The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority

Inspection Report

Name of Service: Clifton House Residential Home

Provider: Radius Housing Association

Date of Inspection: 2 October 2025

Information on legislation and standards underpinning inspections can be found on our website https://www.rqia.org.uk/

1.0 Service information

Organisation/Registered Provider:	Radius Housing Association
Responsible Individual:	Mrs Fiona McAnespie
Registered Manager:	Mrs Catrina O'Rourke

Service Profile:
Clifton House Residential Home is a residential care home registered to provide health and social care for up to 27 residents. The home provides care for residents living with dementia, physical disabilities, past or present alcohol dependence and for those needing general residential care.

Residents bedrooms are located over two floors in the home. Residents have access to a dining room, activity room, hairdressing room and lounge areas. The home has an enclosed garden for residents to enjoy.

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 2 October 2025, from 10.00am to 3:05pm. The inspection was completed by a pharmacist inspector and focused on medicines management within the home.

The inspection was undertaken to evidence how medicines are managed in relation to the regulations and standards and to determine if the home is delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and is well led in relation to medicines management. The areas for improvement identified at the last care inspection were carried forward for review at the next inspection.

Mostly satisfactory arrangements were in place for the safe management of medicines. Medicines were stored securely. Medicine records and medicine related care plans were well maintained. There were effective auditing processes in place to ensure that staff were trained and competent to manage medicines. However, improvements were necessary in relation to archiving of obsolete records, monitoring of refrigerator temperatures and the management of inhaled medicines.

Whilst areas for improvement were identified, there was evidence that with the exception of a small number of medicines, residents were being administered their medicines as prescribed.

Details of the inspection findings, including areas for improvement carried forward for review at the next inspection, and new areas for improvement identified, can be found in the main body of this report and in the quality improvement plan (QIP) (Section 4.0).

Residents were observed to be relaxed and comfortable in the home and in their interactions with staff. It was evident that staff knew the residents well.

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

3.0 The inspection

3.1 How we inspect

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how the home was performing against the regulations and standards, 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 areas for improvement identified at previous inspections, registration information, and any other written or verbal information received from residents, relatives, staff or the commissioning trust.

Throughout the inspection process, inspectors seek the views of those living, working and visiting the home; and review/examine a sample of records to evidence how the home is performing in relation to the regulations and standards.

3.2 What people told us about the service and their quality of life

One questionnaire was received from a resident's relative who was very satisfied with how medicines were managed within the service. Comments included: "The staff go above and beyond, they notice when my mum is not herself and have prevented infections becoming more serious due to their quick response."

Staff expressed satisfaction with how the home was managed. They also said that they had the appropriate training to look after residents and meet their needs. They said that the team communicated well and the management team were readily available to discuss any issues and concerns should they arise.

Staff advised that they were familiar with how each resident liked to take their medicines. They stated medication rounds were tailored to respect each individual's preferences, needs and timing requirements.

No completed questionnaires or responses to the staff survey were received following the inspection.

3.3 Inspection findings

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

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

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

Personal medication records were in place for each resident. 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 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 confirm that they were accurate. A small number of minor discrepancies were highlighted to staff for immediate corrective action and on-going vigilance. Copies of residents' prescriptions/hospital discharge letters were retained so that any entry on the personal medication record could be checked against the prescription.

Obsolete personal medication records had not been cancelled and archived. This is necessary to ensure that staff do not refer to obsolete directions in error and administer medicines incorrectly. An area for improvement was identified.

All residents should have care plans which detail their specific care needs and how the care is to be delivered. In relation to medicines these may include care plans for the management of distressed reactions, pain, modified diets etc.

The management of distressed reactions, pain, insulin, and epilepsy was reviewed. Care plans contained sufficient detail to direct the required care. Medicine records were well maintained. The audits completed indicated that medicines were administered as prescribed.

Some residents 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 resident 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 resident.

The management of thickening agents and nutritional supplements was reviewed. Speech and language assessment reports and care plans were in place. Records of prescribing and administration which included the recommended consistency level were maintained. One care plan required updating with the current consistency level, this was discussed with the manager who provided assurance this would be actioned after the inspection. The correct consistency level was being administered.

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

Medicine stock levels must be checked on a regular basis and new stock must be ordered on time. This ensures that the resident'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.

Records reviewed showed that medicines were available for administration when residents required them. Staff advised that they had a good relationship with the community pharmacist and that medicines were supplied in a timely manner.

The medicine storage area was observed to be securely locked to prevent any unauthorised access. It was tidy and organised so that medicines belonging to each resident could be easily located. A box of medication belonging to one resident was stored on top of the refrigerator within the treatment room. This was highlighted to the senior carer who relocated them to a locked cupboard at the time of the inspection. Satisfactory arrangements were in place for the storage of controlled drugs and the safe disposal of medicines.

Medicines which require cold storage must be stored between 2^{o}C and 8^{o}C to maintain their stability and efficacy. In order to ensure that this temperature range is maintained it is necessary to monitor the maximum and minimum temperatures of the medicines refrigerator each day and to then reset the thermometer. The temperature of the medicines refrigerator had not been recorded on numerous occasions. Records of maximum temperatures were often outside of the recommended range and no action had been taken. . This does not provide evidence that the temperature is maintained within the required range at all times. An area for improvement was identified.

3.3.3 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 residents 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 accurately completed. Records were filed once completed and were readily retrievable for audit/review.

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.

Management and staff audited the management and administration of medicines on a regular basis within the home. There was evidence that the findings of the audits had been discussed with staff and addressed. The date of opening was recorded on medicines to facilitate audit and disposal at expiry.

3.3.4 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.

A review of records indicated that satisfactory arrangements were in place to manage medicines at the time of admission or for residents returning from hospital. Written confirmation of prescribed medicines was obtained at or prior to admission and details shared with the GP and community pharmacy as necessary.

Medicine records had been accurately completed and there was evidence that medicines were administered as prescribed.

3.3.5 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.

There have been no medicine related incidents reported to RQIA since the last medicines management inspection. Management and staff advised that they were familiar with the type of incidents that should be reported. The inspector signposted staff to the RQIA provider guidance in relation to the statutory notification of medication related incidents available on the RQIA website.

The audits completed at the inspection indicated that the majority of medicines were being administered as prescribed. However, audit discrepancies were observed in the administration of a number of inhaled medicines. The audits were discussed in detail with the staff on duty and the manager for on-going monitoring. An area for improvement was identified.

3.3.6 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 residents are well looked after and receive their medicines appropriately, staff who administer medicines to residents must be appropriately trained. The registered person has a responsibility to check that they staff are competent in managing medicines and that they are supported. Policies and procedures should be up to date and readily available for staff reference.

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.

It was agreed that the findings of this inspection would be discussed with staff to facilitate the necessary improvements.

4.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

Areas for improvement have been identified where action is required to ensure compliance with Regulations and Standards.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	2*	4*

* the total number of areas for improvement includes three that have carried forward for review at the next inspection.

Areas for improvement and details of the Quality Improvement Plan were discussed with Mrs Catrina O'Rourke, Registered Manager, as part of the inspection process. The timescales for completion commence from the date of inspection.

Quality Improvement Plan

Action required to ensure compliance with The Residential Home Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005	
Area for improvement 1 **Ref:** Regulation 13 (4) **Stated:** First time **To be completed by:** 2 October 2025	The registered person shall ensure that the refrigerator temperature is monitored daily and action taken if outside the recommended range. Ref: 3.3.2 **Response by registered person detailing the actions taken**: All members of the Senior team have been reminded that the medication refridgerator and medication room temperature must be recorded each day and retained for future audit.
Area for improvement 2 **Ref:** Regulation 13 (4) **Stated:** First time **To be completed by:** 2 October 2025	The registered person shall ensure that inhaled medicines are administered as prescribed. Ref: 3.3.5 **Response by registered person detailing the actions taken:** All members of the Senior team have been directed how to record administered inhaled medication dosage and how to audit these medications mid cycle.
Action required to ensure compliance with the Care Standards for Residential Homes, December 2022	
Area for improvement 1 **Ref:** Standard 31 **Stated:** First time **To be completed by:** 2 October 2025	The registered person shall ensure that obsolete personal medication records are cancelled and archived promptly. Ref: 3.3.1 **Response by registered person detailing the actions taken:** The Registered Manager has put appropriate measures in place to ensure appropriate archiving of obsolete medication records.
Area for improvement 2 **Ref:** Standard 27.1 **Stated:** Second time **To be completed by:** 1 October 2025	The registered person shall conduct a review of the homes environment to identify refurbishments required and complete a time bound action plan to address any issues identified. This plan should be shared with RQIA for review. **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.** Ref: 2.0

Area for improvement 3 **Ref:** Standard 6 **Stated:** First time **To be completed by:** 23 May 2025	The registered person shall ensure that where a resident is at risk of falling, their care plan and risk assessment are reviewed and updated following any fall. **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.** Ref: 2.0
Area for improvement 4 **Ref:** Standard 25.8 **Stated:** First time **To be completed by:** 1 July 2025	The registered person shall ensure that staff meetings take place on a regular basis, for all staff, at least quarterly and that records are maintained. **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.** Ref: 2.0

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