

TALES OF THE UN-INSPECTED, HOME NUMBER 28, BY EILEEN CHUBB

The Inspection of care homes has changed its headed paper to The Care Quality Commission, what else has changed will be judged by this charity according to what we see on the front line, that is in the care homes we visit and here is the first report since the headed paper came into force.

Dear Baroness Young, Chair of the CQC, We recently visited
.....Home twenty eight, these are our observations,

We arrived at the home and were asked to wait in the entrance area; the first thing that we noticed was a strong smell of urine. We saw an elderly couple walking towards the door, the man was very smart and extremely well groomed which was in marked contrast to the woman with him who was dirty and unkempt and very neglected. It transpired that the man was visiting his wife who was a resident in the home.

The manager came out of the office and said she would show us around the home but that they were not accepting new residents at that time as they had received a bad inspection report and were told to improve things which seemed to have resulted in the action of spending more time in the office improving the paperwork, whilst filthy neglected residents wandered up and down the hallways.

We saw many residents and common features of them all included,

Matted un-brushed hair, filthy dirty and obviously unwashed for a considerable time,

Clothes that were shabby and looked as if they had been washed on too hot a cycle in the past, however they did not look to have recently been washed as they were heavily soiled, one female resident had a considerable amount of dried faeces all over the lower part of her dress, others were covered in various stains from food to urine.

All the residents looked dirty and smelt of urine, faeces or both.

A male resident who was unshaven and wearing a dirty suit asked the manager three times if she would come and talk to him about something, the manager eventually said she would but did not seem to grasp that reassurance is very important to a resident with dementia who is distressed about something as this resident was.

The manager said that activities took place constantly throughout the day but the manager indicated that a table nearby which had several containers of scrap material and which one resident picked up a piece of cloth hid it under her cardigan and walked off was considered to be an activity.

We were told a lot of residents had lost weight and that food was constantly served to them throughout the day, this was referred to as " Grazing " We did see two kitchen staff chatting to each other near a trolley but saw no resident with food or with a drink near them, and many of the residents looked mal-nourished in their appearance and two in particular looked as if they were famine victims.

One female resident was sat outside alone on a balcony area, there was a very strong wind that day and it was worse in the quadrangle of the building and being overcast it was cold due to the wind-chill, this resident was wearing no stockings and only a short thin dress and silky cardigan, it was obvious

she was cold but the manager did not notice and staff just walked past, however a female resident who had followed us about and who clearly suffered from advanced dementia because of her difficulty speaking, managed to point to this resident and say "she's cold she's cold" banging loudly on the glass and trying to get someone's attention. If it were not for this resident no one would have looked and this resident was a vulnerable elderly person who could see the danger. The women outside could easily have suffered Hypo-thermia whilst staff walked past in a care home. Also the balcony was not safe as there was no netting and a confused resident could easily fall to the concrete below.

One female resident was sitting by the main entrance, like many of the other residents she was desperate for someone to talk to, she was wearing a short sleeved crumpled dress, no cardigan or shoes and I noticed clear finger-mark bruising up both her upper arms, she was also wearing a surgical dressing on her lower left arm and this dressing was wrapped too tightly around her wrist which caused her skin to be pinched tight.

We saw no human contact between staff and residents; the staff we saw stood aloof watching the residents as if they were prison inmates.

This home was last inspected on March 18th 2009 and given a zero rating as it had ignored many of the previous recommendations. It was told to improve its guidelines and procedures (bits of paper)

What struck me most about this home is the manager is new and has been sent to sort out the homes paperwork whilst so many filthy sorely neglected victims are left to watch out for each other. How anyone could walk through that home and think putting the paperwork in order would help those residents must be impaired either mentally or morally.

This home is part of a company that does good business with that and other local councils, perhaps withdrawing that business is how to get the message across, because there is an ingrained culture that has gone unchecked way too long in that home and every rule in the book has been broken and what have the inspections achieved, more excuses, more delays, more suffering.