



Operational Compliance Report

The Fremantle Trust (1014986)

About the charity

The Fremantle Trust provides care and support to older people and people with learning disabilities, including by providing care homes, nursing homes, specialist dementia care and day care and community services.

Why we got involved

In December 2012, we received two serious incident reports from the charity. One report detailed the death of a resident at one of the charity's care homes. The other report related to a substantial fraud carried out within the charity's finance department. The police and other regulators and agencies were involved, making sure there was no imminent risk to the charity's beneficiaries, and investigating the alleged fraud. Our focus was on trustees. It was right of the trustees to report the serious incident to us but we needed to make sure that they were complying with their duties towards their charity, including by having proper oversight of the charity's governance, its safeguarding procedures and its finances. We needed to rule out any general failings on the part of the trustees.

The action we took

We undertook an examination of the charity's governance controls, including through interviews with the charity's trustees and staff. We asked the trustees to provide a range of documents, including its risk analysis document and minutes of meetings, as well as copies of the job descriptions of managers working at the care home in question.

What we found

We found weaknesses in the charity's structure and governance processes which may have exposed the charity to serious risk and which they needed to address urgently. The charity's own investigation revealed the fraud was carried out systematically over a number of years by a single individual. An inquest found that the death of the resident occurred because the charity had failed to check her room after it had been refurbished.

The outcome/impact

We issued the trustees with an 11-point action plan with directions for improving the charity's governance and management; we monitored the charity over a six month period. We were satisfied that the charity's trustees had acted on our plan and there was no need for further regulatory action.