

Inspection Report

Name of Service: Stewart Lodge

Provider: Stewart Lodge

Date of Inspection: 14 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:	Stewart Lodge
Responsible Individual:	Mrs Janet Stewart
Registered Manager:	Mrs Janet Stewart
Service Profile: Stewart Lodge is a registered residential care home which provides residential care for up to eight residents including residents living with dementia. Residents have access to the communal lounge, the dining room and an enclosed patio area.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 14 October 2025, from 10.30am to 1.30pm. 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 inspection reviewed the areas for improvement identified at the last medicines management inspection. 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 and residents were administered their medicines as prescribed. However, improvements were necessary in relation to the monitoring of temperature in the medicine storage area and the cold storage of 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.

The areas for improvement in relation to auditing systems and disposal of medicines identified at the last medicines management inspection were assessed as met.

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

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.

RQIA did not receive any completed questionnaires or responses to the staff survey 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.

Medicine records were well maintained. The audits completed indicated that medicines were administered as prescribed.

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. The temperature of the medicine storage area was not monitored and recorded each day. Temperatures of medicine storage areas must be monitored and recorded each day to ensure that medicines are stored appropriately at or below 25°C. An area for improvement was identified.

Medicines which require cold storage must be stored between 2°C and 8°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. Only the current temperature of the medicine refrigerator was monitored each day; this does not provide evidence that the temperature is maintained within the required range at all times. An area for improvement was identified.

Satisfactory arrangements were in place for the storage of controlled drugs and the safe disposal of medicines.

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. Most of the records were found to have been accurately completed. A small number of missed signatures were brought to the attention of the manager for ongoing monitoring. 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 a controlled drug record book.

There were no controlled drugs in stock in the home on the day of the inspection; however, a controlled drug cabinet was available for use as needed. Staff advised that they were aware of which medicines required storage in the controlled drug cabinet and the necessary records to be kept should a resident be prescribed these medicines.

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. 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.

Management and staff were familiar with the type of incidents that should be reported. The medicine related incident which had been reported to RQIA since the last inspection was discussed. There was evidence that the incident 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 medicines were being administered as prescribed. The audits were discussed in detail the manager for on-going monitoring.

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.

There were records in place to show that staff responsible for medicines management had been trained and deemed competent. Medicines management policies and procedures were in place.

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.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	2	3*

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

Areas for improvement and details of the Quality Improvement Plan were discussed with Mrs Janet Stewart, 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: 14 October 2025	The registered person shall ensure that the temperature of the medicine storage area is monitored and maintained at or below 25°C. Ref: 3.3.2 Response by registered person detailing the actions taken: New system now in place.
Area for improvement 2 Ref: Regulation 13 (4) Stated: First time To be completed by: 14 October 2025	The registered person shall ensure that the management of medicine refrigerator temperatures is robust as detailed in the report. Ref: 3.3.2 Response by registered person detailing the actions taken: Now keeping a separate medication temperature record. No fridge lines at present.
Action required to ensure compliance with the Care Standards for Residential Homes, December 2022	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Standard 6.6 Stated: First time To be completed by: 1 June 2025	The responsible person shall ensure that residents care plans reflect the resident's current needs. This is stated in reference to, the management of weight loss and the use of pressure relieving equipment. 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 2 Ref: Standard E8 Stated: First time To be completed by: 1 September 2025	The registered person shall ensure that a working call bell system is in operation in the home. 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 22.3 Stated: First time To be completed by: 1 May 2025	The registered person shall ensure that records required under the Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS) Order 2003 (Regulations), are always available in the home for inspection by RQIA.
	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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