

Inspection Report

8 October 2024



The Laurels DC

Type of service: Day Care Setting
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Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

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1.0 Service information

Organisation/Registered Provider: Southern HSC Trust	Registered Manager: Mrs Geraldine Carragher
Responsible Individual: Dr Maria O’Kane	Date registered: Acting Manager
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Helen Devlin	
Brief description of the accommodation/how the service operates: The Laurels’ is a Day Care Setting with 78 places that provides care and activities for people with learning difficulties. The service operates Monday to Friday.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection was undertaken on 8 October 2024 between 10.10 a.m. and 4.20 p.m. The inspection was conducted by two care inspectors.

The inspection examined the agency’s governance and management arrangements, reviewing areas such as staff recruitment, professional registrations, staff induction and training and adult safeguarding. The reporting and recording of accidents and incidents, complaints, whistleblowing, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), Service user involvement, Restrictive practices and Dysphagia management was also reviewed.

Good practice was identified in relation to service user and relative involvement. The service was very welcoming and had a range of systems in place to ensure its operation and to support good communication and meaningful activities.

All service users spoken with indicated that they were very happy with the care and support provided by the staff.

No areas for improvement were identified.

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.

In preparation for this inspection, a range of information about the service was reviewed. This included any previous areas for improvement identified, registration information, and any other written or verbal information received from service users, relatives, staff or the Commissioning Trust.

As a public-sector body RQIA has a duty to respect, protect and fulfil the rights that people have under the Human Rights Act 1998 when carrying out our functions. In our inspections of day care services, we are committed to ensuring that the rights of people who receive services are protected. This means we will be seeking assurances from providers that they take all reasonable steps to promote people's rights. Users of day care settings have the right to expect their dignity and privacy to be respected and to have their independence and autonomy promoted.

Having reviewed the model "We Matter" Adult Learning Disability Model for NI 2020, the Vision states, we want individuals with a learning disability to be respected and empowered to lead a full and healthy life in their community.

Information was provided to service users, relatives, staff and other stakeholders on how they could provide feedback on the quality of services. This included easy read questionnaires and an electronic staff survey.

4.0 What did people tell us about the service?

During the inspection we spoke with a number of service users, relatives and staff members.

The information provided indicated that there were no concerns in relation to the day care setting.

Comments received included:

Service users' comments:

- "Everyone treats me well,"
- "Staff help me they listen to me."
- "Staff are good I get gluten free food."
- "I am having a good day."

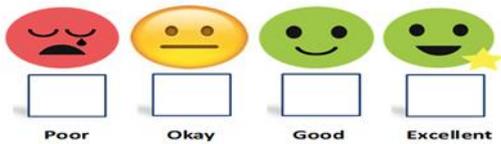
Service users' relatives' comments:

- "Staff are very supportive."
- "We get good support from speech therapy with communication aids."
- "They do the best they can to cater for the service user' needs."
- "I can raise any concerns with staff."

Staff comments:

- “The support here is unbelievable.”
- “It’s a wonderful centre, the energy is great.”
- “I really enjoy this work.”
- “I had a good induction.”
- “Breaks are fine; I also enjoy going on outings with the service users.”

During the inspection we provided a number of easy read questionnaires for those supported to comment on the following areas of service quality and their lived experiences:



- Do you feel safe when you are at the Centre?
- Does your care protect you from harm?
- Is care effective – does your care work well for you?
- Is care compassionate – is your care given kindly with dignity and respect?
- Is the service well led – does the manager run the Centre in a good way?

Returned questionnaires indicated that the respondents were very satisfied with the care and support provided. Written comments included:

- “The centre is home from home.”
- “The staff are so understanding and always helpful.”

There were no responses to the electronic staff survey.

5.0 The inspection

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

The last care inspection of the day care setting was undertaken on 18 April 2023 by a care inspector. No areas for improvement were identified.

5.2 Inspection findings

5.2.1 Are there systems in place for identifying and addressing risks?

The day care setting’s provision for the welfare, care and protection of service users was reviewed. The organisation’s policy and procedures reflected information contained within the Department of Health’s (DoH) regional policy ‘Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in

Partnership' July 2015 and clearly outlined the procedure for staff in reporting concerns. The organisation had an identified Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC).

Discussions with the person in charge established that they were knowledgeable in matters relating to adult safeguarding, the role of the ASC and the process for reporting and managing adult safeguarding concerns.

Staff were required to complete adult safeguarding training during induction and every two years thereafter. Staff who spoke with the inspector had a clear understanding of their responsibility in identifying and reporting any actual or suspected incidences of abuse and the process for reporting concerns in normal business hours and out of hours. They could also describe their role in relation to reporting poor practice and their understanding of the day care setting's policy and procedure with regard to whistleblowing.

The day care setting retained records of any referrals made to the HSC Trust in relation to adult safeguarding. A review of records and discussions with the person in charge and manager confirmed that these had been managed appropriately.

Service users said they had no concerns regarding their safety; they described how they could speak to staff if they had any concerns about safety or the care being provided. The day care setting had provided service users with information about keeping themselves safe and the details of the process for reporting any concerns.

The person in charge was aware that RQIA must be informed of any safeguarding incident that is reported to the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Staff were provided with training appropriate to the requirements of their role. Where service users required the use of specialised equipment to assist them with moving, this was included within the day care setting's mandatory training programme. A review of records confirmed that where the day care setting was unable to provide training in the use of specialised equipment, this was identified by the day care setting before care delivery commenced and training was requested from the HSC Trust.

A review of care records identified that moving and handling risk assessments and care plans were up to date. Where a service user required the use of more than one piece of specialised equipment, direction on the use of each was included in the care plan.

Care reviews had been undertaken in keeping with the day care setting's policies and procedures. There was also evidence of regular contact with service users and their representatives, in line with the commissioning trust's requirements.

All staff had been provided with training in relation to medicines management. The person in charge advised that no service users required their medicine to be administered with a syringe. The person in charge was aware that should this be required, a competency assessment would be undertaken before staff undertook this task.

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) provides a legal framework for making decisions on behalf of service users who may lack the mental capacity to do so for themselves. The MCA requires that, as far as possible, service users make their own decisions and are helped to do so when needed. When service users lack mental capacity to take particular decisions, any made on their behalf must be in their best interests and as least restrictive as possible. Staff who spoke

with the inspector demonstrated their understanding that service users who lack capacity to make decisions about aspects of their care and treatment have rights as outlined in the Mental Capacity Act (MCA).

Staff had completed appropriate Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) training appropriate to their job roles. There were arrangements in place to ensure that service users who required high levels of supervision or monitoring and restriction had had their capacity considered and, where appropriate, assessed. The inspectors noted that three service users had emergency provisions applied. Advice was given in relation to developing a separate resource folder containing DoLS information which would be available for staff to reference. Following the inspection, the person in charge confirmed that further information had been received for two service users and only one person had emergency provisions applied. These matters will be reviewed at a future inspection.

Records examined identified that a number of safety checks and audits had been undertaken including fire alarm tests. It was noted that the last fire risk assessment was undertaken on 26 September 2024. Follow up of the recommendations had been referred to estates. All staff had completed fire training. During the inspection fire exits were observed to be clear of clutter and obstructions.

5.2.2 What are the arrangements for promoting service user involvement?

From reviewing service users' care records and through discussions with service users, it was good to note that service users had an input into devising their own plan of care. Service users were provided with easy read reports which supported them to fully participate in all aspects of their care. The service users' care plans contained details about their likes and dislikes and the level of support they may require. Care and support plans are kept under regular review and services users and /or their relatives participate, where appropriate, in the review of the care provided on an annual basis, or when changes occur. The person in charge was reminded that all areas where signatures are required should be completed or reasons recorded detailing why this is not possible.

It was also positive to note that the day care setting had service user meetings on a regular basis which enabled the service users to discuss what they wanted from attending the day centre and any activities they would like to become involved in. Some matters discussed included:

- Outings
- Activities

5.2.3 Is there a system in place for identifying service users Dysphagia needs in partnership with the Speech and Language Therapist (SALT)?

A number of service users were assessed by SALT with recommendations provided and some required their food and fluids to be of a specific consistency. A review of training records confirmed that staff had completed training in Dysphagia and in relation to how to respond to choking incidents.

Discussions with staff and review of service users' care records reflected the multi-disciplinary input and the collaborative working undertaken to ensure service users' health and social care needs were met within the day care setting. There was evidence that staff made referrals to the multi-disciplinary team and these interventions were proactive, timely and appropriate. On the day of inspection, a speech and language therapist was working with a service user demonstrating a sophisticated communication aid. Staff also implemented the specific recommendations of the SALT to ensure the care received in the setting was safe and effective.

Staff demonstrated a good knowledge of service users' wishes, preferences and assessed needs. These were recorded within care plans along with associated SALT dietary requirements. Staff were familiar with how food and fluids should be modified.

5.2.4 What systems are in place for staff recruitment and are they robust?

A review of the day care setting's staff recruitment records confirmed that all pre-employment checks, including criminal record checks (AccessNI), were completed and verified before staff members commenced employment and had direct engagement with service users. Evidence received following the inspection confirmed completion of AccessNI for a member of ancillary staff. Checks were made to ensure that staff were appropriately registered with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) or the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) or any other relevant regulatory body. There was a system in place for professional registrations to be monitored by the manager. Staff spoken with confirmed that they were aware of their responsibilities to keep their registrations up to date.

There were no volunteers working in the day care setting.

5.2.5 What are the arrangements for staff induction and are they in accordance with NISCC Induction Standards for social care staff?

There was evidence that all newly appointed staff had completed a structured orientation and induction, having regard to NISCC's Induction Standards for new workers in social care, to ensure they were competent to carry out the duties of their job in line with the day care setting's policies and procedures. There was a robust, structured, three day induction programme which also included shadowing of a more experienced staff member.

The day care setting has maintained a record for each member of staff of all training, including induction and professional development activities undertaken.

5.2.6 What are the arrangements to ensure robust managerial oversight and governance?

There were monthly monitoring arrangements in place in compliance with Regulation 28 of The Day Care Setting Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007. A review of the reports of the day care setting's monthly quality monitoring established that there was engagement with service users, service users' relatives, staff and HSC Trust representatives. The reports included details of a review of service user care records; accident/incidents; safeguarding matters; staff recruitment and training, and staffing arrangements.

The inspectors reviewed the staff rota and advised that full names must be included for each staff member, this advice was welcomed by the person in charge and this matter will be reviewed at future inspections.

No incidents had occurred that required investigation under the Serious Adverse Incidents (SAI) procedure.

The day care setting's registration certificate was up to date and displayed appropriately.

There was a system in place to ensure that complaints were managed in accordance with the day care setting's policy and procedure.

There was also a system in place for managing instances where a service user did not attend the day centre as planned. This included a system for signing in and out the service users who attend. The inspectors reminded the person in charge that these documents should not be in pencil.

It was discussed with the manager The need for transport staff or an identified person to check the vehicle at the end of each journey to ensure that no service users remained on the transport was discussed with the manager and person in charge. They welcomed this advice and immediately implemented a system to record these checks.

The Statement of Purpose required updating with RQIA's contact details; the revised document was emailed to the inspector following the inspection.

6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Ms Helen Devlin, senior Day care Worker, Mrs Geraldine Carragher, Manager (acting) and senior trust staff via Teams as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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