



Inspection Report on

Victoria House

Blackwood

Date Inspection Completed

20/02/2024

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About Victoria House

Type of care provided	Care Home Service Adults Without Nursing
Registered Provider	Homes of Excellence Ltd
Registered places	3
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	[30 May 2022]
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is working towards providing an 'Active Offer' of the Welsh language and demonstrates a significant effort to promoting the use of the Welsh language and culture.

Summary

People experience good care and support in the home; they are treated with dignity and respect. Care workers hold people in positive esteem and speak warmly and passionately about their roles. We found that people and care worker share positive relationships and rapport.

The environment meets the needs of people living in the home. People benefit from spacious communal areas as well as personalised bedrooms. The home is comfortable and clean, although we noted there are some areas of wear and tear. The manager has an ongoing refurbishment plan to maintain the environment.

Care workers are safely recruited and trained at the service. The manager has thorough records and systems for managing the support and supervision of care workers. Care workers told us they receive thorough inductions and feel confident within their roles. The responsible individual (RI) visits the home in line with their regulatory duties and considers and analyses all aspects of service delivery.

Well-being

People are treated with dignity and respect. People have choice about how they spend their time. We saw care workers engaging with people in their preferred activities such as reading together or going for a walk. People appear happy in their home. The manager and provider have given consideration to people's compatibility prior to people moving into the home. People are supported to remain healthy. The service keeps thorough records of health appointments and information and guidance from these, reflected in people's personal plans. Care workers are knowledgeable about the health needs of people living in the home. People are protected from harm and abuse. We saw a robust safeguarding policy and procedures in place within the home. The manager ensures that the home is transparent and works with external agencies such as the local authority and health board to ensure people's health, safety, and wellbeing is protected.

People's personal plans are built around their strengths and what they can do. Plans contain clear guidance to enable care workers to encourage people to maintain or develop their skills. We found a variety of visual aids to support people to make choices and to manage their own time. People's individual preferences are considered and evident in all aspects of their care and support such as records, documents, and in the different approaches used by care workers. Care workers follow the model of Active Support to ensure people have control in their day-to-day lives. The home environment supports people's wellbeing. People have their own private spaces as well as plenty of communal space to engage with others on their own terms. People are encouraged to use the home fully and are supported by care workers to engage in a variety of homely duties such as cooking and laundry.

The manager ensures the smooth running of the home day-to-day. There are clear systems in place to support and develop care workers. We saw there are enough care workers on duty to ensure that people receive support in a timely manner, in line with their personal plans. The manager and RI have good oversight of the home and take on board feedback to continuously monitor and improve the delivery of care and support. The RI spends time in the home to support the team to ensure that policies and procedures are consistently implemented. There is provision available for documentation and support to be provided through the Welsh language. However, at this time, this is not required in the home.

Care and Support

People are supported to be as independent as possible. We saw people being supported to complete daily living tasks. Care workers speak passionately about encouraging people to do as much for themselves as they can. The manager ensures that risks and specialist needs considered in the care planning process, and potential risks are monitored and reviewed as part of people's personal plans. Where people are unable to keep themselves safe, the necessary procedures are followed. Appropriate arrangements are in place with the Local Authority to ensure decisions are made in people's best interests, when required.

People benefit from care workers who are well informed and supported to meet their needs. Personal plans are well written, with a focus on people's strengths and wellbeing outcomes. Personal plans provide clear structured guidance to support care workers to meet their needs proactively, and to encourage people to actively participate in their own care and support. Personal plans contain information about people's social histories which help care workers build meaningful relationships with people. Personal plans are reviewed frequently. The manager works collaboratively with people's families and representatives when reviewing the plan, but this is not consistently evidenced in the home's documentation. The RI and manager are taking action to resolve this immediately.

People have allocated key workers who consistently review and report on people's care and support. Key workers support people to work towards their identified wellbeing outcomes and take on board people's preferences through careful observation and by trialling a variety of activities. Care workers complete thorough records of daily care tasks as well as providing daily overviews of people's mood, engagement, and health and wellbeing. Accidents and incidents are recorded and reported effectively, and action is taken to address any potential risks of harm to people or care workers.

The provider has a robust medication policy in place to support the safe handling and administration of medication. We found that people receive their medication in line with the prescribers' directions. Care workers are trained in the administration of medication, and the manager has oversight of this. We saw that care workers keep accurate records of people's medication (MARs). Medication is managed and stored securely in line with best practice. We identified potential risks associated with the location and accessibility of keys to the medication cabinet, however this was rectified immediately by the manager.

Environment

The environment meets the needs of people living in the home. The home is spacious and split over two floors providing plenty of communal and private space for people to enjoy. People have their own bedrooms which are decorated in line with their preferences. Recommendations by external professionals such as the occupational therapist are considered and implemented. We saw multiple examples of sensory equipment such as lights, scents, and activities within the environment to enrich people's experience.

The large family style kitchen diner provides people with opportunities to engage in aspects of daily living chores such as cooking and cleaning. The home follows safe practices in the handling and preparation of food and has a rating of five (very good) with the Food Standards Agency. Care workers ensure that whilst safe practices are followed in the kitchen and laundry room, the environment remains homely, and we found that health and safety signage is discreet but placed effectively. There is a spacious lounge with plenty of seating should all people in the home choose to spend time together. The décor in the lounge is cosy and comfortable although attention could be considered in this area to update. People have opportunities to use and enjoy activities which are easily located and accessible in the environment.

There are patio doors leading from the lounge and kitchen into the enclosed garden. The garden is compact but contains plenty of seating, as well as sensory items, and areas for growing plants and food. Care workers told us about the food grown at the home last summer, and how people enjoyed this.

The environment is safe for people living at the home. We found that health and safety checks are completed routinely by the manager. The provider ensures that external professionals complete appropriate checks to the home's utilities such as gas and electric. We saw that the home has records of these visits, as well as current health and safety certification. Where people require support from specialised equipment, the home ensures that this is regularly maintained. There is a current plan in place for the ongoing maintenance of the home, and to redevelop the upstairs bathroom. People have use of ensuite toilets in their bedrooms and share a communal bathroom in the home.

Leadership and Management

There are governance and oversight arrangements in place to support the smooth running of the home. The manager oversees this home as well as one other but is supported by a consistent team of care workers who know the people and the processes well. The RI visits the service frequently to carry out their regulatory duties. Recent RI reports we viewed demonstrated that they seek feedback from people, care workers, families, and representatives. The RI audits and reviews documentation and processes relating to the delivery of care and support, as well as the environment, and leadership and management. We found that the reports prepared by the RI for the service provider are thorough and contain clear summaries about key areas of achievement as well as opportunities for development. Although people living at the service are not always able to express their wishes, and feedback easily, the RI and manager spend time in the service observing and engaging with people to consider their preferences, and feedback.

We found several systems in place to support effective communication between the provider, care workers, families, and representatives. Processes such as communication books and telephone notes are used consistently within the home.

The manager follows safe recruitment practices. We saw that the manager supports care workers to register with Social Care Wales, the workforce regulator. Care workers are supported effectively within the home. Care workers receive regular support and supervision sessions to help them develop within their roles. The manager has systems in place to help manage and plan staff development. We saw that care workers receive regular training to support their competence and confidence within their roles. Care workers told us they have good opportunities for learning and development, and that they are thoroughly supported during their inductions. One care worker told us “*Can’t fault them.*”

There are enough care workers on duty to support people effectively, and the manager ensures that staff rotas are well planned and available in advance. The RI and provider are passionate about supporting the health and wellbeing of care workers and have several initiatives available to support care workers such as a health care plan. The RI told us they feel strongly about this as it has a positive impact on the delivery of care and support, and ultimately people’s wellbeing.

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