

Tales Of The Un-inspected. Home Number Three by Eileen Chubb

Dear Mr Snell,

I recently visited.....Home Number three, these are my observations.

I entered the home at 12.20 and was asked to sit in the front lobby area, which I did for ten minutes. From the time I entered the home a call bell was ringing, I noticed it was for room 35. I was shown around the home by a very friendly and helpful receptionist as the manager was unavailable. I asked what the ringing sound was and was told it was a call bell and staff would attend to it, however it sounded constantly throughout my tour of the home and was still still ringing when I left almost an hour later.

I was shown the ground floor units first on which there were numerous care staff all busy with residents or serving lunch. I was told the staff sitting in side rooms on both units were nursing staff. The nursing staff on both ground floor units were sitting doing paperwork or talking.

Lunch was being served and I noticed in one dining room that a male resident was sat on what appeared to be a plastic tablecloth the only purpose of which could be to protect the dining chair, however that in its self is a good indication the residents continence needs were neglected.

As we continued to look at the the ground floor I noticed in one room a resident lying in bed had covered their face with the sheet, I asked if they were alright and was told they often do that, however I noted that the constant ringing of the the call bell was very loud outside this room and I found it hard to ignore.

I looked into all the rooms that were open on the ground floor and noticed that all those people that were bedridden had no fluids or drinks when there was no evidence of Peg feeding.

I was shown a very impressive activities rota for each unit and than told the one activities organizer for the whole home was on long term leave, this explained why no activities were taking place. The last available inspection report for this home is dated December 2006 and states that this home offers "excellent activities" So excellent that it is awarded the highest possible grade of 4 which means it exceeds all requirements. However this report is totally misleading compared to what I witnessed. I was especially struck by how grateful bedridden residents were to see a passerby and many wanted a bit of company so desperatly it was sad to witness.

I was shown the garden area which was easy to access and it was good to see that two residents were sitting out side, one of these residents was in a wheelchair and asked the receptionist for help to remove his jacket, which was given. I noted that this resident had bruising on both arms, that his clothes were stained and creased and that he was unshaven. I was told an area of the garden had been allocated for residents use but when I went to look at it I found it was covered in weeds and an old armchair had been dumped there, this pretty much summed up this homes "Excellent Activities"

I was impressed how friendly the care assistants were and the receptionist who knew all the residents by name.

We passed another small dining room where two residents were sat at a table looking at two plates of uneaten food.

I was shown upstairs to the EMI unit, the nurses were sitting in a side room and the care staff were busy with tasks. We passed by a small lounge area where one female resident was slumped in a chair, she was wearing a dress several sizes too small it was so short it had ridden up and exposed her knees and thighs to all who passed by, this resident was in some distress and was trying to change her position in the chair.

Many of the rooms had bedridden people and again no sign of fluids or food or peg feeding and in several rooms what appeared to be plastic buckets had been placed beside the beds. In the hallway a unattended medication trolley had been left with a bottle of liquid medication left on top. bathrooms were being used for storage areas.

The last unit I entered was called Robin unit was completely different from the other three, as we came down the hall the first thing I heard was singing and laughter. There was a totally different atmosphere on this unit, all the staff were with residents and those in the dinning room were singing and laughing with staff. I was introduced to the person who ran this unit who was in the midst of all this activity. The residents I saw on this unit were clean and looked happy which was a marked contrast to the air of desolation that was prevalent in the rest of the home.

I returned to the front lobby to wait for the manager who was in the office on the phone, from where I was sat I could hear the personal details of several residents being discussed including full names and medical histories.

When the manager left the office she was approached by a care worker who did not seem to have a good grasp of English and who was trying to tell the manager there was some kind of emergency, the manager spoke very sharply to this carer who I thought was doing her best, reluctantly the manager went with her.

I spoke to the manager when she returned very briefly and left the home at 1.05 the call bell was still ringing.

UPDATE ON HOMES ONE AND TWO.

No further response about home number one, I received a letter from CSCI regarding home number two saying my concerns had been passed to Mike Rourke Business Director, who will look into the business, what we need is someone to look into the care issues. I will keep you updated and if I have to go into twenty homes or twenty thousand to expose the lack of protection then so be it.