

Inspection Report

15 August 2022



Apple Blossom Lodge

Type of service: Nursing
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www.rqia.org.uk

Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

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1.0 Service information

Organization/Registered Provider: Larchwood Care Homes (NI) Ltd	Registered Manager: Mr Martin Anthony McKee
Responsible Individual: Mr Christopher Walsh	Date registered: 11 February 2022
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Mr. Gerry McVeigh (Registered Nurse)	Number of registered places: 37
Categories of care: Nursing Home (NH) DE – Dementia. MP – Mental disorder excluding learning disability or dementia. MP(E) - Mental disorder excluding learning disability or dementia – over 65 years.	Number of patients accommodated in the nursing home on the day of this inspection: 36
Brief description of the accommodation/how the service operates: This home is a registered nursing home which provides nursing care for up to 37 patients. The home is divided in three units over two floors. Each unit has communal sitting and dining rooms.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 15 September 2022, from 9.45am to 1.55pm. This was completed by a pharmacist inspector.

The inspection focused on medicines management within the home. The purpose of the inspection was to assess if the home was delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the home was well led with respect to medicines management. The areas for improvement identified at the last care inspection were not reviewed.

Review of medicines management found that robust arrangements were in place for the safe management of medicines. Medicine records were well maintained. There were effective auditing processes in place to ensure that staff were trained and competent to manage medicines and patients were administered their medicines as prescribed.

Based on the inspection findings and discussions held, RQIA are satisfied that this service is providing safe and effective care in a caring and compassionate manner; and that the service is well led by the management team.

RQIA would like to thank the staff for their assistance throughout the inspection.

3.0 How we inspect

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how they were performing at the time of our inspection, highlighting both good practice and any areas for improvement. It is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure compliance with legislation, standards and best practice, and to address any deficits identified during our inspections.

To prepare for this inspection, information held by RQIA about this home was reviewed. This included previous inspection findings, incidents and correspondence. The inspection was completed by examining a sample of medicine related records, the storage arrangements for medicines, staff training and the auditing systems used to ensure the safe management of medicines. Staff views were also obtained.

4.0 What people told us about the service

The inspector also met with the nursing staff and the responsible individual.

Staff interactions with patients were warm, friendly and supportive. It was evident that they knew the patients well. All staff were wearing face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) as needed. PPE signage was displayed.

Staff expressed satisfaction with how the home was managed. They also said that they had the appropriate training to look after patients and meet their needs.

Feedback methods included a staff poster and paper questionnaires which were provided to the manager for any patient or their family representative to complete and return using pre-paid, self-addressed envelopes. At the time of issuing this report, no questionnaires had been received by RQIA.

5.0 The inspection

5.1 What has this service done to meet any areas for improvement identified at or since the last inspection?

Areas for improvement from the last inspection on 2 August 2022		
Action required to ensure compliance with The Nursing Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005		Validation of compliance
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 20(1)(c) (i) Stated: First time	The registered person shall ensure all nursing and care staff are in receipt of up-to-date training in the management of distressed behaviours.	Carried forward to the next inspection
	Action required to ensure compliance with this regulation was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection.	
Action required to ensure compliance with the Care Standards for Nursing Homes (April 2015)		Validation of compliance
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Standard 47(5) Stated: First time	The registered person shall ensure there is an increased managerial oversight into the numbers of patients who smoke in the home and their individual associated risks, with subsequent appropriate action(s).	Carried forward to the next inspection
	Action required to ensure compliance with this standard was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection.	

5.2 Inspection findings

5.2.1 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are appropriately prescribed, monitored and reviewed?

Patients in nursing homes should be registered with a general medical practitioner (GP) to ensure that they receive appropriate medical care when they need it. At times patients' needs may change and therefore their medicines should be regularly monitored and reviewed. This is usually done by the GP, the pharmacist or during a hospital admission.

Patients in the home were registered with a GP and medicines were dispensed by the community pharmacist.

Personal medication records were in place for each patient. These are records used to list all of the prescribed medicines, with details of how and when they should be administered. It is important that these records accurately reflect the most recent prescription to ensure that medicines are administered as prescribed and because they may be used by other healthcare professionals, for example, at medication reviews or hospital appointments.

The personal medication records reviewed at the inspection were accurate and up to date. In line with best practice, a second member of staff had checked and signed the personal medication records when they were written and updated to state that they were accurate.

Patients will sometimes get distressed and will occasionally require medicines to help them manage their distress. It is important that care plans are in place to direct staff on when it is appropriate to administer these medicines and that records are kept of when the medicine was given, the reason it was given and what the outcome was. If staff record the reason and outcome of giving the medicine, then they can identify common triggers which may cause the patient's distress and if the prescribed medicine is effective for the patient.

The management of medicines prescribed on a "when required" basis for the management of distressed reactions was reviewed for four patients. Directions for use were clearly recorded on the personal medication records. Care plans directing the use of these medicines were in place for three of the four patients; the nurse wrote a behavioural management care plan for the other patient during the inspection. Staff knew how to recognise a change in a patient's behaviour and were aware that this change may be associated with pain, infection or constipation. Records included the reason for and outcome of each administration.

The management of pain was discussed. Staff advised that they were familiar with how each patient expressed their pain and that pain relief was administered when required. Care plans and pain assessments were in place and reviewed regularly.

Some patients may need their diet modified to ensure that they receive adequate nutrition. This may include thickening fluids to aid swallowing and food supplements in addition to meals. Care plans detailing how the patient should be supported with their food and fluid intake should be in place to direct staff. All staff should have the necessary training to ensure that they can meet the needs of the patient.

The management of thickening agents was reviewed for four patients. A speech and language assessment report and care plan was in place. Records of prescribing and administration which included the recommended consistency level were maintained. One care plan needed to be updated with respect to the prescribed thickener consistency; this was done by the nurse during the inspection.

A care plan was in place when a patient required insulin to manage their diabetes. There was sufficient detail to direct staff if the patient's blood sugar was too low.

5.2.2 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are supplied on time, stored safely and disposed of appropriately?

Medicines stock levels must be checked on a regular basis and new stock must be ordered on time. This ensures that the patient's medicines are available for administration as prescribed. It

is important that they are stored safely and securely so that there is no unauthorised access and disposed of promptly to ensure that a discontinued medicine is not administered in error.

The records inspected showed that medicines were available for administration when patients required them. Staff advised that they had a good relationship with the community pharmacist and that medicines were supplied in a timely manner.

The medicines storage areas were observed to be securely locked to prevent any unauthorised access. They were tidy and organised so that medicines belonging to each patient could be easily located. Temperatures of medicine storage areas were monitored and recorded to ensure that medicines were stored appropriately. A medicine refrigerator and controlled drugs cabinet were available for use as needed.

Satisfactory arrangements were in place for the safe disposal of medicines.

5.2.3 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are appropriately administered within the home?

It is important to have a clear record of which medicines have been administered to patients to ensure that they are receiving the correct prescribed treatment.

A sample of the medicines administration records was reviewed. The records were found to have been fully and accurately completed. The records were filed once completed.

Controlled drugs are medicines which are subject to strict legal controls and legislation. They commonly include strong pain killers. The receipt, administration and disposal of controlled drugs should be recorded in the controlled drug record book. There were satisfactory arrangements in place for the management of controlled drugs. The controlled drug record books had been maintained to the required standard.

Management and staff audited medicine administration on a regular basis within the home. A range of audits were carried out. The date of opening was recorded on all medicines so that they could be easily audited. This is good practice.

5.2.4 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are safely managed during transfer of care?

People who use medicines may follow a pathway of care that can involve both health and social care services. It is important that medicines are not considered in isolation, but as an integral part of the pathway, and at each step. Problems with the supply of medicines and how information is transferred put people at increased risk of harm when they change from one healthcare setting to another.

There had been no recent admissions or readmissions to the home. However, the admission process for patients new to the home or returning to the home after receiving hospital care was reviewed. The nurses advised that robust arrangements were in place to ensure that they were provided with a current list of the patient's medicines and this was shared with the community pharmacist.

5.2.5 What arrangements are in place to ensure that staff can identify, report and learn from adverse incidents?

Occasionally medicines incidents occur within homes. It is important that there are systems in place which quickly identify that an incident has occurred so that action can be taken to prevent a recurrence and that staff can learn from the incident. A robust audit system will help staff to identify medicine related incidents.

Management and staff were familiar with the type of incidents that should be reported. The medicine related incidents which had been reported to RQIA since the last inspection were discussed. There was evidence that the incidents had been reported to the prescriber for guidance, investigated and the learning shared with staff in order to prevent a recurrence.

The audits completed at the inspection indicated that the medicines were being administered as prescribed.

5.2.6 What measures are in place to ensure that staff in the home are qualified, competent and sufficiently experienced and supported to manage medicines safely?

To ensure that patients are well looked after and receive their medicines appropriately, staff who administer medicines to patients must be appropriately trained. The registered person has a responsibility to check that staff are competent in managing medicines and that they are supported.

Staff in the home had received a structured induction which included medicines management when this forms part of their role. Competency had been assessed following induction and annually thereafter. A written record was completed for induction and competency assessments.

6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	1*	1*

* The total number of areas for improvement includes two which are carried forward for review at the next inspection.

This inspection resulted in no new areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Mr. Christopher Walsh, Responsible Individual, as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.

Quality Improvement Plan	
Action required to ensure compliance with The Nursing Home Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 20(1)(c) (i) Stated: First time To be completed by: 3 September 2022	<p>The registered person shall ensure all nursing and care staff are in receipt of up-to-date training in the management of distressed behaviours.</p> <p>Action required to ensure compliance with this regulation was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection.</p> <p>Ref: 5.1</p>
Action required to ensure compliance with Care Standards for Nursing Homes, April 2015	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Standard 47(5) Stated: First time To be completed by: 10 August 2022	<p>The registered person shall ensure there is an increased managerial oversight into the numbers of patients who smoke in the home and their individual associated risks, with subsequent appropriate action(s).</p> <p>Action required to ensure compliance with this standard was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection.</p> <p>Ref: 5.1</p>

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