

# Howard House Nursing & Residential Home Care Home Service

13 Howard Street  
Kilmarnock  
KA1 2BP

Telephone: 01563 532 499

**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
1 November 2021

**Service provided by:**  
Gate Healthcare Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003001705

**Service no:**  
CS2003010268

## About the service we inspected

Howard House is registered to provide a care home service for 41 older people, including four places for adults. The provider is Gate Healthcare Ltd.

Howard House is a three story building located in a residential area of Kilmarnock. There are 40 bedrooms but not all were in use. Most have en-suite toilet and shower facilities, some only have toilet and wash basin. Access between the floors is by lift and stairs.

The accommodation on the ground floor has some bedrooms with patio doors and access to the outdoors. The spacious conservatory also has access to a small, pleasant courtyard garden.

All communal space in general use was located on the ground floor. This included a large lounge with views to the street and an open plan lounge/dining area in the busy central part of the home.

The middle floor lacked easy access to communal space. The top floor was not in use. Bathroom and shower room upgrades were in progress. A refurbishment plan is planned which aims to further upgrade the layout and facilities.

The service employs nurses, but also uses district nurses when necessary.

At the time of the inspection there were 34 people living in the service.

## How we inspected the service

This was a focused follow up inspection to evaluate how well people were being supported during the Covid-19 pandemic. We evaluated the service based on requirements and areas for improvements identified in the previous inspection of 4th August 2021.

## Taking the views of people using the service into account

We spoke with three people using the service and all were content with the heating, hot water and upgrades being carried out to facilities. They spoke positively about staff and felt they were well cared for.

## Taking carers' views into account

There were no relatives consulted on this focused follow up inspection.

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous requirements

#### Requirement 1

By 18 October 2021 the service provider must ensure the fitness of the premises with specific regard to:

- boiler is fixed and able to maintain sufficient heating
- cooker in kitchen is fixed and kitchen can be cleaned more easily
- plans are put in place to ensure dirty utilities/housekeeping cupboards have suitable hand-wash/ fill & tip facilities with clear timescales for completion.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: "I experience an environment that is well looked after with clean, tidy and well maintained premises, furnishings and equipment." (HSCS 5.22)

This is in order to comply with Regulations 4.(1)(a) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/201). Regulation 10(2)(a)(b)(d) Fitness of premises.

**This requirement was made on 4 August 2021.**

#### Action taken on previous requirement

A plan was in place to upgrade the boiler. In the meantime the heating throughout the home was being monitored and people told us it was sufficient. The hot water was also being monitored and a small number of wash hand basins had hot water temperatures which were below average. This was addressed by a contractor in the next few days. People told us there was sufficient hot water for showers and baths. This meant there was no detriment to the care provided. The planned upgrade to the boiler is scheduled for February. We will encourage this date to be brought forward if possible. This will help ensure comfort throughout the winter months.

A new cooker was in place in the kitchen. Kitchen staff found this was easier to clean and use. This meant staff time could be used more effectively to benefit people using the service.

The housekeeper's cupboard downstairs had a new improved fill/ tip and hand washing facilities. The upstairs cupboard was in progress of upgrade. This meant staff could use these facilities more safely and carry out hand hygiene more appropriately. This helps keep everyone safer.

**Met - within timescales**

## What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

### Areas for improvement

#### Previous area for improvement 1

The service provider should develop more person centred care practices within smaller group living areas so staff can respond when needed and help people to get the most out of life. This is with particular reference to:

- staff response to stress/distress of people who cannot use the call system
- support to carry out every day activities such as making a cup of tea/washing dishes
- ensure staff are available to provide support for more meaningful activities by reducing time away from a "household" area for example by provision of dishwasher
- consider how communal spaces are used to create more homely living.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state: 'If I live in a care home the premises are designed and organised so that I can experience small group living, including access to a kitchen, where possible.' (HSCS 5.7)

**This area for improvement was made on 4 August 2021.**

#### Action taken since then

Plans had been developed but were yet to be implemented to progress the introduction of smaller group living.

This area for improvement is not met.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

The service provider should ensure decisions about care and in particular anticipatory care plans have been discussed and agreed with the right people, including GP practice so out of hours are aware. This helps ensure people's rights and preferences are respected.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'My future care and support needs are anticipated as part of my assessment.' (HSCS 1.14)

**This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2020.**

#### Action taken since then

Training and advice were being sought on how to address this area for improvement. However, there were no changes implemented yet.

This area for improvement is not met.

#### Previous area for improvement 3

Supplementary charts should be reflective of planned care evidencing the additional measures in place to support responsive and effective healthcare.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience are safe and effective'. (HSCS 1.24)

**This area for improvement was made on 5 August 2019.**

#### Action taken since then

Supplementary charts were under review. Improvements were noted in recording of care with regards to nutrition and skin care. This meant people could be more confident their needs were being monitored and actions taken to support their wishes.

This area for improvement is met.

#### Previous area for improvement 4

The service provider should consider ways of administering medication in a more homely way, increasing the staff group who can do this so that wider improvements can be made to the monitoring of health and use of best practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that: "My care and support meets my needs and is right for me." (HSCS 1.19)

**This area for improvement was made on 4 August 2021.**

#### Action taken since then

There was no change yet in how medication administration was carried out. This meant only a few staff could carry out this function. At times these staff were stretched and could not support care and other staff in more meaningful ways. Medication trolleys were in use which could at times detract from a homely environment for people experiencing care.

This area for improvement is not met.

#### Previous area for improvement 5

The service provider should routinely complete, review and evaluate all areas highlighted within the homes quality assurance procedures. With particular attention to:

- dependency levels and staff rotas
- Infection control procedures and
- risk assessments, including visitors to the home and staff routine checks.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexpected event'. (HSCS 4.14)

**This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2020.**

#### Action taken since then

The manager had implemented changes to oversee dependencies and staff rotas more closely. Further improvement was planned to break this down to people's smaller group living areas. This would represent a more person centred approach and potentially provide better assurance that there are enough staff to meet people's needs. At the time of the inspection there was no evidence to suggest staffing was insufficient.

A new approach to monitoring infection control procedures was in place overseen by an infection control lead. This was effective in providing assurance and helped support better outcomes to keep people safer.

Dedicated staff were in place to support risk assessments, testing for COVID-19 and support to visitors to the home. This helped to keep people in contact with those important to them.

This area for improvement is met.

## Previous area for improvement 6

The service provider should consider how best practice guidance and training specifically around infection control and coronavirus is delivered and recorded. This should include competency assessments and quality assurance checks to support the service manager to review and evaluate staff knowledge and understanding and how this relates to their practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which state that: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes'. (HSCS 3.14)

**This area for improvement was made on 18 November 2020.**

### Action taken since then

The assurance systems included regular "spot checks" and practice observations. This helped to ensure infection prevention and control was carried out in accordance with best practice. Staff still needed regular reminders in order to prevent cross contamination. However, training and audit systems were in place.

This area for improvement is met.

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

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