

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Care Standards Act 2000

Inspection Report

Arnold House

Abergele

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Introduction

Arnold House is owned by Pro Care Wales Ltd. The 'responsible individual' is Helen Shepherd and the registered manager is Jacqueline Angove. Both have obtained the relevant qualifications which enable them to fulfil their relevant roles.

The home is registered to provide support and personal care for five persons from the age of eighteen to sixty four who have learning/developmental disabilities. This number includes one person who is aged sixteen.

Arnold House is a three storey building situated on a steep hill in a semi rural area. Outside space consists of a large balcony area on the second floor.

We (The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales) undertook a planned inspection that looked at all four quality themes during an unannounced visit on the 30th of November 2012 and an announced visit on the 13th of December 2012.

Inspection methods

The information in this report was gathered from the following sources:

A self assessment of the service completed by the registered person.

Discussions held with people using the service, two relatives, support workers, behavioural analyst, trainee behaviour analyst and the manager.

A sample of records in relation to people who use the service and staff who work there.

Observations made during the inspection visit.

Summary of inspection findings

What does the service do well?

Challenging behaviour is reduced as it is sensitively and professionally managed.

What has improved since the last inspection?

A clinical psychologist was recruited to help with one service users' care.

Work has been undertaken on the roof, rendering, guttering and new electrical appliances have been purchased.

The adjoining building has been purchased in order to extend service provision.

What needs to be done to improve the service?

One matter of concern was that the management having recently applied to vary their conditions of registration went ahead with a course of action prior to receiving notification from us that the application had been approved. The management now understand and acknowledge that they should have waited for the application to be granted and have cooperated fully with us, and given an explanation as to how the situation arose. We did not therefore issue a non compliance notice with regards to this.

Some additional information needs to be included in the homes statement of purpose.

Quality of life

Overall we found that people's rights are protected. People were generally engaged in activities of their choosing and they were observed to be treated with respect and dignity.

People using the service have choice and influence in all aspects of their care. Schedules and routines were designed around people's needs and choices. People told us that they are involved with shopping, meal planning, and cooking. One person was recently involved in interviewing potential staff members. Another person told us he had chosen and participated in decorating and personalising his bedroom.

The support from staff received at Arnold House enables people to access opportunities to follow interests, and to be positively occupied and stimulated. This is because each person has an individualised programme of activities and the delivery of care is based on individual person centred delivery plans of care. People told us that their time is spent undertaking various activities such as playing football, attending college, walking, horse riding, disco dancing, going to the gym, cooking. One person who is fond of animals told us that he is a volunteer dog walker at a local animal sanctuary and also enjoys growing vegetables on an allotment.

People living at Arnold House are supported to look after themselves with the aim of enabling them to be as healthy as possible. People's health care needs are continually monitored and they are enabled to access specialist or medical support when needed. Evidence in one person's file showed that within the last few months they had received visits from or attended appointments with the dentist, optician, speech therapist, GP and the local hospital outpatients department. The same person had received a health assessment and was having his weight monitored. A programme has been devised for one person with a view to encourage a better intake of fruit and vegetables. One person's medication had been considerably reduced while living at Arnold House. The person told us he now feels more aware and reducing the medication has enabled him to be more active and lose weight. Records viewed also showed how one person has been supported to maintain a healthy balance of physical activity and good nutrition.

People can be confident that their emotional needs are identified and relevant support is available when needed. One person who experiences difficult family relationships has received the support needed resulting in a reduction in challenging behaviour. We also saw evidence in daily records made by carers that people's emotional wellbeing is monitored.

Quality of staffing

Overall we found the quality of staffing at Arnold House is very good. The staff receive relevant training, support and are well motivated.

People can feel confident in the care they receive because staff are competent and confident to meet their needs. 70% of staff employed at the home have achieved or are enrolled on the Diploma in Health and Social Care (Level Two.) The units undertaken on the course such as "challenging behaviour" and "person centred planning" are chosen specifically with regards to meeting the needs of people living at Arnold House. This qualification provides staff with the necessary knowledge to carry out their role effectively and efficiently. Staff also told us that they had received mandatory training. We looked at a sample of staff files which showed us that a structured recruitment process is followed and that all necessary checks are undertaken prior to staff being allowed to work.

It is an expectation that people are cared for by motivated staff. Staff told us that they felt supported by the manager and receive formal supervision on a regular basis. Staff spoke enthusiastically about their work.

We explored whether there were enough staff on duty to ensure people's needs are met. Each person living at Arnold House has their own team of staff. This results in consistency and people are cared for by staff they are familiar with and who have an excellent knowledge of their individual needs. Ratios of staff to residents are sometimes 2: 1 and never less than 1:1. People using the service told us during the visit that they were satisfied with the care and support being provided by staff. Relatives told us that they were extremely happy with the ratio and quality of staff at Arnold House.

People living at Arnold House have complex needs and can exhibit very challenging behaviour. As the home follows a person centred care approach and the input and support received from two behaviour analysts who also work at the home mean people with complex needs receive skilful care.

Quality of leadership and management

We found that the service has been well designed to meet people's needs. People receive good quality care and there is effective management. We received positive comments from people we spoke with regarding how the home is run. Some additional information needs to be included in the homes statement of purpose.

People receive effective support from a service which can fully meet their needs. This is because comprehensive pre assessments are undertaken prior to admission and behaviour analysts are employed to develop behavioural plans and give support and advice to staff. This was clearly evidenced when we viewed plans of care and other records at the home

People using the service can be confident that the management will respond positively to feedback. A quality assurance report conducted in March 2012 involved seeking the views of all who are involved with the service by means of questionnaires. Feedback was positive and people we spoke with were very complimentary about the service provided and the staff and management. Relatives we spoke with confirmed that they are asked to complete questionnaires. They both also stated that they have regular contact with the manager over the phone and by means of E mail.

In general those residing at Arnold House can be confident of being safe because the business is well run, with due care and attention to minimum standards and regulations. This is due to the fact that the management have suitable policies and procedures in place and maintain good records. The sample of records viewed had been well maintained and updated appropriately.

We found evidence of an improving service. New purchases made during the last year include a new range cooker, fridge freezer, juicer, food processor and baking equipment. The provider also plans for the majority of staff to complete the Diploma in Health and Social Care. Plans are also in hand to refurbish areas of the premises. During the last year the adjoining vacant premises has been purchased and renovated by the provider of Arnold House. The provider plans to provide two self contained "apartments" where people can live more independently.

Quality of environment

Overall we found that people using the service are safe as equipment is serviced as necessary and the premises are well maintained. Adequate private and communal areas give people choices as to how and where they spend their time and personal information about individuals is kept securely

The premises at Arnold House are light airy and clean. This is because cleaning schedules form part of the daily activities for people living at Arnold House. There is also a night cleaning checklist that is carried out by staff members. Areas of the home viewed by us were visibly clean and tidy.

People are able to meet others and develop relationships in communal areas and also have their own private space should they choose to be alone or want to entertain visiting relatives or friends. Partition walls have been erected to increase the number of communal areas at the home. Arnold House now has two large lounges, a dining room and an activity / educational room. Communal areas are homely and comfortable. During the inspection visit we saw people making choices as to where to spend their time.

It is an expectation that people can be confident that equipment at the premises is safe. This is because the home adheres to a programme of maintenance. A sample of equipment such as fire extinguishers and records viewed by us showed that equipment had been serviced as necessary and portable electric appliances had been tested within the last twelve months. The manager was reminded that restrictors fitted to windows above ground level should be tamper proof in line with the current guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive.

People can be reassured that they are safe from strangers entering the premises as all external doors are key coded. Personal information about people who reside at the home is properly protected and stored in a locked cabinet in the office. We observed that the office door is always locked when unsupervised.

