

Making Space

Making Space - St. Helens

Inspection Report

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Summary of findings

Overall summary

Making Space – St. Helens is also known as Yorkshire Gardens and will be referred to as Yorkshire Gardens throughout the report.

There are seven self-contained apartments within the project where people live as tenants. At the time of our inspection there were seven people who used the service. Care and support is provided twenty four hours a day by staff that work onsite from an apartment which has been converted into a staff office and sleep in accommodation. Yorkshire Gardens provides support to people with learning disabilities or mental health needs. People who use the service stay for a period of between six months to two years.

The manager at Yorkshire Gardens had been in post since January 2014. They had submitted an application to register with the Care Quality Commission. A registered manager is a person who has registered with the Care Quality Commission to manage the service and shares the legal responsibility for meeting the requirements of the law with the provider. At the time of our inspection, the application was still in process.

During our visit we saw that staff had developed a good relationship with the people they supported. People spoke very positively about the service and told us they felt safe and well cared for. One person told us, “The care has been amazing. Staff have gone well above what you would expect.”

Suitable arrangements were in place to protect people from the risk of abuse. People told us they felt safe and secure. Safeguards were in place for people who may have been unable to make decisions about their care and support.

We found people were involved in decisions about their care and were supported to make choices as part of their daily life. All people had a detailed care plan which covered their support needs and personal wishes. We saw plans had been reviewed and updated at regular intervals. This meant staff had up to date information about people’s needs and wishes. Records showed there was a personal approach to people’s care and they were treated as individuals.

Staff spoken with were positive about their work and confirmed they were supported by the manager. Staff received regular training to make sure they had the skills and knowledge to meet people’s needs. They were also given regular supervision and an appraisal of their work performance. This meant they were given opportunities to discuss their role and identify any future training needs.

We found there were good systems and processes in place to monitor the quality of the service provided. Staff told us they felt this was underpinned by an open reporting culture and strong leadership.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We always ask the following five questions of services.

Are services safe?

There was an in-depth transition plan before people moved into Yorkshire Gardens, which involved support planning and engagement with the person. This gave the person the opportunity to become familiar with the staff and the other people who lived at the project, and to feel safe within the environment. It also allowed staff to assess if they could meet the person's needs safely.

CCTV cameras were fitted to monitor the entrance doors to people's apartments and there was a call-system in place to seek assistance should there be an emergency. People spoken with confirmed they 'had peace of mind' and felt safe and secure at the project.

Staff spoken with had an understanding of the procedures in place to safeguard vulnerable people from abuse and had received training on this subject. This meant staff knew how to recognise and respond if they witnessed or suspected abusive practice.

Are services effective?

People were encouraged and supported to express their views about how they wanted their support delivered. This started before the person moved into Yorkshire Gardens. The staff team worked with the person to plan, communicate and develop relationships so that when they moved in everything about them, their needs and desires were understood.

People discussed their healthcare needs as part of the support planning process and we noted there was guidance for staff on how best to meet people's health needs. This meant staff were aware of people's medical conditions and knew how to respond if there were any signs of deterioration in their physical or mental health.

Staff had the training and support to meet the individual and diverse needs of the people they supported.

Are services caring?

We found staff to be caring and compassionate to people who lived at the project, treating them with respect. People confirmed to us that staff were caring and told us they were happy with the support provided.

Each person had a detailed support plan, which was underpinned by a series of risk assessments and daily support records. We saw evidence to demonstrate support plans had been reviewed on a regular basis. This ensured staff had up to date information about people's support needs and wishes.

Summary of findings

The service worked well with other agencies and services to make sure people received support in a co-ordinated way. This ensured people received consistent personalised care to meet their needs.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

People were provided with appropriate information leaflets about the service at Yorkshire Gardens and about the provider, Making Space. The information offered general customer information and advice about the service provided. The information can also be provided in different languages and formats including Braille and audiotape.

People were supported to take the lead on how their support was managed and encouraged to express their views about how that support was delivered. We saw that one person was supported to write their own support plan. People's support needs were kept under review and staff responded quickly when people's needs changed.

People were enabled to maintain relationships with their friends and relatives and take part in activities which were of particular interest to them.

People gave us mixed feedback about the flexibility of individual support they received. They told us weekly activities were planned a week in advance. This meant they had lost spontaneity in what they wanted to do. In response to the comments the manager told us, "We are constantly listening to people's views, it is a work in progress and if something needs changing we will look into changing it."

Are services well-led?

The manager had developed good working relationships with the staff team and external agencies so people received personalised support which met their needs. People who lived at the project and family members made positive comments about the new manager, the staff and the support provided.

Staff told us the manager 'led by example'. This was underpinned by a clear set of values which included being customer focussed, valuing and embracing diversity, working in a spirit of partnership and striving for excellence and innovation. During our visit we observed staff acted according to these values when providing support to people in their care.

The manager actively sought and acted upon the views of others. There was a strong emphasis on continually striving to improve, in order to deliver the best possible support for people who lived at the project. This was supported by a variety of systems and methods to assess and monitor the quality of the service.

Summary of findings

What people who use the service and those that matter to them say

During our visit, we spoke with five people who lived at the project about their experiences of the care and support they received. We also spoke with a visiting family member about their views of the service.

People told us they felt safe because there was always a member of staff available twenty four hours a day. One person told us, "Feeling safe is very important to me. I have always felt safe at Yorkshire Gardens."

People told us the support they received had made positive changes to their lives. A family member told us, "My son has really responded well to the care. He feels important now. He has never had that before."

People told us they had a good relationship with the staff, who they described as "caring and supportive." They also told us they liked living at Yorkshire Gardens. One person told us, "It's a good place to live; in fact it's a great place to live. I am close to my family and friends, I can have support when I want it, I have an advocate if I want one and I have a really nice flat."

People had positive words to say about the leadership at the home. People thought the new manager had ensured some positive changes had been made from comments they had raised. One person told us, "I did have a concern about my support hours. I spoke to the new manager and it was quickly sorted."

Making Space - St. Helens

Detailed findings

Background to this inspection

We carried out this inspection under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection was planned to check whether the provider is meeting the legal requirements of the Health and Social Care Act 2008. It was also part of the new inspection process CQC is introducing for adult social care services.

We visited Yorkshire Gardens on the 6th May 2014. At the time of our visit there were seven people who lived at the project. We spoke with a range of people about the service provided. They included the manager, four staff members, five people who received support and one family member. We also spoke to an advocate who provided independent advice to people at the project in order to gain a balanced overview of what people experienced accessing the service.

During our visit, we spent time observing the daily routines to gain an insight into how people's support was managed. We spent time in the staff office and talked to people in

their apartments. We also spent time looking at records, which included people's support records, staff training and supervision records and records relating to the management of the service.

The inspection team consisted of a lead inspector and an expert by experience. An expert by experience is a person who has personal experience of using or caring for someone who uses this type of care service.

Yorkshire Gardens was last inspected in December 2013 when it was found to be meeting the national standards covered during that inspection. Before this visit the manager had prepared a Provider Information Return (PIR). The PIR is an important element of our new inspection process. It helps us plan our inspections by asking the service to provide us with data and some written information under our five questions; Is the service safe, effective, caring responsive and well-led? We used the PIR and other information held by the Commission to inform us of what areas we would focus on as part of our inspection.

Are services safe?

Our findings

The manager explained there was long term engagement and planning with people before they moved into Yorkshire Gardens. This was described as a transition period and allowed the person to become familiar with the staff and other people who lived there. It also allowed staff to assess if they could meet the person's physical and mental health needs safely. Records we looked at showed a detailed assessment had taken place before people moved to Yorkshire Gardens.

We saw each of the people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens had their own self-contained apartment. This meant people had a high level of choice and control over who came into their property and were also free to come and go from the building as they wished. The apartments within the project were part of a row of identical terraced houses in a small modern housing estate. There were no outward signs that the accommodation was a care setting. The environment supported people to live independently.

CCTV cameras were fitted to monitor the entrance doors to people's apartments and there was a call-system in place to seek assistance within the community, should there be an emergency. People told us they felt safe. One person told us, "Feeling safe is very important to me. I have always felt safe at Yorkshire Gardens. There has never been any trouble with the other people who live here." One family member told us, "It is very safe and secure here."

The manager had a positive approach to risk taking so that people's freedom was not restricted. This was achieved through the development of personal support plans and comprehensive risk assessments which supported and respected a person's rights to take informed risks. Records reviewed showed people had been supported in managing any risks. This ensured clear boundaries to help people stay physically and mentally safe. People we spoke with were very positive about the support they received. They told us they felt safe whilst their freedom was supported and respected. One person told us they were really anxious about going out the front door when they first moved to Yorkshire Gardens, but with the planning and support they had received from staff, they now felt able to go out on their own.

Where people may display behaviour which challenges others, we saw evidence in the care records that

assessments and risk management plans were in place. These were detailed and meant that staff had the information needed to recognise indicators that might trigger certain behaviour. We spoke with staff who told us they were aware of the individual plans and said they felt able to provide suitable care and support, whilst respecting people's dignity and protecting their rights.

We looked at the staff rotas for the four weeks before our visit. These showed a minimum of three staff were always on duty through the day during the week. There was one member of staff throughout the night. The rota showed that staffing levels varied at the weekend due to the planned activities of the people who lived there. For example some people visited or stayed with family members at weekend. The staffing rota reflected the changes to support requirements. The manager talked to us about how they tried to ensure the rotas were flexible. They explained how if a person wanted to go out, but required staff support to do so, the rota was flexible so this could be facilitated.

The service had procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse. The policy was robust and also detailed the Local Authority safeguarding policies and procedures. The staff had access to a flowchart diagram. This acted as a quick visual aid and reminder of what action to take, and who to contact should they witness or suspect abusive practice.

Discussion with staff confirmed they had a good understanding of the type of concern they should report, and how they should report it. Staff members spoken with said they would not hesitate to report any concerns they had about care practices. They told us they would ensure people they supported were protected from potential harm or abuse. Training records confirmed staff had received training and yearly updates on safeguarding vulnerable adults. This meant the staff had the necessary knowledge and information to ensure people were protected from abuse and discrimination.

The service had policies in place in relation to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA). The MCA provides legal safeguards for people who may be unable to make decisions about their care. The manager told us each person they supported had been assessed as having capacity to make decisions. We saw evidence these assessments were in place. The manager explained the service works closely with the community mental health

Are services safe?

team and they would be contacted should there be any doubt about a person's ability to make decisions for themselves. We spoke with staff to check their understanding of mental capacity. Staff demonstrated a good awareness and confirmed they had received training

in these areas. This meant clear procedures were in place to enable staff to assess peoples' mental capacity, should there be concerns about their ability to make decisions for themselves, or to support those who lacked capacity to manage risk.

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

Our findings

We spoke with people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens and a family member to ask them about their experiences of the support provided. One person told us, “I feel that the staff team here have done a good job with me and now I am ready to move on.” A family member we spoke with told us, “The staff here have been so good for my son, brilliant in fact. My son has really responded well to the care that they have been giving. He feels important now. He has never had that feeling before.”

Care records we looked at showed there was an introductory phase before people moved to Yorkshire Gardens. An assessment of people’s needs was carried out and people were invited to visit so they could meet other people and the staff. We noted extensive information was sought from a variety of sources during the assessment process including health and social care professional staff. We looked at two completed assessments during the inspection and noted they covered all aspects of the person’s physical and mental health needs. The manager explained careful consideration was given to what the person wanted to achieve during their stay at Yorkshire Gardens. This approach ensured there were effective systems in place for the service to identify if they could support people’s needs, wishes and choices.

The service used the star recovery programme. This is a tool to support people to create their own wellness recovery action plan, to set out their goals and to identify what help they need to get there, what helps keep them well, and what puts their mental health at risk. The plans of support we viewed showed people had been involved in developing their recovery plan. Plans were reviewed on a regular basis. This ensured each plan was individualised and progress to achieve the person’s goals was at an appropriate level and pace.

The manager told us of some of the success stories where the recovery model had enabled people to access a lower level of support, or move on to a more independent living accommodation. We saw that one person who lived at the project had achieved the maximum they had wanted to achieve and was being supported to move on. We saw there was a three month plan in place. This set out planned support for practical aspects of moving into a new home, such as buying curtains, but also provided planned support

visits from the staff at the service, or from health and social care professionals, for when the person had moved. This ensured the person was provided with the skills, support network and coping strategies to manage.

People we spoke with were very positive about the programme and the impact it had on their progress. One person told us, “With support from the staff I made the plan and they are making it happen. I will be going to college soon to boost my GCSE’s. I want to find a paid job eventually.” Another person told us, “I do need support and it’s been perfect for me here. I do get involved in working out what support I need.”

We reviewed compliments the service received about the support provided. One compliment read, “I was encouraged to self-exclude myself from the bookmakers. I followed it through and now I feel really good about myself. I feel as though staff really help me think about my life and where it is going. They have helped me put things in perspective. They have got me looking forward to the future for the first time in a long time. I feel invigorated.”

People’s healthcare needs were carefully monitored and discussed with the person as part of the support planning process. Records we looked at showed that the service worked closely with other health and social care professionals. The manager told us, “Service users complete a physical health checklist upon arrival at Yorkshire Gardens. This helps us to identify any healthcare needs and set up initial appointments with appropriate healthcare professionals.” We saw these records were in place along with completed health passports. This meant people’s current and changing needs were monitored and reviewed regularly so that timely intervention could be made where necessary. One person told us, “I think that the staff here do a good job. I needed to go to hospital because I was unwell. The staff talked it over with me and looking back I can see that they did a good job.”

Staff training records showed staff had received training in safeguarding vulnerable adults, medication, food safety, moving and handling, health and safety, infection control, fire training, Mental Capacity Act and first aid. In addition there was a range of training taking place which reflected good care practices for people who lived at the project. This included staff development training on the star recovery model, conflict management and breakaway

Are services effective?

(for example, treatment is effective)

techniques and training on risk assessment and risk management in mental health. The training records showed the staff had completed the training and it was up to date.

Staff members we spoke with confirmed they had access to a structured training and development programme. One staff member told us, “The training here is good. Quite

thorough.” Another person told us, “The availability of training is really good here. There are courses that we have to do but if we can support someone better because they have a certain medical condition or behaviour, we only have to ask for training and it is sorted.” This ensured people in their care were supported by a skilled and competent staff team.

Are services caring?

Our findings

During our visit we spoke with people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens. They said they were very satisfied with the service and the support they received. One person told us “I feel the staff here do care. They are doing much more for me than they are really paid to do.” People told us they had a good relationship with the staff and described the staff as “caring” and “supportive.” A family member told us the staff team at Yorkshire Gardens, “Have gone well above what you could expect. Amazing support. Unscheduled support and they have always kept me in the loop.”

The manager told us, “Service users can expect to be respected for their individuality, their views and the way in which they conduct their lives. They can expect to be consulted on any matter which affects their care and to have their wishes respected. Cultural, religious beliefs and practices will be respected at all times.”

Staff told us they enjoyed their work because everyone cared about the people who lived at the project. The staff members we spoke with were knowledgeable about people's individual needs and how they were being met. They said care plans were easy to follow so they always knew what people's needs were. This meant staff knew the people they were caring for and had the knowledge and understanding of the support people required. One staff member said, “We work together to get the end result which is to make a difference to the lives of people we support.”

During our visit, we spent time observing the daily routines to gain an insight into how people's support was managed. We spent time in the staff office and talked to people in their apartments. Our observations confirmed there was a positive culture which supported people to be independent. We saw staff had a good relationship with the people they supported. Staff interacted positively with

people and talked to them in a supportive and respectful way. Staff ensured they made time for people whenever required and took time to explain things to people so they didn't feel rushed. Staff showed an interest in what people had been doing and what their plans for the day were.

The service had policies in place in relation to privacy and dignity. We spoke with staff to check their understanding of how they treated people with dignity and respect. Staff gave examples of how they worked with the person, to get to know how they liked to be treated. One staff member told us, “People here are respected as individuals. They have the privacy they need and can be as independent as they want to be. We always listen to how they wish to live their lives.”

We looked in detail at two people's care records and other associated documentation. We saw evidence people had been involved with, and were at the centre of, developing their support plans. This demonstrated people were encouraged to express their views about how their support is delivered. The records were well organised and laid out in such a way that it was easy to locate information. A member of staff told us they had ready access to people's support plans and they were informed if there had been any changes. The plans contained information about people's current needs as well as their wishes and preferences. We saw evidence to demonstrate people's support plans were reviewed with them and updated on a regular basis. This ensured staff had up to date information about people's needs.

The manager told us the service worked closely with other health and social care professionals. This was to ensure people received consistent and co-ordinated support that focussed on the person's individual needs. Records showed health care professionals, psychiatrists, social workers and GP's were involved in people's care and support to ensure their physical and mental health needs were met.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

Our findings

People told us they were encouraged and supported to undertake activities that were of interest to them. However there were mixed comments from people about the support provided to access activities. We spoke to five people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens. Three of the people were very positive about their support hours. One person told us, "I told the staff here that I wanted a volunteer job and they made it happen for me. I have been there a year now." They went on to explain the staff team had, "Gone out of their way to make good stuff happen for me."

Two of the people told us they felt the support hours were not flexible enough to meet their needs. One person told us, "I feel a bit under pressure with the new support methods. I never used to feel like this with the floating support that used to be in place here. My life is much more run by the support staff timetable than it ever used to be. It's hard to be spontaneous in my life now." Another person told us, "There are not enough activities on offer for me here leisure wise. There is nothing happening here at night time. That's the problem."

There was also mixed comments about the support hours from staff members we spoke with. One staff member told us, "The new manager has tried hard to link our work shifts to the service users contracted support. That's fine and things are good, but I do miss a bit the flexible or floating support methods that we are used to. Another staff member told us, "The fixed support is working. There is room for flexibility if someone is unwell, or anxious. There is always flexibility. We always put people's needs first."

We spoke with the manager about the support hours. They told us the amount of support hours people received were commissioned by local authorities. Weekly activities were planned with each person a week in advance. Support hours, which the manager described as face to face time, were fixed with the 'service user' choosing the times. The manager went on to say the staff rota was then balanced around the support requirements. The team leaders at the service had flexibility in their rota to provide floating support or support for an emergency situation. There was also floating support available from 7pm in the evening.

We reviewed people's support records to review activities they had undertaken. We saw one person had been supported to undertake journeys within the community.

Another person had been supported to access a local classic car club and was now travelling to events independently. Records also showed that when a person had become unwell or anxious, there had been an increase in support hours. One person told us, "I recently had really bad flu and staff helped me through this in lots of nice little ways – getting my shopping and stuff like that. They are doing much more for me than they are really paid to do." Another person told us, "The staff have been great. They have helped me with general living skills and motivated me to attend courses. They have helped me get my confidence back."

We spoke to the manager about the mixed comments we had received regarding support hours. The manager told us support hours had been changed from floating to fixed hours, in response to comments they had received from people at the project and staff members. However the manager said, "We are constantly listening to people's views, it is a work in progress and if something needs changing we will look into changing it." The manager said they would speak further with people who lived at the project and staff members, to gather their views about the flexibility of the support hours.

Throughout the assessment and planning process, staff support and encourage people to express their views and wishes, to enable them to make informed choices and decisions about their support. People were allocated a named member of staff known as a key worker, which enabled staff to work on a one to one basis with them. This meant they were familiar with people's needs and choices.

We were told where specific decisions needed to be made about people's support and welfare; additional advice and support would be sought. People were able to access advocacy services and information was available for people to access the service should they need to. People we spoke with confirmed they had accessed advocacy service when they needed independent advice.

People were asked weekly about the support they have received during that week. We saw one person wrote their own weekly report. This demonstrated an innovative and open approach where the person was encouraged to take charge of the care and support they received.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

(for example, to feedback?)

We spoke with staff members who told us the team are focussed on the support people need. One staff member told us, "The support provided to each person is individual and tailored to meet their needs. It all begins with the service users."

We saw that as part of the star recovery programme, the key worker would review and discuss the person's progress with them. Records we looked at showed these reviews had taken place and new goals set as appropriate. If people's needs changed, their support plans would be reassessed to make sure they received the support required. A family member told us they regularly had the opportunity to comment on the care their relative received. They told us, "My son has a good care plan. It is regularly updated. He is involved with this plan and it seems to work well for him. He has really responded well."

We saw the provider had a policy and procedure in place for dealing with any complaints or concerns. This was made available to people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens. There had been no formal complaints, since the new manager took up post in January 2014. However we saw the manager took a proactive approach, seeking to respond to any concerns positively before they escalated. The people we spoke with told us they were aware of how to make a complaint. One person told us, "I did have a concern about my support hours. I spoke to the new manager and it was quickly sorted." Another person said, "I never have had to complain while I have been here, but I would speak to the manager here if I wanted to."

Are services well-led?

Our findings

The manager had been in post since January 2014. At the time of the inspection, they were in the process of registering with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). A registered manager is a person who has registered with CQC to manage the service and shares the legal responsibility for meeting the requirements of the law with the provider. Both staff and people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens spoke positively about the leadership of the manager.

Observations of how the manager interacted with staff members and comments from staff showed us the service had a positive culture that is centred on the individual people they support. We found the service was well managed, with clear lines of responsibility and accountability. All staff members confirmed they were supported by their manager. One staff member told us, "There is no 'hush-hush' here. I feel the management are listening. The new management seem much more on the ball and prepared to make changes." Another person told us, "We have a great boss, she leads by example. The staff are behind her 100% because she gives us 100%."

The provider had systems and procedures in place to monitor and assess the quality of their service. These included seeking the views of people they support through monthly 'tenant's meetings', annual satisfaction surveys and care reviews. We saw the results of the last satisfaction survey were very positive and any comments, suggestions or requests were acted upon by the manager. This meant people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens were given as much choice and control as possible into how the service was run for them.

People who lived at Yorkshire Gardens were also invited to take part in the Making Space service user involvement groups. Meetings were held every two months. These gave people the opportunity to raise their views but also to be involved in reviewing organisational policies, procedures and business plans.

All staff spoke of a strong commitment to providing a good quality service for people who lived at Yorkshire Gardens. The manager and staff team work closely together on a daily basis. This meant quality could be monitored as part of their day to day duties. Staff confirmed they were supported by the manager and enjoyed their role at Yorkshire Gardens. One staff member told us, "We know there is someone who we can talk to and get an instant response." Another staff member told us, "All of the staff here seem to work well together as a team, we support each other. All of this makes me feel valued."

Staff attended handover meetings at the end of every shift and monthly staff meetings. This kept them informed of any developments or changes within the service. Staff told us their views were considered and responded to. Staff received regular supervision sessions as well as annual appraisals. We saw evidence these had taken place. This meant staff were being supported in their roles as well as identifying their individual training needs.

The provider had systems in place to identify, assess and manage risks to the health, safety and welfare of the people who used the service. Records reviewed showed the service had a range of quality assurance systems in place, to help determine the quality of the service offered. These included health and safety audits, medication, care records, people's finances and incidents and accidents. We looked at completed audits during the visit and noted action plans had been devised to address and resolve any shortfalls. This meant there were systems in place to regularly review and improve the service.

Where incidents had occurred, we saw detailed records were maintained with regards to any safeguarding issues or concerns, which had been brought to the manager's attention. Where appropriate these were reported to CQC. This evidenced what action had been taken to ensure that people were kept safe.