



Inspection Report on

The Elms Care Home

Foelgastell

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Description of the service

The Elms Care Home is registered by the care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to provide accommodation and personal care for up to six younger adults (aged eighteen to sixty five) who have functional mental ill health. There is also a variation to these conditions to accommodate one person over the age of sixty five within the total number.

The home is located in the semi rural village of Foelgastell, which is between the towns of Swansea and Carmarthen, with easy access to the motorway. The service provider is M & D Care Ltd and they have appointed a responsible individual. The registered manager, who has day to day responsibility for the running of the home, is Abbi Davies.

Summary of our findings

1. Overall assessment

People are supported in a person centred way to make choices, be active, engaged and as independent as they can be. People have access to a variety of activities within the home and community based activities. The service offers spacious, comfortable and well maintained accommodation which meets people's individual needs. We found areas of consistently good practice supported by effective quality assurance measures. People have things to look forward to living at The Elms and told us they like staying at the home. The service offers comfortable and well maintained accommodation.

2. Improvements

The home was free from the use of door wedges and was in line with fire safety requirements.

3. Requirements and recommendations

Section five of this report sets out the action service providers need to take to ensure the service meets the legal requirements and recommendations to improve the quality of the service provided to people in the care home. Below is a summary of the key issues:

- The Registered Person should ensure that local authority assessment, care plan and reviews are available.

- The sloping grassed access area to the garden would benefit from being developed to accommodate a purpose built access path to the garden.
- The service user guide would benefit from further developing to make the guide easier to read.

1. Well-being

Summary

People are supported to maintain their well-being through being provided with a wide range of opportunities to make choices, follow interests and to be actively involved in their local community. People are happy, respected and feel they contribute.

Our findings

People are safe and protected but also have their own freedom to be independent. We looked at the records of two people living at the home. We found pre-assessment and admission information to be detailed and clearly recorded, there was detailed information on the history of people including the forensic history and their likes and dislikes. We saw that paperwork was person centred, and reflected the goals and aspirations of the person. Care plans were detailed and provided clear guidance for staff. This included sections on how to support the person to express how they are feeling and how they would like to be supported to manage any changes in their mental health. Reviews were carried out in specified timescales and included the person and/or family member at the review meeting, the review records contained progress made during the period being reviewed. The care and support plans were in a new format and were in the process of being introduced, these contained detailed outcomes to be achieved by the individual. Risk assessment and behaviour management documentation were detailed and included a narrative of activities, health, mood and any potential risks and how these could be managed. Therefore we can be confident that people feel safe and protected. People experience warmth whilst living at The Elms. People looked relaxed and comfortable, both in the company of each other and in the company of the registered manager and care workers. The registered manager told us that there is a detailed assessment undertaken when people move to The Elms and then this is developed into a person centred care and support plan. We observed respectful staff interactions with people, demonstrating genuine affection and saw people responding in kind. People told us that they enjoyed living at The Elms and this was evident in the pride people displayed when showing us around the home. This shows that people feel they belong and have positive relationships.

People can do things that matter to them. On arrival at the home we saw one person making their own cooked breakfast with discreet low level support from a staff member. The same person told us later that day that being able to cook their own breakfast was really important to them and it made them feel like it was really '*their own*' home. They went on to say that they have been able to get back on their feet after a period of illness. Records showed that the person's care and support plan included information on sensitively developing this person's independence including cooking their own breakfast. We saw another person relaxing outside the home on a bench who told us they were "*just*

watching the world go by” and that later on that day they had plans to go out with staff. The manager told us that this person enjoyed watching the comings and going of life at the home and had a more relaxed routine than some of the younger people living at the home. Therefore, people have control and are enabled to make choices, are being treated with dignity and respect and having their individual identities and routines recognised and valued.

People can be involved, participate and feel valued. We saw from records that people were being asked what activities they wanted to be involved in and this was based on what people told them and the knowledge of the staff of the individual. Upcoming activities were displayed in the communal areas and there were photos of recent activities displayed around the home. There was a swimming timetable for a local leisure centre on the noticeboard at the entrance to the home as well as other activities. We spoke with staff who demonstrated a good knowledge of the individuals they were supporting and appeared to know people’s needs. It was clear that staff, recognised and valued people’s identities and culture and were familiar with their personal histories. These discussions were confirmed by the detail recorded in people’s person centred care and support plans which included information about their life history and important relationships along with how to best support that person. People therefore, can be confident that they have choice in the activities they pursue and when they do this; being encouraged to be creative, to follow their interests, and beliefs, exploring new challenges and experiencing a sense of achievement. There is an emphasis on individual as well as group activities.

2. Care and Support

Summary

People are supported by staff who are committed to enabling and empowering people, so that they have choice, autonomy and control over their lives as is possible. This is enhanced by the person centred approach to the service taken by staff in the care plans and risk assessment.

Our findings

People receive the right care, at the right time in the way that they want it. This is because we saw that risk assessments were current and were reviewed regularly and staff were familiar with the documents and the strategies for managing the risk. Risk assessments were signed and were reviewed either annually or as when required depending upon circumstances. In a discussion with a relative of one person living at the home they said that *“their relative is settled and happy and they are safe and well looked after.”* They went on to say that their relative *“is now doing things they were not able to do and is looking forward to taking part in activities they wouldn’t have tried where they previously lived.”* There was a menu board displayed in the kitchen with the choices for the day and the person cooking demonstrated a good knowledge of the likes and dislikes of people living at The Elms. However, they also stated that staff support people at the home to cook meals and serve it afterwards. Records showed that independence is a key outcome identified in people’s care and support plans at the home, these were seen to be detailed and included clear guidance in how to support that person best to achieve the outcome desired. However, the local authority assessment, care plan and reviews were not available in the sample of files viewed and we recommended to the registered manager to request copies of these documents for the service, in order to underpin the care home’s own care plans. We therefore consider that people’s individual needs and preferences are understood and anticipated by a staff team that have a sound knowledge of the people they provide care for.

People are involved in making decisions about their care. People told us that they follow their own routines, when to get up, go to bed, and have a shower or bath for example. We saw that people were actively involved in all aspects of daily living. People told us they chose what they wanted to eat. When we looked at records we saw people’s food preferences recorded and that people had eaten the food they had chosen. We observed people making choices about what they would eat that day. We saw one person preparing their own meal with food they had chosen. We saw that staff gave people discreet support without taking over the task. Records showed that people were being encouraged and supported to eat well and to have a good diet. We saw that the home was stocked with an ample supply of provisions for people to make their choices. We were told that if anything different was needed people went shopping for it, either independently or with staff support.

People were involved in other various domestic tasks. We saw a daily cleaning schedule on display in the kitchen for people and staff to follow. We noted that staff and people living at the home had done some of these tasks together, which people told us they enjoyed. We saw that one person living at the home had an independent advocate who was representing them. The registered manager demonstrated a good understanding of the role of advocacy and its advantages and limitations. We saw from records that the person's care plan contained the relevant information and noted that advocacy details were available on the service noticeboard in the entrance hallway. This shows that people receive the right care and support at the right time in the way they want it.

People have good relationships with staff. We saw staff interacting appropriately with people giving them time and individual attention in a relaxed and dignified way. Staff communicated well with people who live at the home in a way that they could be understood in their preferred method of communication by either using verbal or non verbal approaches. One relative said that *"the staff at The Elms are brilliant, they get on really well with my relative and really care about them"*. We were told that currently they do not provide a service through the medium of Welsh, this is because currently, there is only one person living at The Elms who is learning Welsh. However, we were reassured that people could be supported by Welsh speaking staff if needed because the manager told us that there were five staff who could speak Welsh to different abilities at the home. People therefore, can be confident that they are support by staff who know and understand them and their needs and aspirations.

3. Environment

Summary

People can be confident that The Elms provides good support and access to living accommodation that meets their needs and facilitates independent living.

Our findings

People live in accommodation which meets their needs and supports them to maximise their independence. This is because we saw that people enjoyed living in a property that provided a large amount of space which allowed for a variety of activities within the house and the grounds. All areas viewed were clean, well decorated and well maintained, the kitchen had well stocked cupboards with good quality food and the home received regular deliveries from local suppliers. The home was awaiting their inspection from Carmarthenshire Local Authority with regards to their hygiene inspection. One relative told us that *“the house is large and spacious and my relative is able to decorate their room in the way they want it. He is really proud of his room.”* Therefore, people can feel confident that the home provides sufficient space to enable people to maximise their independence.

People live in an environment that has a comfortable and homely atmosphere throughout the property. People’s bedrooms were individualised and specific to their needs. We saw a bedroom that had a range of books and memorabilia on various interests that were followed by the individual. We saw that the lounge was split into two parts by a dividing door and were well used. There was a range of games and puzzles that the registered manager told us were used on a regular basis. There was also a large garden area that included a well maintained lawn, a raised vegetable garden and patio area with chairs and a table. One person told us that they often used the garden especially in summer but the garden wall *“could do with a new coat of paint”*. The outcome for people is that they feel included, uplifted and valued because they are supported in a personalised environment that is appropriate to their individual needs.

People have access to safe, pleasant and interesting space that caters for their interests. The home is a detached two storey property in a quiet cul de sac. It includes a large parking area to the front and has a large garden area which is partly raised. The garden includes a raised vegetable garden and there are plans to further develop this aspect of the garden. The registered manager told us that the garden is accessed either by steps or there is a sloping grassed area which can be used by wheelchairs, however, this area would benefit from being developed to accommodate a purpose built access path to the garden. This was discussed briefly with the registered manager. The garden contained an area described by the registered manager as a sensory garden which was enclosed with trellis and offered a quiet area which was often used by relatives who were visiting. This would also benefit from

developing however, it is acknowledged that in the winter months the benefits could not be appreciated. A range of outside seating areas are available in the grounds and patio area, these offered views of the countryside and wildlife could be seen and enjoyed by people. In addition the home was ideally positioned for countryside walks and the local community. Therefore there is sufficient external space and facilities to meet the needs of people.

The laundry room is in the detached garage in a separate room and the remainder of the garage is used for storage. Staff told us that people are supported to do their own washing and drying of their clothes. We observed that laundry and other domestic tasks were being carried out with a great deal of laughter and clearly provided a genuine opportunity for conversation and a sense of achievement.

People can be confident that appropriate steps have been taken to protect them from risk. When we arrived at the home we were asked to introduce ourselves and to show personal identification. In addition we were requested to sign a visitor's book. The CSSIW registration certificates and Employer Liability Insurance certificates were clearly displayed in the hallway. At the previous inspection CSSIW recommended that fire doors should not be held open with wedges as they were not in line with fire safety regulations, we were able to confirm that there were no door wedges being used at the home. Records showed that fire safety system and equipment was regularly maintained as well as staff had received training in fire safety. We found personal emergency evacuation plans available for people in sample of files viewed. Testing and servicing of appliances and equipment was being kept up to date. We were shown a maintenance reporting book that evidenced good reporting of maintenance faults. The home has access to a maintenance team to address any maintenance issues. Care files and other confidential information were stored in lockable filing cabinets and there were blinds in place which could be lowered to offer confidentiality on the various planning white boards in the office. Therefore, people are cared for in safe, secure, warm and well maintained surroundings, with the need for confidentiality anticipated and respected.

4. Leadership and Management

Summary

There are good systems in place to assess and improve the quality of the service. The management has a positive approach to staff training and supervision which benefits the support given to people who live at the service.

Our findings

People know and understand the care, support and opportunities which are available to them. We saw a detailed statement of purpose and service user guide. The service user guide contained some pictures to illustrate the guide but would benefit from further developing to make the guide easier to read. These documents described the service aims and objectives, which include dignity, independence, security civil rights and respecting the rights and responsibilities of people. Staff, were observed working in a way that demonstrated these values.

Staff, were seen to interact with people using a range of communication techniques and engaging with people's unique forms of communication. Staff were observed to be aware of people's communication needs and interacted with people in a sensitive and patient manner. Records showed that the care and support plans considered people's communication needs such as how people are enabled to 'talk to staff when they a problem'. Staff told us that it was getting to know the person and their understanding of that person which enabled them to clearly understand what people would mean on occasions. Therefore the vision, values and purpose of the service are clear and are actively implemented.

The service has a quality of care review process that draws on regular quality assurance procedures and takes account of the views of people. Monthly audits of all aspects of the service were being carried out by the manager. This was underpinned by a quality assurance policy and procedure that was detailed and explained the areas covered. These were being overseen by the responsible individual (R.I.). People were actively involved in reviewing the quality of the service and were being asked for their views on a regular basis. We saw from records that people were asked to describe their experience of living at The Elms. Records showed that visits were carried out by R.I. at the required frequency and were seen to be detailed and of good quality. The manager told us that the support they received from the R.I. was very good and "*I feel I can ask her anything without feeling useless*". The manager went on to say that the R.I. is "*very supportive and encourage new ideas*". This was evidenced in the creative responses by the service to difficult situations they had to deal with. Therefore people are able to contribute to the improvement of the service.

Policies and procedures are available to support practice at the home. For example, there was a clear policy to protect people from harm and abuse and there was evidence that this was being followed. The organisation uses an on-line platform which contains access to the organisations policies and procedures as well as care documentation. These were seen to be up to date and in line with present-day practice. During the inspection the registered manager was able to access support from head office for any queries. Daily records supported people's person centred care and support plans and the home also kept records of money held and managed on people's behalf. Records were being used to check people had received their personal care and medication each day. There were no inconsistencies between these and the other records. Overall, the evidence demonstrates that people benefit from care and support that is informed by best practice.

People receive care and support from staff who are vetted and receive training and supervision. We saw that recruitment checks were being carried out to assess whether people were suitable to work at the home. This was followed by a probationary period and structured induction training which was in line with the Care Council for Wales Social Care Induction Framework. We saw a training matrix and individual staff records that evidenced this, showing that each staff member had a training plan. Staff, were having one to one supervision meetings with the manager on a regular basis. Records showed that regular staff meetings were taking place and seen to be inclusive and covered an appropriate agenda. Staff we spoke with confirmed the evidence we saw recorded and demonstrated a good understanding of the training and its application to practice. They also said that they were well supported by the manager and the rest of the team, and there was a sense of pride in the role they undertake. This shows that people benefit from a service where staff, are well led, supported and trained.

5. Improvements required and recommended following this inspection

5.1 Areas of non compliance from previous inspections

None

5.2 Areas of non compliance identified at this inspection

None

5.3 Recommendations for improvement

We recommend the following:

- The Registered Person should ensure that local authority assessment, care plan and reviews are available for the service in order to underpin the care home's own care plans
- The registered manager told us that the garden is accessed either by steps or there is a sloping grassed area which can be used by wheelchairs. This would benefit from being developed to accommodate a purpose built access path to the garden.
- The service user guide contained some pictures to illustrate the guide but would benefit from further developing to make the guide easier to read.

6. How we undertook this inspection

We undertook a full inspection of the service looking at the four themes. The methodology used at this inspection included:

During the inspection we spoke with the following:

- Two (2) people living at the home;
- Two (2) relatives;
- Three (3) staff;
- The registered manager;
- The Responsible Individual;
- One (1) Health Professional.

We looked at:

- Two (2) care records of people living in the home;
- Two (2) staff files;
- The Statement of Purpose;
- Service User Information Guide;
- The maintenance book;
- The annual quality of care report;
- The reports of Regulation 27 visits.

In addition, we

- Toured the home;
- The Short Observational Framework for Inspection (SOFI) was not used during the inspection. The SOFI tool enables inspectors to observe and record care to help us understand the experience of people who cannot communicate with us. However, observations were noted of interactions in the home and recorded

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About the service

Type of care provided	Adult Care Home - Younger
Registered Person	M & D Care Limited
Registered Manager(s)	Abbi Davies
Registered maximum number of places	5
Date of previous CSSIW inspection	Wednesday, 16 September 2015
Dates of this Inspection visit(s)	19/01/2017
Operating Language of the service	English
Does this service provide the Welsh Language active offer?	No
Additional Information:	