

TALES OF THE UN-INSPECTED.

HOME NUMBER FIVE, BY EILEEN CHUBB.

Dear Mr Snell,

I recently visited.....home number five, these are my observations, I entered the home at 1.35 and was asked to wait in the front reception area. I noticed a resident was also waiting outside the office.

After about ten minutes the manager came along and asked me to come to her office and as we walked past the resident who was waiting the manager tried to persuade him to move but he would not and when the manager took hold of his arm he became agitated so she left him there.

I noticed there were numerous industrial air fresheners throughout the ground floor which would mask any odours so I was not able to judge if there were any odours.

The manager pointed out that Bingo was due to take place and I looked into the ground floor lounge and noticed eleven residents were in there and several were holding Bingo cards with their pens ready to start, there were no staff in the room.

I went to the managers office and were just going to enter when a staff member came down the hallway and asked if there were any more towels, the manager said no use some of the old blankets.

I went into the office and the manager chatted generally about the home, I asked about staff and was told there were many staff who had been there a long time but there were a lot of staff from the Philippines who left when their work permits ran out which was a problem.

I was then taken on a tour of the ground floor and we passed the lounge where the bingo was to take place, there were now only nine residents as two had wandered of and another left as we stood there. A rather flustered looking member of staff passed with a resident in tow and I was told this was the activities organiser. It was apparent the activities organiser was left to get on with it and as fast as she brought residents to the room others left.

I looked at all the staff photos that had been put up on the walls and noticed that ninety per cent of the night staff were male and wondered how residents who preferred a female carer were attended to.

I was taken to the lower ground floor next and was shown the gardens first which were empty and the only evidence of use were full ashtrays on the tables nearest the door, as the ashtrays were so full it indicated that this was an area used by staff.

I Continued to look around the lower ground floor, one of the fire exits to the garden was blocked by a wheelie bin. I could see no air fresheners and in a marked contrast to the floor above there was a strong odour of urine throughout this floor.

I saw only one member of staff and she seemed attentive to the residents she was able to care for, but this being a Dementia unit it was clearly not possible to attend to many of the residents.

I wondered if that was why so many were sat in the corridors as the one staff member could watch them. Three residents were sat by the lift, I noticed one lady had a short dress on and a pair of men's socks, she also had large bruises on the front of both lower legs. The lady sitting next to this resident seemed very distressed and tried to get the managers attention, the manager said she would come back to her but did not, as we walked away I saw that this lady was hit three times by the male resident who was sat to her right, the one carer did not see this and the manager said nothing.

We went back to the ground floor and I noticed that the activities organiser was pushing a resident in a wheelchair towards the lounge, the wheelchair had no foot rests and the resident was told to keep her feet out in front of her. Clearly this activities organiser was doing her best but she was fighting a losing battle as no member of staff was helping her, the bingo had still not started and several more residents had left the room and one had fallen asleep bingo card and pen in hand. I was given a comprehensive information pack about the home which bore no resemblance to the reality and I left the home at 2.30.

This home has a CSCI rating of 2 stars, which implies the care is good.

UPDATES.

CSCI have requested a meeting and I am happy to meet with them and hope to arrange a date in October.

Home Number Two.

My sources tell me the home has been cleaned and all of a sudden there are increased staffing levels, its amazing what a real inspection can achieve.