### Overview of the service:

Four Rivers Nursing Home is situated on the outskirts of the historic market town of Ludlow Shropshire, a short distance from the town with good transport links. The home is purpose built to provide nursing care to 40 people. The site has spaces reserved for disabled parking.
Summary of our findings
for the essential standards of quality and safety

What we found overall

We found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting all the essential standards of quality and safety we reviewed.

The summary below describes why we carried out the review, what we found and any action required.

Why we carried out this review

We carried out this review as part of our routine schedule of planned reviews.

How we carried out this review

We reviewed all the information we hold about this provider, carried out a visit on 15 March 2011, observed how people were being cared for, talked to people who use services, talked to staff, checked some of the provider’s records, and looked at some records of people who use services.

What people told us

People told us that they are content living at Four Rivers Nursing Home. They told us that they are consulted about their care, that their views are taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered.

People said their privacy and dignity is very much respected and their independence promoted.

People told us that the home is very well run by the manager and her deputy. They said that they wouldn’t hesitate to ask questions or request help with any aspect of their care. “The staff are very very caring and I couldn’t choose a better place to be now I need help”.

People told us they are happy with their bedrooms and that they can either remain in the privacy of their own room or join other people in the range of communal areas.
available. They said their rooms are kept clean and when they moved in they were encouraged to bring in some of their personal belongings if they wished.

What we found about the standards we reviewed and how well Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting them

Outcome 1: People should be treated with respect, involved in discussions about their care and treatment and able to influence how the service is run

People living at Four Rivers Nursing Home can express their views about how the home is run and are fully involved in the decisions about their care, treatment and support.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 2: Before people are given any examination, care, treatment or support, they should be asked if they agree to it

Four Rivers Nursing Home has arrangements in place for ensuring people can make informed decisions about their care and their views acted upon.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 4: People should get safe and appropriate care that meets their needs and supports their rights

Staff have the information they need and a clear understanding of how to offer care to each person, ensuring people’s health and personal care needs are met in a way that they prefer.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 5: Food and drink should meet people’s individual dietary needs

People are provided with healthy, well-presented meals in accordance with their dietary requirements and choice ensuring their nutritional needs are met

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 6: People should get safe and coordinated care when they move between different services

Staff are alert to change in people’s health needs and seek suitable advice from other agencies to ensure people’s health and personal care needs are met.
Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 7: People should be protected from abuse and staff should respect their human rights

Staff receive training so that they have an understanding in adult protection to ensure people they support are protected from abuse, promoting their well being.

Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 8: People should be cared for in a clean environment and protected from the risk of infection

The environment is clean with systems in place to minimise the risk of infection.

Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 9: People should be given the medicines they need when they need them, and in a safe way

Systems are in place to ensure people receive their medication as prescribed in a safe way.

Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 10: People should be cared for in safe and accessible surroundings that support their health and welfare

People are provided with a comfortable environment to live in which is equipped to meet their individual needs and makes them feel safe and secure.

Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 11: People should be safe from harm from unsafe or unsuitable equipment

The service provides equipment that is suitable to the individual assessed needs of the people living at the home and ensures it is maintained, making people safe.

Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

Outcome 12: People should be cared for by staff who are properly qualified and able to do their job
People have confidence in the staff at the home because checks have been done to make sure that they are suitable to care for them.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

**Outcome 13: There should be enough members of staff to keep people safe and meet their health and welfare needs**

Staff are provided in sufficient numbers to assure people who live at the home that their health and welfare needs will be met.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

**Outcome 14: Staff should be properly trained and supervised, and have the chance to develop and improve their skills**

The arrangements for staffing, their support and development ensure people living at Four Rivers Nursing Home are cared for by a competent workforce.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

**Outcome 16: The service should have quality checking systems to manage risks and assure the health, welfare and safety of people who receive care**

Effective systems are in place to monitor risks and to review the quality of the service provided.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

**Outcome 17: People should have their complaints listened to and acted on properly**

People living at Four Rivers Nursing Home feel listened to and are confident that their concerns are listened to and acted upon.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.

**Outcome 21: People’s personal records, including medical records, should be accurate and kept safe and confidential**

Records are accurate and held securely ensuring confidentiality.

- Overall, we found that Four Rivers Nursing Home was meeting this essential standard.
What we found
for each essential standard of quality
and safety we reviewed
The following pages detail our findings and our regulatory judgement for each essential standard and outcome that we reviewed, linked to specific regulated activities where appropriate.

We will have reached one of the following judgements for each essential standard.

**Compliant** means that people who use services are experiencing the outcomes relating to the essential standard.

A **minor concern** means that people who use services are safe but are not always experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard.

A **moderate concern** means that people who use services are safe but are not always experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard and there is an impact on their health and wellbeing because of this.

A **major concern** means that people who use services are not experiencing the outcomes relating to this essential standard and are not protected from unsafe or inappropriate care, treatment and support.

Where we identify compliance, no further action is taken. Where we have concerns, the most appropriate action is taken to ensure that the necessary improvements are made. Where there are a number of concerns, we may look at them together to decide the level of action to take.

More information about each of the outcomes can be found in the *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety.*
Outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Understand the care, treatment and support choices available to them.
- Can express their views, so far as they are able to do so, and are involved in making decisions about their care, treatment and support.
- Have their privacy, dignity and independence respected.
- Have their views and experiences taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us

People told us that they had been given information about the home before moving in to decide if it was suitable for them. They agreed that as far as possible their needs were discussed with them and their family and they were asked lots of questions about their personal life, their health and care needs, what they enjoy doing during the day and their preferred meals.

People told us that they are content living at Four Rivers Nursing Home. They told us that they are involved in planning their care and that their views are always taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered. People told us that staff respect their privacy and dignity when caring for them.

People we spoke with told us that residents’ meetings are regularly held to gain their views about the service. They said they are consulted about activities, social events, trips out, meal choices, and that the manager and staff always act on
suggestions they make. People told us that the manager sees them on a daily basis so she knows them well.

**Other evidence**

We looked at the previous reports of inspections we have undertaken on Four Rivers Nursing Home and the information that we received from other agencies in preparation for this review. We know that staff gain information from residents about their needs and how they would like this to be delivered giving them control of their well-being. People are encouraged to discuss their care, treatment and support options and where there is an element of risk involved this is assessed and support is given to enable the person to maintain independence wherever possible.

During our visit we saw people being offered choices about if they wanted to remain in their own room or join others in the communal areas of the home, respecting people's preferred lifestyles.

**Our judgement**

People living at Four Rivers Nursing Home can express their views about how the home is run and are fully involved in the decisions about their care, treatment and support.
Outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Where they are able, give valid consent to the examination, care, treatment and support they receive.
- Understand and know how to change any decisions about examination, care, treatment and support that has been previously agreed.
- Can be confident that their human rights are respected and taken into account.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with told us that staff discuss their care with them and that staff also talk with their family so everyone is kept informed of any decisions affecting their care.

Other evidence
We looked at previous reports from inspections that we have undertaken and no concerns have been raised regarding people's consent to care and treatment. During our visit a member of staff described to us how they gain people's consent to clinical intervention and how this is recorded. The provider sent us their compliance assessment stating that staff are trained to seek the consent of the person prior to supporting their care needs. If a person lacked the capacity to make a decision then a meeting would be held involving the individual and all relevant parties in the best interests of the individual concerned and any decisions made documented and regularly reviewed. There is no person living at the home that is currently subject to any deprivation of liberty.
We were told that the home has developed positive working relationships with other agencies in the local community to include healthcare professionals such as the GP, district nurses, dentists and opticians in relation to people working in the best interests of people who use the service.

**Our judgement**

Four Rivers Nursing Home has arrangements in place for ensuring people can make informed decisions about their care and their views acted upon.
Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Experience effective, safe and appropriate care, treatment and support that meets their needs and protects their rights.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with were very complimentary about the care that they receive. They spoke highly about the staff and the manager and described their care as ‘of a high standard’ and that they are looked after well. One person told us “I’ve been here quite a while now and am well looked after here, the care is outstanding”.

Other evidence
The manager told us in the assessment that staff are trained to adopt a person centred approach when supporting people living at Four Rivers Nursing Home, and people have a named nurse and keyworker assigned to support them. We spoke with a member of staff and they shared experiences of how they provide this approach, they told us that the care people receive is tailored around their individual assessed needs and that they are very much involved in their care.

A member of staff showed us and discussed the care records held for one individual to evidence this. The care plan detailed the person’s needs to include their physical, mental, nutrition, social and emotional needs. We saw that any risks are identified, managed and reviewed to reduce the risk of the person receiving unsafe care, treatment and support. The care records we saw clearly evidenced that these are reviewed and updated on a regular basis and any changes discussed with the
individual are recorded.
Staff engaged with people in a positive manner and it was clearly evident that good working relationships have been developed between people using the service and care workers.

Our judgement
Staff have the information they need and a clear understanding of how to offer care to each person, ensuring people’s health and personal care needs are met in a way that they prefer.
Outcome 5:
Meeting nutritional needs

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
• Are supported to have adequate nutrition and hydration.

What we found

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<th>Our judgement</th>
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<tr>
<td>The provider is compliant with outcome 5: Meeting nutritional needs</td>
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<th>Our findings</th>
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<tr>
<td>What people who use the service experienced and told us</td>
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People we spoke with told us that staff in the home discuss their dietary preferences with them. They told us that they are provided with a good choice of food and refreshments and can choose where they would like to eat their meals.

Other evidence
We saw the menu displayed in the dining rooms of the home offering a range of choices. An ‘alternative’ menu is also made available daily ensuring individual preferences are met if the choice of food on offer is not desired. People are very much involved in menu planning through residents’ meetings and if a person does not like the food available on the menu they are encouraged to discuss their preferred options.
The home has achieved the platinum rating for healthy eating and food hygiene. This indicates the attention to detail and the offer of an excellent meal service in the dining room to ensure that mealtimes are a dignified experience.
People can either have their meals in the dining rooms provided or in their own rooms, as observed during our visit. People were offered a choice of refreshments during our visit. We were shown a nutritional assessment on a care file.
People are only assisted to take their diet by a member of staff if they are unable to meet this need for themselves maintaining people’s independence.
Previous reports we have completed on the home have not identified any concerns.
in relation to meeting the nutritional needs of the people living at Four Rivers Nursing Home.

**Our judgement**
People are provided with healthy, well-presented meals in accordance with their dietary requirements and choice ensuring their nutritional needs are met.
Outcome 6: Cooperating with other providers

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Receive safe and coordinated care, treatment and support where more than one provider is involved, or they are moved between services.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 6: Cooperating with other providers

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with told us that staff support them to access other services and are responsive to their changing needs. People told us that staff enable them to have access to the local GP, dentists, opticians, chiropodist and social workers and that they are confident that their confidentiality is maintained when information about them is shared with other agencies.

Other evidence
We saw detailed information recorded on a care file when other agencies have been involved with an individual’s care. We observed staff maintaining confidentiality during our visit. The manager told us at the visit that should a person be transferred into the care of another provider then information is passed on using an updated transfer information sheet.

Our judgement
Staff are alert to change in people’s health needs and seek the appropriate advice from other agencies to ensure people’s health and personal care needs are met.
Outcome 7: Safeguarding people who use services from abuse

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Are protected from abuse, or the risk of abuse, and their human rights are respected and upheld.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 7: Safeguarding people who use services from abuse

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with told us that they feel safe at Four Rivers Nursing Home. They said they are confident in raising any concerns with the staff team or the manager and felt that concerns are listened to and acted upon. People told us that the manager operates an open door policy which ensures that concerns are dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

Other evidence
The provider told us in their assessment that the home has clear policies and guidelines on response to alleged abuse and that any member of staff suspected or accused of abuse is immediately suspended as a neutral act both for the protection of the people using the service and the staff member. Staff we spoke with confirmed that they had received training on safeguarding which shows them how to identify the various forms of abuse, how to respond and whom to report to.

Our judgement
Staff receive training so that they have an understanding in adult protection to ensure people they support are protected from abuse, promoting their well being.
Outcome 8:
Cleanliness and infection control

What the outcome says

Providers of services comply with the requirements of regulation 12, with regard to the **Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance**.

What we found

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<tr>
<td><strong>The provider is compliant</strong> with outcome 8: Cleanliness and infection control</td>
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<th>Our findings</th>
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<td><strong>What people who use the service experienced and told us</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>People told us that their rooms are cleaned daily and that the home is kept clean and tidy.</td>
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<td><strong>Other evidence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>People did not know of our plan to visit the home and when we arrived we saw domestic members of staff busy cleaning areas of the home. Staff were wearing the appropriate personal protective clothing. Staff on duty told us that they had received training in infection control, that sufficient materials are readily available and that they are given enough time to ensure the premises are kept clean and safe for the people using the service, visitors and staff. Rooms seen during our visit were clean and free from odour.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Our judgement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The environment is clean with systems in place to minimise the risk of infection.</td>
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Outcome 9: Management of medicines

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Will have their medicines at the times they need them, and in a safe way.
- Wherever possible will have information about the medicine being prescribed made available to them or others acting on their behalf.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 9: Management of medicines

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with told us that they are happy with how their medication is managed.

Other evidence
Our previous reports confirm that staff know how to comply with safe medication systems and that their practice ensures that the home’s procedures are complied with.

The provider told us in their assessment that all individuals wishing to manage their own medication are assessed as to their capability and understanding of the requirements and risks.
We were shown care plans for specific medication that require special monitoring and administration. Care plans also evaluate the effectiveness of any medication regime.

Our judgement
Systems are in place to ensure people receive their medication as prescribed in a safe way.
Outcome 10: Safety and suitability of premises

What the outcome says

This is what people should expect.

People who use services and people who work in or visit the premises:
• Are in safe, accessible surroundings that promote their wellbeing.

What we found

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<tr>
<td>The provider is compliant with outcome 10: Safety and suitability of premises</td>
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<th>Our findings</th>
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| **What people who use the service experienced and told us**
People we spoke with told us that they liked their bedrooms. People expressed no concerns about health and safety of the premises. |
| **Other evidence**
The manager carries out an assessment of identified risks in relation to the environment and the people accommodated and we saw these on the files we were shown. We looked at some parts of the home and met with people in their rooms. Areas we saw were accessible, clean and safe. |
| **Our judgement**
People are provided with a comfortable environment to live in which is equipped to meet their individual needs and makes them feel safe and secure. |
Outcome 11:
Safety, availability and suitability of equipment

What the outcome says

This is what people should expect.

People who use services and people who work in or visit the premises:
- Are not at risk of harm from unsafe or unsuitable equipment (medical and non-medical equipment, furnishings or fittings).
- Benefit from equipment that is comfortable and meets their needs.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 11: Safety, availability and suitability of equipment

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People told us that they have the necessary equipment they need to keep them safe and to maintain their independence.

Other evidence
The provider told us in their assessment that each person who requires equipment has an assessment and subsequent referral to the appropriate person to facilitate obtaining the equipment which will be fully detailed on their care plan with appropriate risk assessments. They told us that staff are trained from induction in the safe systems of use of all equipment, which was confirmed in the discussions we had with staff during our visit.

Our judgement
The service provides equipment that is suitable to the individual assessed needs of the people living at the home and ensures it is maintained, making people safe.
Outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:

- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by staff who are fit, appropriately qualified and are physically and mentally able to do their job.

What we found

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<th>Our judgement</th>
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<td>The provider is compliant with outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers</td>
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<th>Our findings</th>
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What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with told us that staff treat them with respect and considered them to be honest and reliable. They felt that staff are competent, knowledgeable about their needs and promote their independence.

Other evidence
Our previous reports have not identified areas of concern in relation to how staff are recruited to work at Four Rivers Nursing Home. A member of staff we spoke with was able to clearly explain the process for ensuring staff employed are safe to work with vulnerable adults. Relevant check lists are in place to ensure new staff are only employed following robust checks being carried out.

Our judgement
People have confidence in the staff at the home because checks have been done to make sure that they are suitable to care for them.
Outcome 13: Staffing

What the outcome says
This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by sufficient numbers of appropriate staff.

What we found

Our judgement
The provider is compliant with outcome 13: Staffing

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
All of the people we spoke with told us that there are enough staff on duty to meet their needs and keep them safe.

Other evidence
The service has a good staff compliment with a suitable level of staff and skill base to enable the people using the service to receive the care they require. They told us that they are able to respond to unexpected changing circumstances such as sickness or maternity leave. This ensures people who use the service can expect a consistency of care.

We spoke with staff with different roles and responsibilities during our visit. They all considered that there are enough staff on duty at the right times of the day to meet the assessed needs of the people living at Four Rivers Nursing Home. Staff responsible for providing direct care told us that they have enough time to undertake specific care tasks with people and to ensure their safety is not compromised. Staff told us that the manager works alongside them so she knows the needs of the people well and ensures there are enough staff on duty to meet the individual needs of people living at Four Rivers Nursing Home.
Our judgement
Staff are provided in sufficient numbers to assure people who live at the home that their health and welfare needs will be met.
Outcome 14: Supporting workers

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by competent staff.

What we found

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<th>Our judgement</th>
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<tr>
<td>The provider is compliant with outcome 14: Supporting workers</td>
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<th>Our findings</th>
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<tr>
<td>What people who use the service experienced and told us</td>
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<tr>
<td>People told us that staff work hard and do their jobs very well. They felt that staff make sure they are kept safe.</td>
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<th>Other evidence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Staff told us that they are well supported and are valued by the manager and the organisation they work for. They told us that they received induction training when they first started work at the home and that they receive on-going training to keep people safe and understand their changing needs.</td>
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<th>Our judgement</th>
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<tr>
<td>The arrangements for staffing, their support and development ensure people living at Four Rivers Nursing Home are cared for by a competent workforce.</td>
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Outcome 16:
Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services:
- Benefit from safe quality care, treatment and support, due to effective decision making and the management of risks to their health, welfare and safety.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People we spoke with told us that residents’ meetings are regularly held to provide them with the opportunity to share their views about the service and offer suggestions for improvement. They told us that the manager is open to change and is always available to discuss any matters with them. They told us that they are involved in planning and reviewing their care.

Other evidence
The provider has systems in place for the gathering, recording and evaluating accurate information about the quality and safety of the care, treatment and support the service provides. These include quality assurance systems, risk management, handling of complaints, staff development and encouraging reporting of any incidents thus safeguarding the safety and wellbeing of people who use the service. Regular surveys are circulated to people who use the service and their families in order to gain their views and an action plan developed and made available. Senior managers within the organisation visit the home on a regular basis to monitor the service.
Staff told us that they receive regular supervision, appraisals, attend team meetings
and that their practice is observed and their performance discussed. They also told us that the manager is very much focused on providing a person centred service, ensuring the views of people are paramount in how the service is run.

**Our judgement**
Effective systems are in place to monitor risks and to review the quality of the service provided.
Outcome 17: Complaints

What the outcome says

This is what people should expect.

People who use services or others acting on their behalf:
- Are sure that their comments and complaints are listened to and acted on effectively.
- Know that they will not be discriminated against for making a complaint.

What we found

Our judgement

The provider is compliant with outcome 17: Complaints

Our findings

What people who use the service experienced and told us
People said they can talk directly with the manager or with a member of staff. They felt confident that any concerns would be listened to and acted upon. They told us they can share concerns or suggestions through talking with staff, at residents meetings, surveys and during reviews with key workers.

Other evidence
We have no concerns in how the service manages complaints. A complaints procedure is in place and displayed in the reception area of the home. The manager keeps a record of complaints received and the outcome.
The provider stated in their assessment that Four Rivers Nursing Home operates an ‘open door’ policy and people who use the service and their families, friends and visitors are encouraged to air concerns and reassured that these will be taken seriously and issues acted upon. Staff spoken with told us that the views of people living at the home are very much listened to. Contact details of advocacy groups are made available.

Our judgement
People living at Four Rivers Nursing Home feel listened to and are confident that their concerns are listened to and acted upon.
Outcome 21: Records

What the outcome says

This is what people who use services should expect.

People who use services can be confident that:
- Their personal records including medical records are accurate, fit for purpose, held securely and remain confidential.
- Other records required to be kept to protect their safety and well being are maintained and held securely where required.

What we found

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<td>The provider is compliant with outcome 21: Records</td>
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<td><strong>What people who use the service experienced and told us</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>One person told us they were confident that any records that are kept of them are only shared with people on a ‘need to know’ basis and that information held is kept safe.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other evidence</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The records viewed during our visit were detailed, regularly reviewed and securely stored. Discussions with staff evidenced that they are aware of maintaining records and confidentiality. Other records relevant to the service for example risk assessments, health and safety and maintenance records were available during our visit.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Our judgement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Records are accurate and held securely ensuring confidentiality.</td>
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What is a review of compliance?

By law, providers of certain adult social care and health care services have a legal responsibility to make sure they are meeting essential standards of quality and safety. These are the standards everyone should be able to expect when they receive care.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has written guidance about what people who use services should experience when providers are meeting essential standards, called *Guidance about compliance: Essential standards of quality and safety*.

CQC licenses services if they meet essential standards and will constantly monitor whether they continue to do so. We formally review services when we receive information that is of concern and as a result decide we need to check whether a service is still meeting one or more of the essential standards. We also formally review them at least every two years to check whether a service is meeting all of the essential standards in each of their locations. Our reviews include checking all available information and intelligence we hold about a provider. We may seek further information by contacting people who use services, public representative groups and organisations such as other regulators. We may also ask for further information from the provider and carry out a visit with direct observations of care.

When making our judgements about whether services are meeting essential standards, we decide whether we need to take further regulatory action. This might include discussions with the provider about how they could improve. We only use this approach where issues can be resolved quickly, easily and where there is no immediate risk of serious harm to people.

Where we have concerns that providers are not meeting essential standards, or where we judge that they are not going to keep meeting them, we may also set improvement actions or compliance actions, or take enforcement action:

**Improvement actions**: These are actions a provider should take so that they maintain continuous compliance with essential standards. Where a provider is complying with essential standards, but we are concerned that they will not be able to maintain this, we ask them to send us a report describing the improvements they will make to enable them to do so.

**Compliance actions**: These are actions a provider must take so that they achieve compliance with the essential standards. Where a provider is not meeting the essential standards but people are not at immediate risk of serious harm, we ask them to send us a report that says what they will do to make sure they comply. We monitor the implementation of action plans in these reports and, if necessary, take further action to make sure that essential standards are met.

**Enforcement action**: These are actions we take using the criminal and/or civil procedures in the Health and Adult Social Care Act 2008 and relevant regulations. These enforcement powers are set out in the law and mean that we can take swift, targeted action where services are failing people.
Information for the reader

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