitable for their job roles.

Using medicines safely

- People were supported safely with their medicines. Staff were trained to administer medicines and had their competency to do this checked regularly. Staff supported people to take their medicines in their preferred way and knew how important this was for people. One person said, "I know what my medication is for and I always receive it at the right time."
- People had protocols in place for as and when required (PRN) medicines to help guide staff when to administer these.
- The management team completed stock checks and audits to help ensure medicines were administered safely.

Preventing and controlling infection

- The service felt fresh and was visibly clean. Domestic staff confirmed that they were well supported in their job roles and had received training specifically around infection control of diseases such as COVID-19. One person told us, "The service is clean and well-maintained, and I am confident that if I saw anything that needed cleaning or fixing, this would be done straight away."
- Relatives spoke to us about the infection control measures in place to support them to safely see their family members. One relative said, "The service is supportive of us seeing [family member] and taking them out and about. We must do COVID tests and wear PPE- it is all well organised and safe."
- We were assured that the provider was preventing visitors from catching and spreading infections.
- We were assured that the provider was meeting shielding and social distancing rules.
- We were assured that the provider was admitting people safely to the service.
- We were assured that the provider was using PPE effectively and safely.
- We were assured that the provider was accessing testing for people using the service and staff.
- We were assured that the provider was promoting safety through the layout and hygiene practices of the premises.
- We were assured that the provider was making sure infection outbreaks can be effectively prevented or managed.
- We were assured that the provider's infection prevention and control policy was up to date.
- We were assured the provider was facilitating visits for people living in the home in accordance with the current guidance.

Learning lessons when things go wrong

- The provider and management team reviewed accidents and incidents and took action if this was necessary. This included, referring people to external health professionals or updating people's care plans and risk assessments.
- Actions and findings were shared with the staff team in meetings and at handovers to promote lessons being learned.

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 the last inspection this key question was rated as good. At this inspection this key question has remained the same. This meant the service was consistently managed and well-led. Leaders and the culture they created promoted high-quality, person-centred care.

Managers and staff being clear about their roles, and understanding quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements; How the provider understands and acts on the duty of candour, which is their legal responsibility to be open and honest with people when something goes wrong; Continuous learning and improving care

- The provider, registered manager and staff team were clear about their roles. Staff knew how to support people in line with assessed risks and their personal preferences. Staff felt well supported and were able to request further training or guidance if they needed this.
- People and relatives were confident about the support that staff gave to them. One person said, "[Staff] seem to be very well trained. I feel comfortable asking them to help me with anything I cannot do myself." A relative told us, "[Family member] is very happy living at the service and I have complete trust that the staff are treating them with dignity and respect."
- The provider and registered manager carried out audits to monitor the quality of the service in areas such as care planning, health and safety and medicines. Where areas for improvement were identified, actions were put in place to rectify these.
- The provider was open and honest with people when things went wrong. Complaints were responded to in a timely manner and the person was asked whether the response to the complaint met their expectations. Reportable events were notified to the CQC in line with legal requirements.
- The provider and registered manager were committed to continually improving the service. A detailed improvement plan with actions and timelines was in place and this was based around people, staff and relatives' feedback about the service. We fed back some minor areas for consideration at this inspection and the provider and registered manager took immediate action to put improvements in place.

Promoting a positive culture that is person-centred, open, inclusive and empowering, which achieves good outcomes for people

- The provider and registered manager promoted a positive culture. The registered manager made sure they were visible to people and the staff team. This meant that they helped people and staff understand that they could approach them to discuss the service. Staff told us that the registered manager was supporting them to continually focus on maintaining and improving the culture at the service.
- People and their relatives were happy with the support they received at the service. People's comments included, "There is nothing I would change. This is the best service I have been in." and, "[Staff] are lovely and I cannot fault any of them. The food is good, and you can have as much as you want. We have lots to do

and I love the social events." A relative said, "You can tell how good the service is as [family member] describes it as their home and looks forward to going back after we have been out. This hasn't happened anywhere else."

- People and their relatives were positive about the management of the service. One person said, "No worries at all with the management here. If there is anything I need or if anything is wrong, they sort it out straight away." Relatives comments included, "The service is well managed and is perfect for [family member] in every way." and, "We are absolutely thrilled with the service and the management team. I feel very at ease approaching the service with anything we might need."

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

- People were supported to be involved in and feed back about the service in meetings and in one to one discussion with the staff team. One person said, "I go to residents' meetings and we talk about things like the food or social events. It's nice that we are asked about this."
- Relatives were positive about the way they were kept involved in their family members care and support. The registered manager sent monthly updates to relatives about their family member and how they had been over the month. One relative told us, "The way that we are kept up to date is what makes the service stand out. It gives me a lot of confidence in the support they give to [family member]."
- People and their relatives were involved in care planning and reviews of care plans. People were supported to understand what was being discussed in ways that made sense to them, for example using pictures or symbols. For example, a video of interviews for the registered manager role was produced so people could watch these and feedback their thoughts on potential candidates.
- Staff were invited to feedback and be involved in the direction of the service in supervisions and team meetings. Staff felt listened to and felt that their suggestions were taken on board.

Working in partnership with others

- The staff team linked and worked with health professionals such as GP's and physiotherapists to ensure that people achieved good outcomes.
- The management team built links with communities such as churches and social event organisers following the COVID-19 pandemic. This supported people to engage in their chosen interests more easily and achieve their chosen outcomes.