

Tales of the Un-Inspected

Home Number 82

By Eileen Chubb

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This home is owned by the same company as homes, 33,36,41,48,49,50,54,59,60,62,63,64,65,66,67,68,70,71,72.

In October 2010 a local Newspaper reported that home 82 had been given a zero star rating by the regulator CQC, which at first glance could give the impression that the CQC were actually taking action when they found a home to be poor, however I did not have to read much further to find that this inspection only took place because the Local Authority raised concerns about the home.

I looked into the past history of this home and found the following,

Four years earlier in August 2007 this home was taken over by the company that currently owns it. This company did what it usually does when it takes over a home, it cut the staffing levels so drastically that staff and relatives raised concerns with the regulator. The regulator fails to do anything about this. When you cut staff, you cut care and the result is always the avoidable suffering of those who need that care. It is also noted that the Local Authority and the regulator are aware there are very serious concerns about the homes care of residents with dementia and this is considered to be such a problem the home has agreed not to accept any new admissions with dementia. The home is graded as Good.

The next Inspection takes place 11 Months later in July 2008, it is noted there are a high number of safeguarding investigations taking place after concerns are reported to the local Authority, not by the home but by relatives and healthcare professionals. These related to low staffing levels, medication problems including stock discrepancies, medication found in a trolley that was not prescribed and residents not given their medication. The regulator is told by residents, staff, relatives and visitors there are not enough staff to care for residents.

The Home is graded 1 Star Adequate.

The next inspection takes place 5 Months later in December 2008 and is inspected because the Local Authority are so concerned they have placed an embargo on the home.

The home was noted to previously have a high number of safeguarding concerns but this is now considered to have escalated to an even higher number. The danger signs ignored for so long have resulted in so much suffering that even CQC cannot excuse it. But merely noting it and taking no action is all that is done.

There are clearly some very good cares staff in this home who have worked hard to provide care in an imposable situation, there are also some very poor staff.

Given this homes past failures to care for residents with Dementia and that the concerns were so serious that the Local Authority removed residents with Dementia from this home, I find it incredible that the regulator has since allowed this home to open a new dementia unit and register it to care for 36 of the most vulnerable residents.

The result is relatives raise concerns about the poor care on the dementia unit in particular.

The concerns raised with the local authority relate to bedsores and lack of treatment and equipment, people at high risk of mal- nutrition, medication is still a total mess, poor record keeping, one resident had an infected wound and needed hospital treatment as sutures had been left in. The inspectors list a catalogue of failures in the sample of care plans they looked at but what is most telling is these care plans all belonged to people who had since died or been hospitalized.

A sample of the many they had already failed to protect, people left with infected bedsores, weeping wounds, given no food or pain relief.

Diabetics in a coma, Catheters not changed and blood in the urine, and people left screaming in pain. This is just the general nursing care but it is even worse on the dementia unit.

This report made to the regulator sums up the fate of those with dementia,

I heard a nurse ask my relative if they wanted a drink but as my relative can no longer communicate due to dementia they could not reply so this

nurse said, please yourself you won't get another chance,

The good news is the home manager who oversaw this sorry excuse for a care home is leaving; the bad news is she has been promoted by the company to run a whole region of homes including this one.

The inspectors decide the staffing levels are ok in spite of the evidence there are not enough staff. The home is graded Zero Star but not for long.

Six months later in June 2009 the regulator upgrade this home to 2 Star Good. There is no evidence to support this decision in fact all the evidence points to the home being poor.

It is stated the report that staffing levels are so good it merits particular praise, but makes no mention of the fact the home is less than half full. The manager is noted to be very proud that there are no residents being treated for bed sores, but there could be residents with untreated bedsores.

The home is also praised for making residents comfortable in Kirton chairs but fails to say anything about these chairs being widely used to restrain people.

The regulator says the care plans and medication were checked and found to be in order. The manager and staff are praised for their knowledge and commitment to safeguarding and whistle-blowing. The home is considered so good it fully meets every standard. Not a single shortfall or requirement is made. Quite a miracle given the history of this home.

11 Months later in May 2010 the regulator has to inspect again only because they receive a telephone call saying there are serious problems because there are such low staffing levels.

The inspectors go to great lengths to say this concern is unfounded they say there are always 18 staff each shift, because the home tells them that. But later on in the report reference is made to one unit where the alleged 8 staff are noted to be four and that included non-care staff helping to feed residents. The evidence before their eyes is ignored and the home judged to have good staffing levels.

It remains 2 Star good.

Just 8 Weeks later the regulator inspects the home again but only because a visiting healthcare professional raises extensive concerns about neglect with the local Authority and only because these are found to be true, the concerns relate to the following, Neglected pressure sores, lack of food and drink, medication is found to be a total mess, abuse is not reported as required, in fact it is not even considered abuse by a home so recently praised for its commitment to safeguarding and whistle-blowing. Poor care plans and a serious lack of staff.

In fact everything that the regulator considered to be praiseworthy 8 weeks ago is now found to be seriously poor and the home is graded as Poor zero star as a reaction.

The same situation of abuse and neglect has continued unchecked in this home for 4 years. The abuse could not have continued without the assistance of the regulator, the very organization that should be protecting the vulnerable is protecting the abusers and that is why so many suffer.

The company that owns this home is praised for not tolerating abuse and its whistle-blower helpline which is run by a large charity, which is also funded by the same company. A company that is protected by the whole system, protected by the law, by the regulator and even by the big charities.

Eileen Chubb.