

# Balcarres Care Home Service

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
11 December 2023

**Service provided by:**  
HC-One No. 1 Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2016012770

**Service no:**  
CS2016349809

## About the service

Balcarres is a care home for older people situated in a residential area of Broughty Ferry, close to local transport links, shops and community services. The service provides residential care for up to 35 people.

The service provides accommodation over two floors in single bedrooms, each with en-suite facilities. There are two sitting rooms and one dining room. There is a large, accessible, well-tended garden with a number of summer houses that are used creatively for several purposes.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 05 December 2023. The inspection was carried out by three inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with three people using the service and four of their families
- spoke with three staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents

**Key messages**

- There was a track record of exceptionally high-quality care.
- People were supported by a skilled and consistent staff team.
- People were at the heart of decision making in Balcarres.
- There was a person led approach to the delivery of care.
- Quality assurance processes were effective in identifying and driving innovative change.
- The service was committed to achieving the best possible experiences for people living in Balcarres.

**From this inspection we evaluated this service as:**

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

## How well do we support people's wellbeing?

6 - Excellent

This service demonstrated a track record of exceptionally high-quality care. We identified innovative approaches to people's support which led to outstandingly high-quality experiences. We have therefore evaluated key question one as excellent.

Without exception people were treated with compassion dignity and respect. We observed interactions between staff and people that were warm, natural and fun. There were clearly strong, positive relationships in Balcarres, both among people living there and with the staff. The value on positive, supportive relationships was extended to relatives and visitors too. This created a real sense of belonging and community which supported people to feel included. People told us they liked living here and enjoyed the company.

A strong sense of belonging was further enhanced by personalised bedrooms easily identified by clear name plaques which the staff went above and beyond to ensure were always in place and reflected people's choices. Personal belongings were displayed in people's bedrooms and also about the home which created a sense of homeliness and familiarity.

People were supported by staff who were highly skilled in promoting independence through meaningful activity. People's skills were recognised and developed in all aspects of daily living. People were enabled to be involved in meaningful tasks including managing their own laundry. Staff had worked innovatively to create a photographic inventory of people's clothing that was used to support with recognition of their own items. This ensured people had purpose and in turn, supported good wellbeing.

The service promoted a person-led approach to how care was delivered, providing people with a meaningful level of determination over their lives. People and those important to them were at the heart of decisions about their care and involved in a variety of ways such as activity planning and care plan reviews. People were seen as experts in their own care and their aspirations were valued when planning their support and reflected in documentation.

People benefitted from a truly holistic approach to care provision which took account of their individual health conditions and abilities. People were able to choose how they spent their time and were involved in a range of meaningful and individually tailored activities. People had access to photographs and mementos of some of the activities they had participated in, ensuring the enjoyment of the experiences was treasured and shared. Some of these were displayed in peoples' rooms and some were used in the service newsletters.

People were able to maintain important relationships outside of Balcarres with the use of technology if needed. Meaningful connection was further promoted in the celebration of important family events. We saw how spaces were available for families to 'hire' out if required for special occasions. Interest and awareness of life outside of Balcarres was promoted with good community social links. Key annual events such as Easter, Halloween and Christmas were celebrated, supporting people's orientation to the time of year. Creative and inclusive approaches were taken to these celebrations such as the creation of an accessible 'Brugge Market' in the garden for Christmas that people would be free to visit throughout the festive period.

The service went the 'extra mile' to ensure families were welcome in the home. Toys and play equipment were available for children to use which made it easier for families to visit together. People living in Balcarres could be involved in family activities, events and told us they enjoyed seeing younger generations of their family grow up.

Mealtimes were calm, highly organised and uninterrupted. People were able to choose where they wanted to sit. Mealtimes were used as opportunities for social interaction and to maintain relationships with different people. Visitors were also welcome to join at mealtimes if they wanted to. Food was varied and well presented; people told us they had a choice every day and there was always an alternative if they didn't fancy the menu options. Special diets were easily catered for and there were measures in place to ensure people received the right diet for them. People told us the food in Balcarres was lovely.

Special effort was made to ensure someone's first night in Balcarres was comfortable and welcoming. A favourite meal was prepared, personal belongings were placed in their room and around the home to support the transition. A fold-down bed was available for relatives to spend the night with their loved one if they needed or wanted to. This was available to families throughout people's stay at Balcarres.

People's health and wellbeing was enriched by staff who had specialist skills and knowledge. Some staff had gained additional qualifications to provide an enhanced footcare service and tailored exercise opportunities. There was evidence of improved outcomes for people's balance, mobility and a reduction in falls as a result. The environment and unhurried atmosphere in the home enabled people to freely move around, further supporting these outcomes.

Medication was managed safely and effectively ensuring people received their medication as prescribed. Risk assessments and care plans sensitively considered people who may experience stress and distress. Strategies to support people were clear and concisely documented to ensure people's emotional wellbeing was maintained. As a result, the level of incidents occurring within the home was minimal.

Care plans were written with respect, valuing the person as an individual and promoting independence. They were informed by comprehensive, relevant risk assessments and completed and reviewed with the person and their representative to ensure they were fully reflective of the person's needs and wishes. Staff we spoke to told us they understood the care plans and we saw care being delivered in accordance with them such as with mealtime support. Non-direct care staff were also encouraged to familiarise themselves with the contents of the care plans to ensure they had a thorough understanding of people's needs and abilities.

The positive and open relationships between staff, people and families allowed for honest, sensitive discussions around future care planning. End of life wishes were recorded within the care plans to ensure people continued to receive care that met their needs and wishes.

Overall people living in Balcarres received excellent, flexible and responsive, and person-led care. Creative approaches were taken to ensuring positive experiences. Staff were not complacent in this approach and demonstrated a commitment to strive for progress with the people living in Balcarres firmly at the heart of all decision-making.

## How good is our leadership?

## 6 - Excellent

We evaluated this key question as excellent. The service demonstrated a track record of outstanding leadership and was committed to achieving the best possible experiences for people living in Balcarres.

There were comprehensive quality assurance processes in place which supported effective leadership oversight of all aspects of the service. Self-evaluation was prioritised and linked to the Care Inspectorate quality framework. There was a visual display accessible to all staff, people and families which ensured everyone was empowered to be involved in quality assurance. In this way good practice could be encouraged, sustained and used to drive improvements.

Although working to the highest standards, the service sought to continually improve. A service improvement plan was in place that detailed the direction of the service and was shared with staff, families and people living in Balcarres. Feedback was collected frequently from people and their families using a variety of methods to suit people's needs and abilities. People told us they were confident that their feedback would be responded to effectively. This ensured that people felt included and that the needs, outcomes and wishes of people living in Balcarres were the primary drivers for change.

The service was responsive to people's needs but also proactive in identifying and managing areas for change. Leaders demonstrated a clear understanding of what was working well and used experience to identify areas for improvement. A refurbishment of some communal areas was underway so that the service would be better equipped to meet the needs of their changing client group. Plans were in place to ensure people's needs were fully met and dignity upheld should an unplanned hospital admission be required. There was a new system for the identification of lost laundry items that could fully and sensitively include the person. These small but significant changes were being implemented in consultation with people and families and demonstrated that people living at Balcarres were at the heart of all improvements.

The manager strove for excellence, and this was evident in the meticulous and consistent quality assurance records and in the regular evaluations of staff practice. To achieve best outcomes for people, it is essential that staff feel supported in their role and are confident they have the right knowledge and skills. There was a stable and established staff team in Balcarres that benefitted from regular management support and was empowered to develop knowledge and skills. Opportunities for extensive learning tailored to people's needs was readily available and taken advantage of so that this could be achieved. Staff champions were developed in specialist roles such as medication management, moving and handling, and mental health to act as a point of contact for any specific queries and to drive targeted improvements. There were incentives and rewards in place for staff to recognise achievements and celebrate success. This resulted in a valued and motivated staff team who told us they enjoyed working at Balcarres and felt well supported. This also contributed to maintaining the friendly and positive atmosphere within the home.

The manager was accessible and provided support and guidance to people and their families throughout their time at Balcarres. A person-led ethos was integral to Balcarres and people living there were clearly at the heart of all decision making.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	6 - Excellent
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	6 - Excellent
1.2 People get the most out of life	6 - Excellent
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	6 - Excellent
How good is our leadership?	6 - Excellent
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	6 - Excellent



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