

Tales of the Un-Inspected

Home Number 107

By Eileen Chubb

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In January 2009 the care home regulator, CQC rated this home 2 Star Good. An annual review was carried out in February 2010; this is not an inspection but the CQC publishing the homes self-assessment. It was considered this home did not need an inspection until 2011; however a random inspection had to be carried out four months later after members of the public contacted the CQC with concerns about the care.

The main concern being that people were not getting food or as CQC prefer to call it (Poor Nutritional diet) Records were looked at and found to be lacking and the home was told to improve records of what people eat and weights recorded. The chef is said to need improvement in performance there needs to be records kept of activities.

When I visited this home I saw that CQC's requirements were being met in that the one young carer in the lounge where all the residents were seated, was writing out the care records, the fact whilst doing this she had chosen not to sit on the empty chair which was facing the residents, but had chosen to sit on a footstool in order to turn her back on them told me quite a lot.

When entering the home and ringing the bell I gained admittance without seeing anyone or being asked who I was the simple act of ringing the door bell was all that was needed to gain entry, I waited a while in the entrance and then wandered off trying to find someone, I saw a male resident in his bedroom he was trapped behind the television table and was turning desperately in circles trying to find a way out. A male carer came out of a room further down he looked rushed and was carrying soiled clothing, I explained that I was looking for a home for a relative and he left me sitting in the staff room for about ten minutes, this room was very small had no ventilation or light and was filthy, the chairs were black with ingrained dirt so I stood and waited. I could hear residents calling out their cries became more intense as time elapsed and I heard a male staff voice say very abruptly in a minute, a nurse came to show me around.

Whilst the inspection report had said some bedrooms could not be reached by the lift, I did not expect to find a building so unsuitable to be a care home; it used to be a hotel and would not be surprised if it was called faulty

towers.

As a care home it was even worse, if there was an emergency given the frailty of the residents the place was a death trap. Long dark twisting corridors up flights of steps around narrow corners into more narrow twisting corridors, the unsuitability of the premises and the staffs efforts to get people to their bedrooms clearly a struggle as long sections of wall scrapped by hoists and wheelchairs, huge chunks of paint and plaster evidence of the impossible struggle to access many parts of the building. The bedrooms seen were cold and dirty. The whole home stank of neglect and the strongest smell came from the residents in the main lounge.

Every single resident seen was dirty with lank greasy hair, stained and crumpled clothing, long dirty nails, and men unshaven. They all looked in total despair and those that were awake just stared ahead others slumped sideways or had slid down their chairs. One female resident had the left side of her face covered in dark purple bruises and had cuts to her eyebrow. The nurse made much of the view out the window in front of which a male resident was seated slumped in a wheelchair.

There no drinks in the room and no evidence of any having been consumed.

Two very frail female residents were laying in two half-moon type chairs which forced them into a reclined position, they were very thin, emaciated in appearance, one lady appeared to be in pain as she was laying with the hoist sling under her and the straps and seam were cutting into the very little skin that protected her bones.

I was told there were activities which amounted to a vague description of something with an elastic thing. Apart from the male carer, the nurse and the girl writing the care plans I only saw two other staff that were both going off duty.

The difference between this home and home 106 is the difference between heaven and hell and only the CQC could judge them the same.

Eileen Chubb