

North Merchiston Care Home Service

34 Watson Crescent
Edinburgh
EH11 1HF

Telephone: 01313 479 100

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
17 October 2024

Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
SP2003002576

Service no:
CS2023000137

About the service

North Merchiston is a purpose built care home, located close to Edinburgh city centre. The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since May 2023 to provide care for 50 older people. The service provider is the City of Edinburgh council. There are local amenities nearby and the home is close to local transport links. Ample parking is available within the grounds of the home.

Accommodation is offered over three floors with two units on each floor. Each unit is made up of ten rooms with en-suite facilities. Access to outdoor areas is available on all floors, with small verandas off the sitting rooms on the upper floors. There is a communal garden with seating and pathways around planted areas.

At the time of the inspection there were 40 people experiencing care in North Merchiston.

About the inspection

This was a full inspection which took place from 08 October 2024 to 15 October 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

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

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 12 people using the service and five of their family members
- spoke with 15 members of staff and management
- reviewed questionnaire feedback from five members of staff and 11 relatives
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

- People's health and wellbeing needs were being met.
- People experienced warm and gentle care from staff who knew them well.
- People's dining experience required some attention.
- Staff were committed to helping people achieve their best possible outcomes.
- Staffing arrangements were good and staff worked well together.
- Family members commented favourably about the care their loved ones received.

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?	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	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?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

People experienced good health and wellbeing outcomes as a result of their care and support. Staff interactions with people experiencing care were kind, gentle and encouraging. Staff treated people with dignity and respect and were focussed on achieving the best possible outcomes for the people they were caring for. Care was delivered at a pace suitable for each person. Staff spent time speaking to people and knew people's history and interests. This meant that trusting relationships were formed between people and the staff who cared for them.

People experiencing care put ideas forward for improvements at resident's meetings. This demonstrated that people's input was valued and respected. Relatives we spoke with reported that they felt their loved ones were treated with compassion, dignity and respect. One family member commented:

"the care (my relative) gets is great - no problems whatsoever. They're lovely with (my relative). They know what can make (them) laugh - it shows how much they have got to know (them) and it is nice to see that".

People's dining experience required some attention. People were offered choices with food and drinks and good hygiene practice was followed by staff. Some people's experience would have benefitted from a range of specialised aids to enable independent eating. We asked the service to review this and to look at ways to enhance interactions during the dining experience.

People were able to leave the home to spend time with people who were important to them. Family members were free to visit their loved ones at a time of their choosing and we saw a high number of people receiving visitors during the inspection. Staff understood the importance of people maintaining contact with friends and relatives. This approach promoted positive wellbeing for people.

The provision of activities in the home was good. Relationships between people experiencing care were developed as a result of well provided activities. We asked the service to review the variety and number of activities offered to people with a focus on physical activity. Family members we spoke with commented positively about the activity team. One relative told us:

"I think the activity girls are actually brilliant - they would get my star rating. Not only do they do that well, along with fundraising... but the way they talk to people and how well they know them really comes across".

People's health benefitted from good engagement with other health services. Health professionals we spoke with told us staff were quick to act on health related issues and were responsive to any advice given. This approach helped people keep well and ensured their health needs were being met.

Medication systems were good. Systems for the administration of medication were in place and processes were regularly audited with clear plans in place when issues were identified. Areas for storing medication were clean and tidy. This good practice helped reduce errors and kept people well as a result.

A range of charts were in place to ensure people's health and wellbeing was continuously monitored. Communication systems including regular handovers and clinical meetings focussed on people's wellbeing.

These resulted in actions being taken to support people's wellbeing. Relatives we spoke with told us they were kept up to date regarding their loved ones. This evidenced that staff were aware of the current needs of the people they cared for.

Risk assessments in place demonstrated an enabling approach from staff to promote people's independence. Reviews of people's care and support were regular and involved people who were important to those experiencing care. Detailed personal plans guided staff on how to deliver care that met people's needs. These processes ensured people continued to receive a service of good quality.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths regarding the staffing of the service and how this supported positive outcomes for people. We evaluated the performance of the service under this key question as very good.

The recruitment of new staff was carried out in a safe manner with systems in place to reduce risks to people experiencing care. Processes were in place to ensure potential staff demonstrated the values required for caring for people. Induction processes ensured staff were equipped to start supporting and caring for people effectively. People were kept safe as a result of good recruitment and induction processes.

Staff completed training that was relevant to their roles. Training records were kept and evidenced a high level of completion of courses. Systems were in place to monitor staff training which detailed when refreshers were due. This ensured the knowledge that staff had was up to date and in keeping with current best practice.

Rotas were in place which ensured that people were regularly cared for by the same staff. This allowed for relationships to be developed between people and the staff caring for them. A dependency tool in place ensured that staffing levels across the home were flexible and met people's needs. There had been a recent reliance on bank and agency staff. However, these vacancies were regularly filled by the same staff members, ensuring continuity of care for people. Plans were in place to fill staff vacancies on a permanent basis.

The home worked as one large team and staff spoke positively of working together to achieve the best outcomes for people. One staff member commented:

"we have wonderful residents. Just seeing their smile after caring for them, that makes me feel I'm doing good work and something worthwhile".

Staff engaged in supervision which gave them an opportunity to talk about their development. Managers observed staff practice which contributed to discussions during supervision meetings. Staff spoke positively of the process of supervision where they felt able to bring up anything positive or negative about their work and life outside of the home. Regular team meetings provided staff with further opportunity to discuss concerns and offer ideas for improvements. This evidenced that staff were valued and that their opinions mattered to managers.

Staff treated people experiencing care, their relatives and each other with kindness and compassion. Family members spoke very favourably about the staff culture. One relative told us:

"I've got to know people and I know that people will listen to me if there is something on my mind. The relationship has developed. I'm closer to more staff than I was before".

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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