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Name of Service Provider: Ben Motor and Allied Trade Benevolent Fund

Premises visited: Town Thorns Care Centre, Brinklow Road, Easenhall, Rugby CV23 0JE

Date of Visit: Monday 19th August 2019

Time of visit: 10:00am

Registered Manager: Debbie Dale (Acting Manager)

Authorised Representatives: Robyn Dorling, Gill Fletcher, Sue Roodhouse, Jackie Prestwich, Dilys Skinner, Maggie Roberson.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users, their relatives and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time of our visit.

Approach Used

The visit was in response to a concern received by Healthwatch Warwickshire. Six Authorised Representatives arrived at the home unannounced, which means that no-one knew we were coming. We spoke to Acting Registered Manager, eight members of staff, eight residents and observed the care being given in the communal areas of the home, including the period over lunch.

Summary of findings

The Acting Registered Manager was aware of the issue that had caused the concern and had already taken steps to remedy it. More detailed findings are in the body of the report.

We were impressed by the Acting Registered Manager who has been in this role for two years.

We observed the physical environment of the home and found it to be generally well maintained and very clean.

The people living at the home told us they were well looked after and happy living there.

We observed that:

Laundry and care standards appear to be very high, evidenced by people's clothes being clean and appropriate.

Carers were responsive to the needs of individual residents.

Residents were engaged in meaningful activity such as reading, writing and knitting.

We observed the staff requesting consent before carrying out a range of activities. Staff seemed to know residents well and interacted in a respectful way.

On the day of our visit we found the atmosphere of the home was quiet and calm. The quality of care provided by the staff appeared to be of a good standard and did not give any cause for concern.

Staff were working well to meet the complex needs of some residents, in particular;

Staff were carefully implementing the dietary advice of specialists.

Residents had the equipment they needed, such as modern, specially adapted wheelchairs. We were told these were paid for by the charity.

Residents told us that:

They are looked after at the home and like the staff.

They like having a hairdresser at the home.

They appreciate having a dedicated Physiotherapy service at the home.

Recommendations

We spoke to staff and residents across all three units and comments about staffing pressures at night, or first thing in the morning, were made across all three areas. The Acting Registered Manager (RM) is aware of the issues and is reviewing staffing rotas using the Rowan Jefferson approach, alongside discussions with managers and staff. This method is favoured by the local Clinical Commissioning Group. We recommend that the RM continues to keep this under review, including night shift spot checks, and commend her for her proactive approach and continual review of this issue.

We recommend that the RM continues to pursue the lift being mended and the implementation of the planned refurbishments.

Interview with the Acting Registered Manager (RM)

When we arrived at the home we were met by the RM and spent the first part of the visit asking her questions about the home.

On the day of our visit forty-eight people were living at the home with one room

available. The RM told us that until recently Town Thorns Terrace Wing housed up to fourteen adults with learning disabilities. This wing has recently been closed due to changes in how people are supported to live in their own homes in the community. The Terrace Wing is now deliberately being kept empty so that residents will be able to move in there when planned refurbishments are taking place in the other parts of the home.

The RM told us that there are usually twelve to thirteen staff working on any one day which includes Nurses. Full time staff work fourteen shifts over four weeks and part time staff work seven shifts over four weeks. Shifts are from 8.00am to 8.00pm and 8.00pm to 8.00am, with fifteen minutes, prior to starting, for a handover meeting. Staff have six supervisions a year. All house leads meet every Wednesday.

Mandatory training is online and classroom training is given for Dementia and Moving & Handling. Nurses at the home provide 1:1 training. The RM assesses people in their own homes before they move into Town Thorns and will organise the training necessary for staff to meet their needs. All staff are trained in the Abbey Medical Pain Scale, which teaches people to spot signs that someone is in pain who may not be able to tell them.

The RM told us that unannounced monitoring visits take place at night bi-monthly. These visits have led to a review of policies and some changes in practice. After speaking about this with the RM we were satisfied that she followed correct procedure and is continuing to check that the good standards of the home are maintained in all areas.

The RM told us that the home does not have wi-fi.

After interviewing the RM we split into pairs and spoke to residents and staff on each wing.

Observations / Findings

Physical Environment:

Town Thorns is in a large building in a rural location in Rugby set in grounds within surrounding countryside. There are plenty of parking spaces. There is a bus that goes past the home twice a day but ideally you would need a car to visit the home.

The entrance of the home leads to a large open reception area which is attended to. There is a lift in reception.

The home three floors which are organised into wings. The Garden Wing, on the Lower Ground floor, has rooms for people living with Dementia, with access to a secure garden. The Ground Floor has a nursing wing for people with physical disabilities and complex needs, who do not have Dementia. The first floor has a wing for older residents. The home has two shared rooms. There are a further nineteen independent living flats, which were not included as part of our visit.

All rooms, except one, have an en-suite toilet and sink but no shower or bath. Residents living on the Garden Wing must go upstairs if they want a shower. One bathroom we saw was cluttered. We raised with the RM and she said she would have a look and address this straight away. Staff work well with what is available and residents said they were assisted to wash and use the shower or bath whenever they wanted to. We found no evidence that this limitation was impacting on the care of the residents. The RM told us that owners are looking at the costs of a refurbishment which will address the en-suite bathroom issue, as not having a shower is now out of date with modern day expectations.

The home was very clean and well maintained with wood flooring throughout. The lighting and temperature were appropriate.

The corridors are wide and spacious with handrails, wood flooring and no trip hazards. The physical environment appeared safe and secure.

One of the three lifts was broken with repair relying on the delivery of a part, from Italy, which was taking some time. There were two other working lifts, so staff and residents were able to move around the building using the lifts.

Activities:

There is no dedicated Activities Coordinator, but the Ancillary Services Manager organises some scheduled weekly activities which include seated dance and fish and chips.

The RM told us that the ethos of the home is that all staff should be involved in organising and supporting people to do things. The home has its own minibuses to take groups of residents out and all the staff are insured to take residents out in their cars.

We saw residents reading, writing, knitting, chatting with staff and holding a newspaper. We were told by two residents these were things they had enjoyed doing all their lives and continued to do so.

The home has a shop which was open during the lunch period on the day of our visit. There is also a café, which provides a different social environment, in which residents from both the home and the independent living wing can have lunch and socialise together.

Food:

Food is cooked freshly on site and is served four times a day with drinks and snacks offered at regular intervals throughout the day. Lunch was eaten in the communal dining area by many of the residents. The tables were laid, and the staff worked to create a pleasant environment. Residents who needed help eating were well assisted, receiving 1:1 support.

Nutrition and Hydration:

On the Nursing Wing we saw strong evidence of appropriate nutrition and hydration being given to residents over lunch to meet their individual and complex needs, with staff carefully following instructions from specialists.

One resident commented that, when they lost weight, the Nutritionist visited, and that staff had been very helpful in adapting their advice to meet her wishes.

Falls:

All residents have call bells and those at risk of falling have sensor mats and/or an alarm, that is worn on the wrist, in case they cannot reach the call bell. One resident told us she had used the wrist alarm.

Doctors:

Doctors from Revel Surgery visit on a Tuesday and Friday and come as and when necessary. Residents can have their own GP but if they do it is likely they will need to attend the surgery. Staff will support them to do this.

Medication:

On the day of our visit we saw Nurses administering medication.

Red Bag Scheme:

The home uses the (National) Red Bag Scheme for transferring standardised medical information, medication and the personal property of individuals when being transferred between the care home and hospital. This initiative is to improve communication between care homes and hospitals at all points of the resident's journey.

Dentists / Opticians / Podiatrist / Physiotherapist:

The home has an in-house Physiotherapist and Physiotherapist Assistant who, between them, work the equivalent of six days a week. This substantial provision was appreciated by the residents we spoke to.

Dentists visit periodically and, as and when needed. Some residents go to the Orchard Centre. On the day of our visit one resident had an appointment to go to a Dentist in Leamington the next day for specialist dental care.

Specsavers the Opticians visit and there are four or five Chiropodists that see residents in the home.

It is the personal choice of residents as to whether they use these services or not.

Hairdressing:

The hairdresser works at the salon in the home two days a week. The residents told us they really liked the hairdresser and valued the service. It was clear that the hairdresser was very popular, highly regarded and busy.

Laundry:

Laundry is cleaned in house five days a week with special procedures for hygiene.

Spiritual and Cultural needs:

The Chapel next door holds a service every Sunday. The RM proactively responded to our suggestion that religious leaders may be able to visit residents in the home.

Smoking arrangements:

Residents can smoke outside, and a carer will go with them if needed.

Alcohol:

Residents can have alcohol in the home.

Complaints:

We spoke to four people about complaints. Staff felt confident that they could go to the Manager with any problems. Residents felt their complaints would be addressed and gave us positive examples of when this had happened.

Feedback from staff:

We spoke to eight members of staff about what it was like working at the home.

Staff told us they liked working at the home.

Several members of staff had worked at the home for over ten years. One person we spoke to had progressed from being a cleaner to a carer and felt she had received appropriate training. Another member of staff told us they had moved from being employed by an agency to being permanently employed by the home.

We were told by staff that having more staff working in the morning would be helpful.

Feedback from residents:

We spoke to eight residents about what it was like to live at the home these are some of the things they said:

“I came here for a month and the staff were really helpful”.

“It’s like home from home”.

“The staff are the best”.

“We are waited on hand and foot”.

“I read mostly, I’m a great reader, I watch the telly but it’s boring”.

“I like it, the staff are very friendly and very helpful”.

“I could not have chosen a better place”.

“Sometimes the food gets a bit boring”.

“My family visit me a lot”.

“I don’t go out of the home now but I like to get some fresh air in the grounds where there is lots of wildlife, I have seen Herons”.

I can see Monks Kirby from my window. I lived there for 26years”.

“If I need help at night I use my bell. I can get out of bed but I can’t get back in. The call bell takes no more than five minutes, but it does get a bit desperate”.

“I have only ever complained once”.

“The girls and staff are lovely”.

“Really I can’t fault this place. I recommend it to all my friends”.

“I could not live alone anymore. I used to live in sheltered housing, but they would find me on the floor, so I had to make a decision. It was the best decision I made”.

“At night there are usually regular night staff”.

“I have used the wrist alarm when I couldn’t find the call bell”.

“Really, it does not take long for staff to come at night, there are always two staff on at night. You may wait ten minutes, if they have an emergency you may wait longer, but you know they are coming”.

“The food is quite good but not like home cooking”.

“It can be quite rushed in the morning, there are two night covers and eighteen people, so in the morning it is pretty rushed”.

“The community nurses come in to see me every morning”.

Feedback from relatives/carers:

We were not able to speak to any relatives on the day of our visit.

How do we rate our observations?	
Green	At least 80% of our observations were positive.
Amber	At least 60% of our observations were positive.
Red	Less than 60% of our observations were positive. This rating is also used if safeguarding issues are identified or hazards which have the likelihood of causing harm.

Area of Observation	Rating (RAG)	
Atmosphere	Green	Low noise levels Appropriate temperature Calm & quiet
Cleanliness	Green	Clean
Decoration	Green	Good
Facilities	Amber	Need showers in en-suites to be up to date with modern expectations.
Fixtures and Fittings	Green	Satisfactory
Flooring	Green	Wooden floors throughout
Furnishings	Green	Satisfactory

Lighting	Green	Appropriate
Privacy and Dignity	Green	Residents addressed by name Staff knock doors before entering residents' rooms Staff ask before helping Residents treated with dignity and respect
Signage	Green	The inside and outside of the building are well signposted
Storage	Green	
Bathrooms	Amber	Toilets and basin in each room One bathroom cluttered and facilities need improving
Garden	Green	Good Accessible, safe and secure with walks for residents. Surrounding countryside
Laundry	Green	
Kitchen	Green	Clean and organised