



Inspection Report on

Rhyd Hir

Neath

Date Inspection Completed

14/01/2025

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About Rhyd Hir

Type of care provided	Care Home Service Adults Without Nursing
Registered Provider	National Autistic Society
Registered places	3
Language of the service	English
Previous Care Inspectorate Wales inspection	11 January 2024
Does this service promote Welsh language and culture?	This service is not making a significant effort to promote the use of Welsh language and culture.

Summary

People enjoy a good quality of life at Rhyd Hir. The home offers a comfortable environment for people to live as independently as possible. People lead an active lifestyle doing things they enjoy. The service has largely overcome challenges with regards to staffing, so people experience good continuity of care. People have bonded with care staff, who have the skills and abilities to fulfil their roles effectively.

The manager and deputy manager provide clear direction and a good support network to staff. Managers are passionate about continually developing the service, so it makes a positive difference to people's lives. There are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of the service and drive improvement. An application to CIW is currently in progress with regards to a change of Responsible Individual (RI).

Well-being

People receive a good standard of care and support which promotes their physical and mental well-being. Staff know people well and have access to up-to-date information about their care needs and preferences. Personal plans identify how people can achieve their individual goals and work is underway to strengthen the team's approach to goal planning and monitoring. Care staff encourage people to make healthy choices and support them to attend health appointments and reviews. People consistently receive their prescribed medicines to help them stay as healthy as possible. The home is maintained to a good standard of cleanliness, which helps minimise infection risks.

People have ample opportunities to remain active and positively occupied. Care staff work with people to plan their weeks ahead, taking into account their preferred leisure activities. People keep in touch with family and friends and enjoy celebrating special occasions. People experience a sense of responsibility by contributing to the home's upkeep and undertaking work through day centre services.

People's views are valued. Care staff use effective communication methods to empower people to make their own decisions. People contribute to the development and review of their personal plans. They have a say in home improvements and are consulted during quality monitoring visits. Managers are open and responsive to feedback from others. A relative told us *"I've never had a complaint; they're brilliant there"*.

There are measures in place to promote people's safety and well-being. The home is kept in a good state of repair. People are familiar with staff, who are appropriately vetted and recruited. Staff complete safeguarding training and know how to report concerns regarding people's welfare. A relative said, *"I trust them all there"*. Care records include clear strategies for managing risks to people's safety and well-being. Staff receive a good standard of training to assist them in their roles. They said, *"It's a lovely house to work in"* and *"It is an enjoyable place to work... We're lucky"*.

People live in a personalised, homely environment, which includes facilities to support independent living. People have access to private and communal space where they can relax and socialise with others in comfort. People's identity is reflected in the furnishings and décor, giving them a sense of belonging. People have benefitted from recent environmental upgrades. This will continue with the planned refurbishment of people's bedrooms.

Care and Support

People have choice and control over their day-to-day lives. Care staff are familiar with people's interests and what matters to them most. This information is highlighted within personal plans and incorporated into weekly planners. Care staff support people to follow their preferred routines and make decisions regarding their daily activity. People choose where to shop, what meals to eat and what in-house and community-based activities to take part in. People have designated one-to-one time with care staff, which they use to pursue their hobbies and visit places of interest. People also plan holidays with care staff and choose how to mark special occasions. A relative told us their loved one is "very happy" at Rhyd Hir.

The service provides opportunities for people to socialise and develop their skills and independence. Care staff encourage people to complete domestic tasks independently, factoring these into weekly planners. Where appropriate, a rota is used to support people with their cleaning and laundry duties. People regularly attend day centre services where they can learn new skills and gain work experience. People meet with friends and family often and have formed positive relationships with care staff. Each person has a keyworker who they meet with regularly to discuss their support. Managers are holding workshops to further develop the keyworker role, so it supports meaningful goal planning and helps celebrate people's accomplishments.

The service has a clear, up-to-date policy to support the safe management of medicines. We observed medication to be stored securely and at a suitable temperature. Medication records show that people consistently receive their prescribed medicines, although better record-keeping is needed in relation to transcribed medication. The manager assured us this would be addressed. People receive appropriate support with their medication, and individualised risk assessments are in place for those who complete medication tasks independently. Care staff receive annual medication training and assessments to keep their knowledge and skills up to date. Managers regularly audit medication systems to ensure medicines are being handled safely.

The service develops detailed personal plans which outline the care and support people need to promote their physical and mental health. Each person has a health profile and action plan, and care staff support them to maintain healthy lifestyle goals. Risk assessments also guide care staff in supporting people in the safest way. Care records are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain accurate. Records confirm that care staff make prompt referrals to medical services where there are concerns about people's health and well-being. One relative said, "*They inform us of health changes, and we have an annual meeting*". Care staff also support people to attend their health appointments and reviews.

Environment

The home neighbours a community of other homes operated by the same provider and is close to some of the provider's other care home services. People visit friends who live in other homes and can easily access day centre services. The service is actively recruiting new staff who can drive, to help facilitate people's frequent community outings.

The home has facilities to support independent living. There is adequate space for people to store groceries and prepare meals in the kitchen. People also have access to an external laundry room where they can wash and dry their laundry. People can relax, socialise and complete leisure activities in the comfortable communal lounge. People's private bedrooms are laid out and furnished according to their needs and preferences. The décor and items within each bedroom give them a real sense of identity. The manager told us outdoor furniture will be provided so people can relax in the small back garden during fine weather.

The service has made a number of environmental improvements since the last inspection. These include replacing external windows and doors, upgrading internal fire doors, renewing the ceilings in bathroom facilities and laying patio slabs in the garden. There are imminent plans to redecorate all bedrooms and fully refurbish bathroom facilities. These uplifts have been delayed due to the volume and breadth of work undertaken by the company's maintenance officer. The provider is addressing this by recruiting extra maintenance staff and outsourcing some work. People have contributed to previous environmental works, and we were assured they will have influence over upcoming renovations.

The service promotes a good standard of hygiene and infection control. We found the home to be clean and tidy throughout. Care staff prompt and encourage people to keep their home clean. Rotas offer people structure with completing general household tasks and cleaning their individual rooms. All staff complete training in relation to infection control.

The accommodation is appropriately maintained. Managers carry out routine health and safety checks to ensure facilities remain safe. The service compliance manager also reviews environmental conditions during three-monthly audits. The maintenance officer prioritises repairs as necessary. Action has been taken to improve fire safety standards as a result of an independent fire risk assessment conducted in September 2024. We saw that fire safety equipment has been serviced within recommended timescales. Flashing beacons are visible within some bedrooms and communal areas to alert people with a hearing impairment to alarms. Personal emergency evacuation plans are in designated areas and can be accessed easily. Records confirm that staff complete fire safety training and regular fire drills.

Leadership and Management

People have confidence in the management of the service. Relatives told us *“We have no complaints”* and *“All the managers have been brilliant. If I had a complaint, I’d definitely bring it up”*. Staff described managers as approachable and open to new ideas. They are familiar with safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures and can discuss any concerns during their supervision meetings and appraisals. One staff member said, *“If I’ve got an issue, I’ll bring it up straightaway”*. The quality of the service is monitored by an operations manager and the applying RI, who has commenced visits to formally assess standards. Six-monthly quality of care reviews have also been completed. These help identify service improvements based on feedback from those living and working at the home and an analysis of key performance data.

The staff team is growing, which has provided more stability to the service and improved the continuity of care people experience. Staffing rotas are designed based on people’s support needs and planned activities. Worked rotas show that appropriate staffing levels are maintained to accommodate these. We observed people being informed about who is working each shift. Relatives feel that people have adapted well to staff changes and developed good relationships with the whole team. Staff absence is now covered more easily by the team, or by longstanding bank staff who are very familiar with the home and the people they support. Managers plan to embed the most effective ways of working throughout the team, so people benefit from a consistent approach to care. The appointment of a deputy manager has increased support for care staff and the manager, who also runs two other small care services.

Staff are appropriately recruited and supported. Records confirm that the necessary recruitment checks are carried out before new staff are employed. The provider requires staff to sign up to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) update service, allowing easy access to their latest DBS certificate. The service has a lone working policy and effective on-call arrangements to promote staff’s safety. A staff member confirmed *“There’s always someone to get hold of”*. Staff are given information and updates during team meetings and shift handovers. They also have opportunities to reflect on their work and development during individual supervision meetings and annual appraisals.

Staff have the skills to provide safe, effective care. The service has a robust induction programme which includes mandatory training, a shadowing period and reflective exercises. Managers support staff to register with Social Care Wales, the workforce regulator. Staff complete mandatory and specialist training relevant to people’s needs. Managers use various learning resources to support staff’s learning and increase their confidence when applying it to practice. There is an effective system in place for monitoring staff’s completion of training, so it is refreshed within expected timeframes.

Summary of Non-Compliance	
Status	What each means
New	This non-compliance was identified at this inspection.
Reviewed	Compliance was reviewed at this inspection and was not achieved. The target date for compliance is in the future and will be tested at next inspection.
Not Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was not achieved.
Achieved	Compliance was tested at this inspection and was achieved.

We respond to non-compliance with regulations where poor outcomes for people, and / or risk to people's well-being are identified by issuing Priority Action Notice (s).

The provider must take immediate steps to address this and make improvements. Where providers fail to take priority action by the target date we may escalate the matter to an Improvement and Enforcement Panel.

Priority Action Notice(s)		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this inspection	N/A

Where we find non-compliance with regulations but no immediate or significant risk for people using the service is identified we highlight these as Areas for Improvement.

We expect the provider to take action to rectify this and we will follow this up at the next inspection.

Area(s) for Improvement		
Regulation	Summary	Status
N/A	No non-compliance of this type was identified at this	N/A

	inspection	
22	Staff shortages affecting, communication, community access and wellbeing of people.	Achieved

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Date Published 21/02/2025