

Northcote Lodge Care Home Care Home Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 October 2025

Service provided by:
Northcote Lodge Trust

Service provider number:
SP2010010986

Service no:
CS2010251941

About the service

Northcote Lodge is located in the quiet residential area of Airyhall in Aberdeen. The service aims to provide a 'personalised' level of care and support, to maintain independence and individuality. It is registered to provide a care service, up to a maximum of 60 older people.

The home is a modern two storey building, and is accessible for all people. There are distinct areas, each having their own lounge and dining area, and the spacious rooms are all en-suite. The home has two enclosed garden areas for residents to enjoy safely, as they wish. There are two summerhouses, a putting green and various outdoor games available.

The home also has a chapel which people and their families can use, and services are held regularly.

Northcote Lodge has a café located by the front reception area serving home bakes, soup, sandwiches and snacks. This provides a space for people to enjoy socialising with friends, family and visitors.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6 and 7 October 2025. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 16 people using the service and six of their families
- spoke with 17 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals.

Key messages

People spoke positively regarding the care and support at Northcote Lodge.

People benefitted from an environment that was well maintained and cleaned to a very high standard.

The service had a variety of different areas in the home for people to enjoy, which promoted social interaction and inclusion.

Staff knew people well and supported them in a kind and caring way.

The service needed to improve on notifying events to the regulatory body.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The service had a nice, relaxed atmosphere which encouraged people to relax and feel at home. Staff were consistent, visible and interacted well with people, and positive relationships had been developed. We were told, 'The staff are really very good and patient' and 'It is a brilliant place. This is the best place she could be in. We could not be happier with it.' This meant that people had confidence in the service and gave them reassurance.

People's personal plans were generally of a good standard, with clear and detailed information about individuals needs, views, and preferences. The transition to an electronic system had been effectively managed, supporting consistency and accessibility of care information.

Legal documentation was up to date and clearly recorded in people's plans and reviews were taking place within regulatory timescales and demonstrated participation with people living in the service. This meant that people's views being actively sought and recorded.

Care notes could have been more informative, to better reflect people's outcomes. While some entries were insightful, for example, when individuals were unwell or had engaged in activities, many were task-focused and lacked reflection on outcomes or the impact of care. We discussed this with the manager and will follow this up at our next inspection.

There were risk assessments in place and a good overview of people's health and wellbeing needs and access to external health professionals. People's dietary needs, weight and nutrition was monitored closely. There was oversight of falls, and care plans were regularly updated to reflect this. As a result, people had received the right support at the right time.

Staff had good knowledge of people's needs and were responsive and kind in their interactions. It was positive to see staff engage alongside people during activities. For example, staff joined in with an exercise class and were on hand to offer encouragement to those less able. This ensured that they got the most out of this class. We observed good community involvement, such as a local singing groups and visits from school children. There were also volunteers who worked in the service. As a result, people were supported to lead busy, active lives in order to reach their full potential.

There were lots of different activities on offer for people to enjoy. A weekly planner kept people informed of what was on offer each week. During our inspection, people were engaged with bingo, an exercise class and musical entertainment. Staff were working hard to ensure that there was a mixture of group activities and 1-1s for those who preferred this rather than a group setting. People's choices on how they spent their time was therefore managed well and respected.

Whilst there were several positive staff interactions, some occurred when carrying out tasks with people. For example, on some occasions people were sleeping in the communal circle area in the home and staff spoke whilst walking past or helping them with mobility. On speaking to staff there was a mix of views on whether people preferred to sit in these areas, or whether it was easier for staff supervision to monitor people at high risk of falls. We discussed this with the manager and discussed the potential privacy and dignity issues associated with people sitting sleeping in these busy areas. We will follow this up at our next inspection.

There were good examples of people experiencing meaningful connection during the inspection. For example, families and friends were coming in and using the café area to enjoy a meal or coffee with someone. This was very relaxed and promoted connections and good outcomes for people, particularly in relation to their emotional well being. Families also had unlimited access to the service with their own swipe card which promoted visiting at anytime. There were signs on dining room doors to restrict visiting, referring to it as a 'protected area'. Whilst the home has lots of areas people could share and enjoy during mealtimes, this did restrict access to the dining area. We discussed this with the manager and staff and how this could be facilitated, and also referenced the current guidance around meaningful connection. We will follow this up at our next visit.

People told us they enjoyed the food and we observed that people had access to a wide range of options tailored to their needs. There was warm and caring engagement from kitchen staff to people, talking about their preferences. People told us they enjoyed the meals which meant they were having positive mealtime experiences, in order to enhance their wellbeing.

The service was very clean and tidy with a competent and knowledgeable housekeeping team. Standards of cleanliness were high and staff practices were in line with current guidance regarding infection prevention and control. People were confident that they were being cared for in a clean environment free from the risk of cross infection.

The service had robust policies and procedures in place. Audits were working well, and areas for improvement were being identified quickly, with measures put in place to reduce risk of harm. Some incidents we found, however, had not been reported to the Care Inspectorate as required. We discussed this with the manager and will follow this up at our next visit. See area for improvement 1.

An organised process was in place to ensure people received their medications appropriately. The senior team had good oversight of this process, and regular audits had taken place to monitor compliance and identify any areas for improvement.

People's finances were managed safely and appropriately, with a robust and organised system in place.

Areas for improvement

1. The Provider should ensure that all notifiable incidents are reported to the Care Inspectorate as per the guidance for adult care services, 'Guidance on records you must keep and notifications you must make'.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS), which state that: 'I benefit from different organisations working together and sharing information about me promptly where appropriate, and I understand how my privacy and confidentiality are respected' (HSCS 4.18).

How good is our setting?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The facilities in the home enabled people to have positive experiences. There were a variety of different spaces for people to spend time in such as a café, library, chapel and bright, homely lounges. These were being well used, and some areas such as the café, really brought people together socially and created a lively atmosphere for people to enjoy. People told us, 'Mum is making friends and connections with people', 'I've never seen her look so well. She takes part in everything and is making friends. I get to come in and sit at the café with her and have lunch, we always come on a Friday for the fish and chips'. The service made people feel welcome and as a result, people involved in their loved one's care and support.

People were given the choice to spend time privately in their rooms or use other areas in the home. Where some people could not advocate for themselves and were at high risk of falls, they were sometimes assisted to use the circle areas in the home. Please see information under key question 1.

The service had a very competent maintenance team who ensured that all regular, required checks were up to date and required certification was in place, in order to keep people safe. The interior and exterior of the home was maintained to a very high standard.

Rooms were spacious with ensuite facilities and were clean and homely. People had personalised their rooms with items from home to make them feel more comfortable and familiar.

People had access to the outdoors with no restrictions. The grounds were beautifully kept and offered a variety of different seating areas for people to enjoy. There was a large summerhouse which was warm, welcoming and well used. A minibus was available for people to experience trips out and about. We were told, 'I get out and about in the garden. I go shopping'. People were supported to maintain connections with the local community which promoted inclusion.

The service was very clean and tidy with very good oversight from a competent and knowledgeable housekeeping team in order to maintain the high standards in place. People told us, 'The cleanliness of Northcote I must say is second to none'.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our setting?	5 - Very Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	5 - Very Good

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