

Abbeleigh House: Follow-up visit

We re-visited Abbeleigh House on 27 July 2017 to review the progress made in implementing the recommendations made following our Enter and View visit in June 2016.

Our team were met by the owner, who introduced the Deputy Manager, who was on duty in place of the Manager. Both were very welcoming. The owner explained that the Manager, whom we had spoken to during the previous visit, had been forced to give up full time work as a result of difficult personal circumstances and now worked part-time in a job share with the Senior Care Assistant, who had a nursing background and had been at the home for 5 years. This arrangement was working well.

As the team had expressed concern following the previous visit about the volume of work the Manager was trying to undertake and consequent lack of organised training, supervision, appraisal and systemised record keeping, they welcomed this positive development.

The team was also pleased to learn that actions to further improve the position had been set in place would continue. Staff training would mostly be carried out 'in house', the Deputy Manager was carrying out supervision on a two-monthly basis at present. It was noted, however, that staff appraisals need to be put in place on a regular basis.

In addition, the team was informed that the husband of a late resident was now helping voluntarily about the home. As most residents were too frail or unenthusiastic to participate in outings, the team suggested that he might attend to the garden - currently simply a grassed area, with some furniture - in order to create a more stimulating environment. The owner and Deputy Manager thought this a good idea, and that one or two more active residents might like to get involved as well. There is good disabled access.

Menus are now displayed in the dining room and the team were shown the little blackboards they are using. The home has made an effort to provide fresh fruit, as desserts or as an afternoon snack.

Since our last visit, the home had decided to do the laundry in house, which they find works better. The laundry is fully equipped, including ironing facilities. Staff come in to do this work.

The Deputy Manager told the team that the Greenwood Practice provides GP services but were concerned at a developing tendency for doctors to carry out telephone consultations with the Deputy Manager rather than to call at the home personally; this reluctance to make home visits when requested could lead to problems.

The team were satisfied that the home had taken the recommendations in the original report on board and was dealing with the various issues. The Deputy Manager told them that the owner has retired from his profession and was now much more involved in running the home, very approachable and responsive.

Recommendation

That the home raise with the GP practice their concerns about the apparent reluctance of the GPs to visit the home and, failing that, refer the matter to the Clinical Commissioning Group.