

Written by Wauneta Breeze

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Sunrise Heights of Wauneta was recently visited by the Health and Human Services survey team for their annual nursing home survey. The facility received 13 minor health deficiencies and an overall positive result. Surveyors also commended the nursing home on their “beautiful grounds.” (Sheri Hink-Wagner | The Wauneta Breeze)

By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

Each year nursing homes in Nebraska are visited by a team of surveyors, or inspectors, whose purpose is to make sure each nursing home is meeting state guidelines for resident care. The Health and Human Services survey team was in Wauneta on Sept. 24 and 25 to perform the facility’s annual inspection.

Sunrise Heights of Wauneta passes annual HHS survey with overall positive report with 13 minor health d

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Overall, the results of the survey were very positive. The facility received a total of 13 health deficiencies and three deficiencies from the fire marshal.

The survey grades each nursing home on several items—over 500 according to nursing home staff—related to residents' health, residents' rights, environmental concerns, fire safety, building construction, emergency plans and fire drills, electrical issues and complaints and facility-reported incidences.

Sunrise Heights Administrator Lisa Kisinger said the fact that the surveyors only found 13 minor deficiencies is relatively minor in the grander scheme.

After the survey is complete the nursing home is given 10 days to write a plan of correction and has until Nov. 9 to correct the immediate issues.

Kisinger said many of the issues have already been addressed and that they will audit the corrections for six weeks, per state guidelines.

Although not included on the report, Kisinger said the survey team indicated, "Of all the homes they visit, ours is one of the friendliest and they always enjoy their visit here."

She said surveyors also commended the facility on their beautiful grounds. Surveyors also indicated to Kisinger that the residents all spoke very highly of staff and there seemed to be a great sense of teamwork in the facility.

Summary of findings

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The health deficiencies included providing residents information on how to contact the state Ombudsman and abuse/neglect hotline both verbally and by posting the information.

At the time of the survey the information was posted, but not delivered orally as well.

The nursing home was also cited for giving residents a choice for the number of baths they receive per week.

Sunrise Heights received two citations related to the appearance of bugs in the light fixtures. One of these citations also included mention of broken floor tiles, and needed touch up paint or repair to walls.

Kisinger said the nursing home had already budgeted to do some remodeling in rooms this winter including repairing walls, painting and replacing old tile floors in bathrooms.

During the survey residents complained that the facility was cold.

Kisinger explained the nursing home is required to maintain a temperature between 71 and 81 degrees. However, she stated that when the surveyors tested a room during the inspection one was found to be too chilly. Also, two residents told surveyors they were too cold and surveyors observed two residents wearing sweaters.

Kisinger stated it was a seasonal issue caused by the transition from summer to fall. The day of the survey the nursing home had not yet switched from air conditioning to heating.

Five of the deficiencies noted by HHS surveyors were related to nursing documentation. Kisinger said the deficiencies were not for any serious issues, but referred to minor omissions from records and a labeling error.

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The final three deficiencies were given for resident complaints of loud doors, cleaning solutions left on the counter that should have been locked up and grab bars with worn/soiled gripper material.

The state fire marshall's inspection revealed three deficiencies. One for items stored within 18 inches of the nursing home's new sprinkler heads, an oxygen tank improperly secured in storage and the lack of self-closing doors on storage rooms.

A full copy of the report is available at the nursing home for public inspection.