

# Balnacarron Care Home Service

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St. Andrews  
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**Type of inspection:**  
Unannounced

**Completed on:**  
4 March 2026

**Service provided by:**  
HC-One No. 1 Limited

**Service provider number:**  
SP2016012770

**Service no:**  
CS2016349811

## About the service

Balnacarron is a well-established care home that is situated in a residential area of St. Andrews. The home is registered to provide care for a maximum of 33 older people. The service comprises of a large Victorian villa with an added extension. The home benefits from a variety of communal spaces that people can use. Well-kept, landscaped gardens surround the home and there are outside seating areas for people and their visitors to enjoy. There were 30 people living there at the time of our inspection.

Balnacarron is operated by the HC-One group of care homes.

## About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 03 and 04 March 2026. 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 seven people using the service and nine of their family and friends
- spoke with 10 staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- received feedback from two visiting professionals
- reviewed online care service questionnaires.

## Key messages

- People experienced warm and compassionate care and support.
- The environment was homely and welcoming.
- Families and visitors reported feeling welcome and involved.
- Care plans supported very good standards of care and were reviewed regularly.
- Staff worked well together and felt supported in their role.
- There was strong leadership, with a focus on quality assurance and oversight.

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

During the inspection we observed staff treating people with dignity and respect and there was a warm and friendly atmosphere in the service. People benefitted from staff knowing them well, which helped ensure support was delivered in the right way for them. A consistent staff team supported positive outcomes for people and relatives. Visitors told us, "Staff look after me too, nothing is too much bother" and "The family have great peace of mind and confidence in the staff and manager".

People should benefit from care plans that are regularly reviewed and monitored. We found care plans included important personalised detail and promoted an approach of positive risk taking. The service used recognised assessment tools to inform plans to improve and maintain people's health. There was evidence of regular reviews and appropriate referrals to other professionals where required. Medication was well managed and relevant guidance was in place for staff for 'as required' medication.

We observed that mealtimes were a social occasion with kitchen staff serving fresh home-cooked food. People were offered choice and personal preferences were respected. Staff supported people with eating and drinking in a discreet and dignified way where required. People told us they were happy with the food on offer with one person saying, "The food is very, very good". One relative told us, "There's been an immediate improvement in their eating and drinking". Afternoon tea with home baking was offered, alongside drinks and snacks being readily available throughout the day.

There were daily activities planned and wellbeing co-ordinators provided a varied timetable. Seasonal events were acknowledged and we observed a birthday celebration during the inspection, both helping people feel connected to their community and orientated to the time of year. The service had good links with the community with trips on the mini-bus, connections with a local church, and relatives could also attend some group activities. One person told us, "The activities are very good, there's always something to do". Staff encouraged people to take part in activities in a way that was accessible and meaningful for them.

The service worked closely with other health professionals to further support people's needs. They expressed confidence in staff's ability and comments included, "We have a really good relationship with staff" and "I always find it a pleasure to visit".

Regular residents' and relatives' meetings took place meaning people were involved in the development and improvement of the service. We saw evidence that management had very good oversight of quality assurance matters and encouraged feedback. This way of working together meant we were assured people's needs and wishes were central to any developments in the service.

People using the service shared positive feedback with comments such as, "The staff and manager are very approachable, capable and hard-working", "Staff know my usual routine" and "Staff respond quickly if I need anything". Visitors also shared a sense of feeling welcome with comments including, "All of them are friendly and welcoming", "It's like being part of the family" and "You get a great welcome as a visitor". We could therefore be confident that people's health and wellbeing needs were being met by the service with a kind and compassionate approach.

## How good is our setting?

## 4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

People benefited from a homely, comfortable environment with plenty of natural light. The home was clean and tidy, with no evidence of intrusive noise or smells. Corridors and communal areas were clutter free which meant people could move around safely and independently.

People could choose where they wanted to spend their time whether in communal areas or their own rooms. The home benefitted from a large dining room, two lounge areas, café area and seating areas throughout the building. There was also a hairdressing salon which was in use during the inspection. People expressed satisfaction with the facilities and families reported feeling welcomed and comfortable during their visits.

People had personalised their bedrooms, which made them feel more homely. Visitors described Balnacarron as welcoming and their loved one's "home".

The external grounds provided a pleasant outlook, and gardens were maintained to a good standard. People told us they enjoyed accessing the outdoor space when they could. One person said, "We have been to the garden centre to pick plants for the garden" and wellbeing co-ordinators shared up-coming plans to improve the space, based on people's suggestions.

The service benefitted from a dedicated maintenance staff member who had good working relationships with the care staff team. Staff told us any issues were promptly addressed. General maintenance records were well kept, and we found arrangements in place for safety checks, servicing and maintenance of care equipment. We were satisfied that people lived in an environment that supported their health and wellbeing.

We found there was good housekeeping and infection prevention control measures. Staff were clear about their responsibilities associated with their specific role. They described a thorough induction and on-going training opportunities, all of which contributed to keeping people safe.

Management oversight of health and safety matters was good, and an assessment of the environment had been undertaken. This demonstrated insight into areas for improvement that could further enhance the setting with action plans in place to support developments.

## 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

In order to support people's health, wellbeing and quality of life, the manager should ensure there are adequate supports in place for people experiencing stress and distress. Care plans should reflect any unmet needs, identify 4 or 5 proactive strategies to meet those needs and be regularly evaluated for effectiveness. The manager should ensure that any agreed strategies are being carried out in practice.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 1.15: 'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices'.

**This area for improvement was made on 23 February 2023.**

#### Action taken since then

The pre-admission assessment tool provided a clearer way of making sure people's health and wellbeing needs could be met prior to admission. This reflected a learning approach from the provider. Stress and distress training formed part of core learning for all new staff and records showed a very high completion rate of this training across the staff team. The service had fully transitioned to an electronic care planning system with mood and cognition care plans in place for each resident, and relevant detail for those who experienced stress and distress. There was also evidence of on-going referrals to community mental health professionals and GPs for those experiencing stress and distress. We observed good practice and staff's pro-active approach when supporting those at risk of distress, which prevented situations from escalating. We could be confident adequate supports were in place.

#### Previous area for improvement 2

In order to support good outcomes for people experiencing care, the manager should ensure that all concerns are listened to, taken seriously and acted upon when appropriate. Records of concerns and how they are acted upon should be kept to help identify any patterns of concerns, and to measure improvement over time.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standard 4.21: 'If I have a concern or complaint, this will be discussed with me and acted on without negative consequences for me'.

**This area for improvement was made on 15 January 2025.**

#### Action taken since then

A system to track and document any concerns relating to the service had been developed and implemented. Electronic accident and incident monitoring also allowed concerns to be recorded and associated action plans put in place. Robust quality assurance information and management oversight reassured us processes are in place to promptly identify and act upon any concerns.

## 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).

## 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?	4 - Good
4.1 People experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

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