

Annual service review

Name of Service: Alexandra House and The Lodge

The quality rating for this care home is: two star good service

The rating was made on:

A quality rating is our assessment of how well a care home, agency or scheme is meeting the needs of the people who use it. We give a quality rating following a full review of the service. We call this review a 'key' inspection

We do an annual service review when there has been no key inspection of the service in the last 12 months. It does not involve a visit to the service but is a summary of new information given to us, or collected by us, since the last key inspection or annual service review.

Has this annual service review changed our opinion of the service?

No

You should **read the last key inspection report for this service** to get a full picture of how well outcomes for the people using the service are being met.

The date by which we will do a key inspection:

Name of inspector:

Ray Finney

Date of this annual service review:

0 1 0 2 2 0 1 0

Information about the service

Address of service:	Main Road Alresford Colchester Essex CO7 8AP
Telephone number:	01206826009
Fax number:	01206826009
Email address:	alexanderhouse@minstercaregroup.co.uk
Provider web address:	www.minstercaregroup.co.uk

Name of registered provider(s):	Minster Pathways Limited	
Conditions of registration:		
Category(ies) :	Number of places (if applicable):	
	Under 65	Over 65
learning disability	14	0

Conditions of registration:		
The maximum number of service users who can be accommodated is:	14	
The registered person may provide the following category of service only: Care Home only - Code PC to service users of the following gender: Either whose primary care needs on admission to the home are within the following categories: Learning disability - Code LD		
Have there been any changes in the ownership, management or the service's registration details in the last 12 months?	No	
If yes, what have they been:		

Date of last key inspection:									
Date of last annual service review (if applicable):									

Brief description of the service
Alexandra House and The Lodge are two self-contained units within a detached property, situated in a semi-rural location between Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea. The home provides care and accommodation for thirteen adults with learning disabilities. Both units are on two floors. There are two double bedrooms and nine single. None of the rooms are en-suite but they do have hand basins. Alexandra House has a kitchen-dining room with separate lounge. The Lodge has a lounge-dining room with separate kitchen. To the front of the property is a paved area, separated from a small lay-by,

and the road, by a large sliding iron gate.

The home charges between £457.39 and £908.21 a week for the service they provide. This information was given to us at the time of the last key inspection. Information about the home can be obtained by contacting the manager.

Service update since the last key inspection or annual service review:

What did we do for this annual service review?

We looked at all the information that we have received, or asked for, since the last key inspection or annual service review. This included:

The Annual Quality Assurance Assessment (AQAA) that was sent to us by the service. The AQAA is a self-assessment that focuses on how well outcomes are being met for people using the service. It also gave us some numerical information about the service.

Surveys were sent by us to people using the service and to other people with an interest in the service.

What the service has told us about things that have happened in the service, these are called notifications and are a legal requirement.

The previous key inspection and the results of any other visits that we have made to the service in the last 12 months.

Any relevant information from other organisations.

What has this told us about the service?

The manager sent us their annual quality assurance assessment (AQAA). They had completed all sections of the AQAA to a good standard, giving ample detail of what they do well, how they have improved in the past 12 months and their plans for improvement in the next 12 months. The standard of the information provided was what we would expect from a 2 star good service. One aspect of the AQAA that ensured they had provided good quality information was the focus on experiences for the service users living in the home. Previous pre-inspection information provided by the manager has been found to be accurate when evidence was examined at unannounced inspections.

Throughout the AQAA the manager gave us many examples of how people living at Alexandra House and the Lodge are encouraged and supported to take an active role in decision making and given the support and opportunities to make their wishes and choices known. The manager told us, "Although there has been no need to recruit many staff over the last year, those staff that have joined Alexandra House were interviewed by service users as well and service users enjoyed this input and look forward to doing this again".

The manager told us, "Within the home an open and inclusive environment is created to ensure that daily dialogue and conversation is maintained with service users by all staff to promote regular and honest communication about the service provided. This is to ensure views can be heard and acted upon continually and is common place within the home. Service user meetings are held monthly from which action plans are formulated to incorporate changes and developments to the service to meet the changing needs and wishes of the service users. These meetings co-inside with staff meetings to ensure maximum communication and effective action planning".

The manager also told us about the lifestyle for people living in the home. One example given stated, "A recent fun day was held where staff were auctioned for various jobs, tombola, raffle, cake stand and care boot sale. With the excellent but unexpected profits, the service users purchased a Wii machine that they had been talking about for quite a while. The service users also enjoyed a ten day experience where they watched eggs hatching and petting chicks. This was a very therapeutic exercise and all residents were able to take part, although a little sad when this finished and have asked if this can be done again next year. It was noted that a subsidence in certain behaviours occurred during this exercise and a lot more relaxed atmosphere for certain service users". The manager further told us, "picture cards have been designed for two of the service users who have difficulty with speech communication. Photos have been taken of every aspect of their daily life from breakfast cereals to pictures of their college and bank on the High Street".

A random inspection was carried out on 25th February 2009 to look at three areas where good practice recommendations were made at the previous key inspection in November 2007. In all areas it was noted that the manager and her team had acted on the recommendations and made significant improvements.

We have not received and are not aware of any concerns or complaints about this service during the period since the last inspection. There have been no safeguarding referrals made to the local authority under their Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults procedures. A person living in the home who completed a survey independently told us they knew who to speak to if they were not happy.

At the time of considering information for this Annual Service Review we had received five completed surveys from people using the service, four of which were completed with the assistance of members of staff and one was completed independently. We also received seven completed surveys from relatives of people living in the home, two from visiting health care professionals and five from members of staff.

The comments in the completed surveys were positive about the care provided by the service. A member of staff who completed a survey told us that what the home does well is, "Everything. The care is A-star and you couldn't ask for more". A relative who completed a survey told us that what the home does well is, "the staff and carers are so friendly, cheerful and helpful. They provide wonderful service to all the residents" and "On each visit to the home I have found no fault in the services they provide". Another said, "makes life as happy and as comfortable as they can - they all work so hard". A health care professional who completed a survey told us, "Service users are treated with respect and in a dignified manner. The staff are proactive in finding ways to enhance the service users' well being - physically, socially, emotionally and psychologically". Another health care professional told us that the home provides, "good preventative care".

Positive comments were also received about the lifestyle people are supported to enjoy at Alexandra House and the Lodge. A relative who completed a survey told us that what the home does well is, "works to encourage [my relative] to have a full and varied life" and "they do an excellent job".

Some comments received about the environment indicated that this is one area where

improvements could be made. A health care professional told us, "the environment is in need of some modernisation and re-decoration". Staff told us that what the home could do better is, "better bathrooms"; another said, nothing apart from the bathrooms" and a third told us "Minster Pathways could help the manager to complete her ambition by confirming a date to commence work on the bathrooms".

A person living in the home who completed a survey independently told us, "It is very nice. The staff are very nice and kind to me. They do a lot for me".

A relative who completed a survey told us, "I have in the past not been 100% happy with the management side. Since the new manager has taken over the post, things have greatly improved, for which I am personally very happy. She is doing a great job".

These responses support our judgement that the home is managed in a way that shows it has the interests of the people using the service at the centre of what they do.

Overall the evidence indicates that the service continues to provide good outcomes for the people who use it.

What are we going to do as a result of this annual service review?

We are not going to change our inspection plan and will carry out an inspection of the service in line with our statutory responsibilities. However, we can inspect the service at any time if we have concerns about the quality of the service or the safety of the people using the service.

Reader Information

Document Purpose:	Annual service review
Author:	CQC
Audience:	General Public
Further copies from:	0870 240 7535 (national contact centre)

Our duty to regulate social care services is set out in the Care Standards Act 2000. The content of which can be found on our website.

Helpline:

Telephone: 03000 616161

Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Web: www.cqc.org.uk

We want people to be able to access this information. If you would like a copy of the findings in a different format or language please contact our helpline or go to our website.

Copyright © (2009) Care Quality Commission (CQC). This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, free of charge, in any format or medium provided that it is not used for commercial gain. This consent is subject to the material being reproduced accurately and on proviso that it is not used in a derogatory manner or misleading context. The material should be acknowledged as CQC copyright, with the title and date of publication of the document specified.