



Inspection Report on

The Firs

Cwmbran

Date Inspection Completed

20/12/2023

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About The Firs

Type of care provided	Care Home Service Adults Without Nursing
Registered Provider	Enable Care Services (South Wales) Ltd
Registered places	6
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	10 November 2022
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service does not provide an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and does not demonstrate a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

People at The Firs are happy and lead fulfilled lives. A suitable environment promotes peoples' wellbeing. Care workers treat people with dignity and respect, and support them to achieve meaningful personal outcomes. A good range of recreational and learning activities keep people stimulated and promotes their independence for as long as possible. Physical and emotional wellbeing needs are promoted through detailed and up-to-date personal plans. Robust safeguarding protocols help to protect people from harm and abuse. Care workers are well-trained and know how to respond to a safeguarding concern. Medication management needs strengthening to ensure people are always safe.

The manager has embedded good governance arrangements ensuring a smooth and effectively run service. Effective quality assurance tools are used to aid continuous development. The Responsible Individual (RI) regularly visits the service. Their oversight of the service has improved. Care workers are safely recruited and undergo a comprehensive probationary induction. Care workers are consistently supervised by a supportive manager.

Well-being

People are treated with dignity and respect by care workers who have developed strong relationships with them. Care workers are polite and take the time to interact with people in a meaningful way. A familiar staff and management team use personalised care delivery to comfort and encourage people. We saw care workers use humour and reassurance when supporting someone to eat their breakfast. Care workers display good knowledge of people's key interests by using preferred activities as a distraction technique to alleviate anxieties.

People get the right care and support to stay healthy. Detailed personal plans outline individual support needs and are reviewed every three months. Care workers organise regular medical reviews and prompt clinical intervention for changing needs. This keeps people as healthy and independent for as long as possible. Risk assessments safeguard people whilst encouraging positive risk taking. People do things that make them happy. Recreational activities are individualised, varied, and promote people's emotional wellbeing. People told us they enjoy keeping busy. Activities include going for meals and attending parties and local social clubs. In 2023, people visited a holiday camp and a seaside resort as part of their summer holidays. They told us they enjoyed these trips.

People live in an environment that suits their needs and promotes their wellbeing. Friends and family members are encouraged to visit at any time. People have developed strong bonds of friendship with others living in the home. Communal areas are homely and lively, offering a space for people to socialise. One person we spoke with described the home as *'the best place I have ever lived.'*

People are mostly safeguarded from harm and abuse, but some improvements are needed to ensure people are always safe. A safeguarding policy helps to keep people safe. All care workers are trained in safeguarding and know how to report a safeguarding concern. People are reminded of their right to make a complaint using reader-friendly literature. Medication management requires some strengthening to ensure people are consistently safe. Personal plans do not always reflect people have full control over their day-to-day choices. Some restrictive and overly rigid language is used to describes people's morning routines, which indicate people cannot always choose what time they wake up. The manager offered us assurance they would take immediate action to ensure all people are happy with their morning routines. Personal plans would be updated accordingly.

Care and Support

People receive care in a way that is meaningful to them by an enthusiastic staff team. Care workers demonstrate a clear understanding of people's needs and use person-centred care delivery to promote their wellbeing. We observed care workers taking the time to have meaningful conversations with people which had a positive impact on their mood. People we spoke with offered positive feedback about care workers and used terms such as '*nice*' and '*kind*' to describe them.

Care is delivered in-line with people's personal plans. Personal plans reflect people's needs identified before they move into the service. Dedicated care workers update plans promptly to reflect continuing care needs. Personal plans have been improved and developed since our previous inspection to focus on what is important to people. The manager has developed individual wellbeing goals with each person to improve their overall wellbeing. Positive behaviour support information is included for people who struggle to control their emotions and behaviours. The manager reviews all care plan documentation regularly. Records of daily activities are wellbeing focused and not task orientated. We identified some overly rigid wording relating to people's morning routines. This indicates people do not always have choice on the time they wake up. All people we spoke with told us they are happy with their morning regime, but we were unable to speak to all people living at the home due to communication differences. We were offered assurance by the manager this would be addressed with each person and personal plans would be updated to reflect individual preferences. We will review this at our next inspection.

Keyworker engagement is consistent and proactive. Regular keyworker meetings focus on people's wellbeing. Robust communication dictionaries are used for people with communication differences to ensure they can be understood and listened to. Service user meetings give people the opportunity to offer feedback about the home. This feedback is used to improve the service. People are regularly asked what activities they would like to engage in. This feedback is acted on. People engage in a variety of both in-house and community activities which have a positive impact on their wellbeing. All people we spoke with told us they are happy with the activities programme and feel it keeps them busy and stimulated.

Medication management needs strengthening. As required medication protocols should be more robust to ensure they are used correctly and appropriately. This should be reflected in the service's medication policy. We identified some out of date medication which was still in use. We were offered assurance that immediate action would be taken to remedy these concerns. We expect the provider to take action to address this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Environment

The environment is suitable for the people living at the service and enhances their wellbeing. Communal areas are homely and have been personalised with photographs of people living at the home. Bedrooms are decorated according to people's preferences and tastes. Some modernisation of the home is needed. We were assured that an ongoing renovation schedule is underway to decorate and update the home.

People live in a safe environment. Visitors are asked to sign in on arrival and present identification. The manager has embedded robust health and safety processes which promote people's safety. Routine health and safety audits and consistent health and safety checks identify areas for improvement. This includes three-monthly infection control audits and weekly specialist equipment checks. Relevant certificates are in place to evidence all required health and safety inspections have taken place. The fire alarm is tested weekly, and people take part in regular fire drills. All people have a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) which considers any individual evacuation needs.

Robust infection control procedures help prevent the spread of infection. Cleaning schedules ensure the service is well maintained and clean. Personal protective equipment is available for care workers to use. People are encouraged to maintain and clean their own surroundings to promote independence.

Leadership and Management

Effective governance arrangements support the smooth and effective running of the service. The Responsible Individual (RI) visits the service at least every three months, in-line with the regulations. Records of these visits demonstrate oversight of the service has improved. Auditing and analysis of care delivery is completed to identify areas for improvement. People and care worker feedback is sought regularly and used to aid continuous development and improvement of the service. This is evidenced in a quality of care report which the RI completes every six months.

The manager demonstrates commitment to providing good quality care and support to help people achieve their wellbeing outcomes. The manager has good oversight of the day-to-day running of the service. A range of consistent quality assurance audits helps them identify areas for improvement. Documentation is well organised and easily accessible. Key policies underpin safe and consistent practices. The manager took immediate action to improve some policies following our feedback.

People are provided with accurate information about the service. The Statement of Purpose (SOP) and Service User Guide (SUG) reflects the service provided which helps people choose a service which can meet their needs. A reader friendly SUG helps people with different communication abilities understand what the service provides.

People are supported by suitable care workers who have the knowledge, competency, and skills to fulfil their roles. Care workers are recruited safely and undergo a thorough probationary period before being signed off as competent for the role. Care workers have a good understanding of safeguarding and know how to report a concern. Regular disclosure and barring services checks are completed on the staff team. All care workers are up to date with mandatory and service specific training which enables them to carry out their roles safely. Care workers discuss ongoing development needs at consistent supervision which are supportive in nature. Care workers told us they feel supported by the manager, who they described as '*approachable*.' Care workers are given the opportunity to offer feedback at regular staff meetings.

Care workers we spoke to offered positive feedback about the quality of care delivered to people. One care worker described the quality of care as '*top notch*' and '*excellent*.' Another described it as '*phenomenal*.' All care workers we spoke with told us they enjoy their roles.

Summary of Non-Compliance

Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people’s well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)

Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection. Where the provider has failed to make the necessary improvements we will escalate the matter by issuing a Priority Action Notice.

Area(s) for Improvement

Regulation	Summary	Status
58	More robust medication procedures are needed to ensure people are safe and healthy.	New
7	The statement of purpose, which describes the services provided, requires updating.	Achieved
15	Personal plans do not accurately reflect identified needs or risk.	Achieved
21	Improvements in mental capacity assessments and best interests assessments are required to ensure people's liberties are protected.	Achieved
36	Specialist training should be available for staff to ensure they have the right skills to meet peoples identified needs.	Achieved
12	Policies do not reflect current legislation and best practice.	Achieved

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