

# Northcare Residences Care Home Service

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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
18 June 2024

**Service provided by:**  
Northcare (Scotland) Ltd

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002314

**Service no:**  
CS2023000224

## About the service

Northcare Residences is a purpose-built care home which can offer individualised care and support to up to 65 older adults. The home is situated in the centre of Stirling and enjoys open views across Stirling, Bridge of Allan and the Ochil Hills. Arranged over four floors, Northcare Residences offers individual and spacious bedrooms, each with en-suite toilet and shower facilities. The care facilities incorporate small lounge areas and family-style dining, while the social space includes private dining, brasserie, cocktail lounge, cinema room, hair salon and sky terrace. The garden space has meandering paths, a greenhouse, potting shed, BBQ area and sensory gardens. The provider is Northcare (Scotland) Ltd and Northcare Residences has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since July 2023.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 11, 12 and 13 June 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate, supported by an inspection volunteer. An inspection volunteer is a member of the public who volunteers to work alongside the inspectors. Inspection volunteers have a unique experience of either being a service user themselves or being a carer for someone who has used services. The inspection volunteer role is to speak with people using the service and their families and gather their views.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since first registration.

In making our evaluations of the service we did not receive feedback questionnaires from families or staff however, we:

- received feedback from 12, and spent time with 28 people using the service
- spoke or emailed with 11 family members
- spoke or emailed with 24 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with nine visiting professionals.

## Key messages

People were supported with respect and dignity and experienced warm, kind and trusting relationships with staff.

People were proactively supported to maintain their health and wellbeing.

The management team valued staff and staff felt very well supported in their work.

People could be confident that the service was focussed on improvement because the quality assurance processes were robust.

Good practice guidance was followed to ensure that staffing levels met peoples needs

Where some general improvements were needed, the provider and management team were very responsive and action focussed.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good

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

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

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

People experienced support with compassion because there were warm, encouraging, positive and trusting relationships between staff and people living at Northcare Residencies.

The service had very good oversight of people's health and wellbeing needs which started with a full introduction to Northcare Residencies before people moved into the service. This meant that people experienced good outcomes throughout the admission process. People spoke positively of the pre admission arrangements. One person said "as soon as I walked in I knew I was home", a family member told us "my (relative) was supported to settle in very well" while another said "the staff have been amazing from the first home visit to everyday we visit now. Everyone is so friendly and interested in our journey."

Health assessments were very full and up to date and we saw good links with healthcare professionals which meant that any changes in peoples health care needs were promptly responded to.

The service had a good understanding of falls prevention. People were encouraged to be active and exercise and mobility support was part of daily life for a number of people.

The service supported peoples wellbeing through a wide-ranging programme of activities, arranged both in house and using external expertise. Intergenerational work with two local nurseries evidenced good outcomes for people living in Northcare Residencies and local children. Nursery groups visit the home twice weekly and people who live at the home have started to visit the nurseries. Nursery staff said "positive relationships have formed between generations" and both have "had the opportunity to make new friends and create meaningful connections".

People could be confident that when they needed support with medication, this was well managed and people were supported to take medication safely. Some prescription medication such as topical creams and gels had not been appropriately stored, however this was resolved on the first day of the inspection with robust plans in place to sustain the improvement.

The mealtime experience was calm and relaxed with staff supporting discreetly. The service kept good information about peoples nutritional needs, weights and food and fluid preferences. The configuration of support staff ensured that fluids and snacks were available at all times and all staff were aware of what was needed to support people to eat and drink well including the chef team who regularly discussed special dietary needs with people and their care team.

Peoples views about the food were mixed and we saw a good service response to this feedback during our inspection, where alternative preferences were made available to people.

## How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of leadership within the service and how this supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People were well-informed and their views were taken into account when developing the service. People,

relatives and most staff described feeling confident giving feedback because this was welcomed and acted on. One relative told us " as relatives, we are really listened to" while another said " It is clear that the staff are well managed, respectful and welcoming at all times. This tone is set by (the manager)", while staff said "(the manager) is approachable and responsive"

Staff felt very well supported by the wider management team who encouraged staff to work towards better outcomes for people. Observations of staff practice were regularly undertaken to assess learning and competence and there was regular meetings, feedback sessions and supervision. Staff told us that they felt valued because they were recognised for their work and were empowered to participate in quality assurance, promoting responsibility and accountability across the whole team.

Quality assurance activity was completed fully and regularly, was action focussed and clearly linked to improving outcomes for people. The service development plan had considered both service improvement and service growth and included a stepped and thoughtful approach to opening the final floor of the home.

### How good is our staff team?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in aspects of staffing and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

People could be confident that the staff team were motivated, worked well together and had formed good relationships. Staff told us that they enjoyed working within the service and there were low level of staff absence. When agency staff were needed to replace staff, they were usually well known, were made to feel welcome and told us that management and staff were friendly and helpful and they received a good introduction to the home when coming for the first time.

The service was mindful of Health and Care staffing legislation now in force and there was a focus on staff wellbeing. People were kept safe because the provider followed safer recruitment guidance and had a full induction programme for all staff.

Good practice guidance was also in place to support the assessment of staffing. A dependency tool ensured that staffing levels were adequate. In addition to this people's needs were regularly reassessed and the service was staffed accordingly. Staff were visible and available to people and visitors throughout the day and were seen to be very responsive to peoples needs.

Care staff were well supported in their role by hospitality staff who provided emotional and social support as well as support with eating and drinking.

Mandatory training was completed timeously to ensure that staff were confident and refreshed in their knowledge regularly in order to support people effectively.

### How good is our setting?

**5 - Very Good**

We found significant strengths in the setting and we evaluated this key question as very good.

People benefitted from a warm, comfortable welcoming environment with plenty of natural light and sufficient space to meet their needs and wishes. People had access to a variety of spaces to spend their

time, depending on whether they preferred privacy or company and this included outdoor options. The care home was well presented, tastefully decorated and very clean and fresh at all times of the inspection visits.

Cleaning of the home was unobtrusive and followed good practice guidance. People could be confident that good infection prevention control was in place because the staff undertook housekeeping in line with the National (Care Home) Infection Prevention and Control Manual.

There were clear and planned arrangements for maintenance of the premises and equipment. The environment was well maintained by the inhouse team with support from external professionals where appropriate. Regular checks and monitoring occurred to ensure that standards were maintained and people were kept safe, however, these checks had omitted some of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) required water checks. When this was raised, the provider responded promptly and made arrangements for immediate and ongoing checks to comply with HSE.

## How well is our care and support planned?

**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good because we found significant strengths in the care plans that impacted positively on outcomes for people. People's care plans were individualised, reflected people well and reviewed regularly. Risk assessments were fully completed and this ensured that care and support provided met peoples needs. Reviews are completed timeously and families told us they were involved in reviews and in care planning.

Where people may experience stress and/or distress the service had good protocols and practice in place. Individual care plans had very clear details of what may exacerbate distress and had well written, tried and tested strategies to support people. Information held in people's rooms was discreet but of a very good standard which meant that people could be confident of their care and support as all staff had immediate access to individual guidance. Further improvement could include sharing good information from the care plans to the bedroom support plan and ensuring all changes to peoples care and support is updated at the point of any change.

Recordings of how people spent their day were focussed on clinical aspects of their care and support and did not reflect how they met outcomes, achievements or aspirations. We discussed this with the manager and provider and were confident in their plans to improve recordings to reflect the whole of peoples day.

## 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?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	5 - Very Good

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