

Our ref: [REDACTED]

6th December 2024

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Dear Sirs,

Regulation 28 Report following the Inquest into the death of Geoffrey Cheney 11 October 2024

I am the Group Operations Director at Radis Community Care, a national provider of care and support services including visiting care, live in care, supported living, nurse led care, children's services and extra care.

All our care and support is delivered to people in their own homes. One model of the care we provide is in extra care settings. Extra care settings comprise self-contained homes, with a range of independent support services available to enable self-care and independent living. Occupants may be owners, part owners or tenants and all have legal rights to occupy their own private home (in contrast to residents in care homes). Care services will be available from a designated care provider, but it is an essential part of the regulation of extra care schemes that the provision of any regulated care services, such as personal care, is independent from the provision of housing. Not all residents will be in receipt of care and when a resident has care needs, they must be free to arrange for this from a third party care provider.

Woodland Court

Geoffrey Cheney lived at an extra care scheme, Woodland Court in Dewsbury. Woodland Court forms part of the housing and care services offered by Kirklees Council. Potential residents are assessed by Kirklees Council, which may result in an offer of accommodation at Woodland Court being made.

Woodland Court is owned by Kirklees Council and managed on their behalf by Pinnacle Housing Group, who are responsible for all aspects of building maintenance and safety. Residents enter into a tenancy agreement with Pinnacle Housing Group and Radis Community Care has no control over the maintenance or adaptation of the building or individual properties.

If residents are assessed as being in need of personal care, Radis Community Care can be commissioned by Kirklees Council to provide this. Residents are free to make their own arrangements to receive support from a third-party care provider and not all residents are in receipt of any commissioned care.

Our staff are present at Woodland Court on a 24-hour basis and can respond to residents' wider support needs, including responding to calls made by residents on an emergency alarm call system.

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Geoffrey Cheney

Geoffrey Cheney was resident at Woodland Court and was a well loved and highly regarded member of the community. He was not in receipt of any commissioned care.

Geoffrey's wife had lived with him until her death in 2020 and a hoist with a ceiling tracking rail had been fitted to their flat by Pinnacle Housing Group on behalf of Kirklees Council due to her care needs. I understand that following her death the motorised unit used to power the hoist was removed, but that it was the policy or practice of Pinnacle Housing Group and Kirklees Council to leave the tracking rail in place as this might be required by a future resident.

In November 2023 Radis Community Care became aware that Geoffrey was in contact with mental health services and had expressed suicidal thoughts. On 8th November 2023 Geoffrey asked the manager of Radis Community Care services at Woodland Court whether she would attend a meeting the following day with mental health services and a member of his family as he was feeling anxious and wanted support.

During the meeting Geoffrey indicated that he had thought about hanging himself from the tracking rail in his flat and our manager agreed to make enquiries with Pinnacle Housing Group whether this could be removed. She recalled sending an email to Pinnacle Housing Group but has not been able to find this. She did speak with the Pinnacle Housing Group caretaker on site who informed her that the rail could not be removed (only the motor which had already been removed) as this was against policy.

I note that the same position is confirmed in the statement of [REDACTED], Pinnacle Housing Group Contract Manager who stated that if they had received a request from the family/Woodlands in these circumstances they would have still not removed the equipment as it was against policy.

I also note the evidence of [REDACTED], another contract manager for Pinnacle Housing Group that they had not received any written requests to remove the hoists from Mr Cheney's property either from Mr Cheney himself, his family, his social worker, the Council or any other party, and that they would refer any request to and only act on the instruction of the Council. I note that he has not commented on the request being made to the Pinnacle Housing Group caretaker on site.

I understand that following the meeting on 9th November, Geoffrey was in receipt of in-patient care from South Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – including assessed unaccompanied day leave.

Our team were greatly saddened by his death, and we continue to offer our condolences to Geoffrey's family.

Action taken

Radis Community Care has no control in relation to the maintenance, repair or alteration of properties at Woodland Court. While Pinnacle Housing Group do have control over the property, it appears that they can or will only act on the authority of Kirklees Council and we have raised this matter with the Council.

I attach a copy of their letter dated 21 November 2024, in which they confirm that they have updated their policy as follows.

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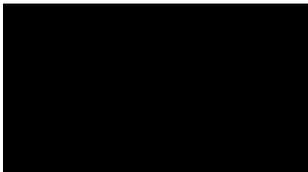
- *It is standard practice that generally we do not remove minor aids and adaptations once fitted. If the adaptations are no longer needed it is the responsibility of the homeowner, landlord or tenant to remove them.*
- *There are exceptions to this, however, as some aids and adaptations, such as hoists and stairlifts can be re-used in other properties needing aids and adaptations. Also, we would consider removing certain adaptations if there are risks to persons or safeguarding concerns.*

We have also reviewed how we can ensure that any concerns about residents in extra care schemes can be followed up and escalated. I have attached a copy of our action plan which sets out details of the action being taken, which includes.

- A more robust mechanism for communication, recording and reporting on individuals who are not in receipt of a commissioned package of care.
- The introduction of a well being policy to cover the reporting and escalation of concerns around those who are not in receipt a commissioned package of care.
- A review of service level agreements with housing providers and local authorities to ensure they include clear processes covering requests relating to adaptations.
- Production of a one-page fact sheet for service managers to guide their response to residents with mental health concerns including action to be taken in an emergency.

I trust that this letter reassures you that effective action is being taken to address the risk that you have identified.

Yours faithfully,




For and on behalf of Radis Community Care