

Inspection Report

Name of Service: Melmount Manor Care Centre

Provider: Ann's Care Homes

Date of Inspection: 5 November 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:	Ann's Care Homes
Responsible Individual:	Mrs Charmaine Hamilton
Registered Manager:	Mrs Hayley Phillips
Service Profile: Melmount Manor is a registered nursing home which provides nursing care for up to 70 patients. The home is divided in two units, with the Dennette Unit providing care for 39 patients living with dementia category of care and the Mourne Unit providing care for 31 patients with general nursing category of care. Accommodation is over a ground floor level. There are a range of communal areas throughout the home and patients have access to an enclosed garden.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 5 November 2025, from 10.20am to 3.20pm. The inspection was completed by two pharmacist inspectors 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 and patients were administered their medicines as prescribed. However, improvements were necessary in relation to antibiotic administration.

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

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

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

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 patients, 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 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. 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 patient 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?

Patients in nursing homes should be registered with a general 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 a GP, a 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 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 for immediate corrective action and on-going vigilance.

Copies of patients' prescriptions/hospital discharge letters were retained so that any entry on the personal medication record could be checked against the prescription.

All patients 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.

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 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 distressed reactions, was reviewed. Directions for use were clearly recorded on the personal medication record and patient-centred care plans were in place. Staff knew how to recognise a change in a patient's behaviour and were aware that this change may be associated with pain and other factors. Records of administration included the reason for and outcome of each administration. Two care plans needed updated with the name of the most recent prescribed medication. This was discussed with staff and the manager for immediate corrective action.

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 were in place and reviewed regularly. One patient needed a care plan for pain, this was discussed with staff and the manager and assurance was provided this would be put in place immediately following the inspection.

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. 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 needed updated with the most recently recommended consistency level and one care plan needed the consistency level added; this was actioned during the inspection.

Care plans were in place when patients required insulin to manage their diabetes. There was sufficient detail to direct staff if the patient's blood sugar was outside of the recommended range. One in use insulin pen was not labelled to denote ownership. This was discussed with staff and the manager for immediate action and ongoing vigilance.

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 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.

Records reviewed 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. All medicines were available for administration on the day of inspection. However, it was noted that one medicine had recently been out of stock; this had not been escalated to the manager, reported to the prescriber for guidance or reported to RQIA as a medication incident. This was discussed with the manager and an incident report detailing the action to prevent a recurrence was received by RQIA on 5 November 2025.

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

Mostly satisfactory arrangements were in place for medicines requiring cold storage. One refrigerator did not have a temperature gauge fitted which allowed for the maximum and minimum temperature to be displayed and recorded. This was discussed with the manager and it was agreed during the inspection that a new temperature probe would be obtained which would allow for the recording of the minimum and maximum temperatures each day.

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 patients 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. Records were filed once completed and were readily retrievable for audit/review. A review of administration records indicated that there were a number of omitted doses for two antibiotics resulting in a delay in completing the courses. An area for improvement was identified.

Controlled drugs are medicines which are subject to strict legal controls and legislation. They commonly include strong painkillers. 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 patients returning from hospital. Written confirmation of prescribed medicines was obtained at or prior to admission and details shared with the GP and community pharmacy. There was evidence that any discrepancies had been followed up in a timely manner to ensure that the correct medicines were available for administration. However, one recently discontinued medicine had not been removed from the medication trolley; this was discussed with staff for immediate removal and with the manager for ongoing vigilance.

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 had been one medicine related incident reported to RQIA since the last medicines management inspection. Management and staff 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 small number of medicines (see Section 3.3.3). The audits were discussed in detail with the nurses on duty and 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 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. 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

An area for improvement has been identified where action is required to ensure compliance with Regulations.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	2*	1*

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

Areas for improvement and details of the Quality Improvement Plan were discussed with Mrs Hayley Phillips, 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 Nursing Home Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 13 (4) Stated: First time To be completed by: 5 November 2025	The registered person shall ensure that antibiotics are administered as prescribed. Ref: 3.3.3
	Response by registered person detailing the actions taken: The handover has will also be utilised and antibiotics will be added as another method of informing staff that antibiotic therapy has been commenced. Memo to all staff nurses regarding administration of antibiotics, specifically ensuring Staff nurses use ways of signposting staff to the fact that antibiotics are in use, e.g Post it notes on main kardex to highlight antibiotic currently prescribed. Also noted in memo that all staff nurses are to ensure boxed antibiotics have a tally commenced at time of first administration.
Area for improvement 2 Ref: Regulation 20 (1) (a) Stated: First time To be completed by: 9 October 2025	The registered person must ensure that there is adequate cover for activities and social events in the home for the same to be enhanced.
	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. Ref: 2.0
Action required to ensure compliance with the Care Standards for Nursing Homes, December 2022	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Standard 16 (11) Stated: First time To be completed by: 16 September 2025	The registered person shall ensure it is clearly recorded in the outcome of complaints whether the complainant was satisfied with the outcome.
	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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