

HEALTHWATCH HERTFORDSHIRE

Enter and View Visit Report

Name and Address of Service

Foxholes Care Home

Pirton Road,

Hitchin, SG5 2EN

Name of Provider

Foxholes Nursing Home Ltd

Healthwatch Hertfordshire Enter and View Visit Report

Premises visited: Foxholes Care Home
Date and Time of Visit: Monday 1st September 2014 at 10.30am
Visit Conducted By: Sally Gale and Pam Morris

Acknowledgements:

Thank you to Marina Kapsarova, Manager, for showing us around, to Neil Gambecha, Director, for answering our questions and their hospitality, as well as to the residents, visitors and staff.

Purpose for the Visit:

To look at the individual's quality of life in respect of environment, leisure and services, digital inclusion and food and drink.

To see if NICE guidelines 1 and 2 of Quality Standard 50: Mental Wellbeing of Older People in Care Homes 2013 are being considered by providers.

QS50 states:

1. Older people in care homes have opportunities during their day to take part in activities of their choice that help them stay well and feel satisfied with life. Their families, friends and carers have opportunities to be involved in activities with them when the older person wishes.
2. Older people in care homes are given support and opportunities to express themselves as individuals and maintain and develop their sense of who they are, for example, this can include helping people to maintain their relationships with family, friends and carers.

Methodology:

A rolling programme of care homes/nursing homes in groups of 12 in order to review results, methodology and outcomes at defined intervals.

We have consulted with the Clinical Commissioning Groups, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire Care Providers Association and our local Care Quality

Commission Compliance managers as well as looked at feedback from the Community to choose our first 12 homes.

Announced visits using questionnaires for residents, staff and observation from 10.30 am to 1pm

Disclaimer

The report relates only to a specific visit (a point in time) and the report is not representative of all service users (only those who contributed within the restricted time available)

Healthwatch Hertfordshire Enter and View Visit Report

1. INTRODUCTION

Foxholes was chosen as part of an ongoing project to assess the residents' quality of life with respect to environment, nutrition, activities and leisure services.

The home re-opened 18 months ago having been completely rebuilt. There are currently 41 residents in the home, although there will eventually be accommodation for 110 residents. It is divided by floors, with free access to all floors for all residents; although those from the lower, dementia care floor, need to be accompanied by a member of staff.

The lower ground floor, Lilly unit, is a more secure unit for dementia care, with 18 rooms. There is also space for a GP room and staff common room.

The ground floor, Norton Unit, is a residential area with freedom to come and go as wanted. There are 27 rooms and many areas for leisure and activity.

The 1st floor is currently not open, but will become the Holwell unit for residential and rehabilitation. It will have 33 rooms.

The 2nd floor is Ashwell and is a high dependency medical unit, with qualified nurses on the staff. It has 32 rooms.

2. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

2.1 We travelled by car to the home. It is situated in a very pleasant area a short distance from the market town of Hitchin. Although it has an easily seen sign outside, it is reached quite suddenly and easily missed.

2.2 There is plenty of car parking space and the area is flat with no steps. The outside is very clean, tidy, bright and welcoming.

2.3 The outer doors are automatic, there is a bell at the inner doors, but, as we were seen arriving, they were opened for us before we rang. We were greeted by Marina, the manager, who was wearing a name badge. We were asked to sign in. We also noticed another visitor signing in.

2.4 Reception was manned and the reception area was bright, clean and friendly.

2.5 There was a café area and orangery opposite the entrance, which is open for all residents and visitors. There is a small shop with limited opening as requested by the residents.

2.6 There are large gardens and beautiful views over farmland. Decorations are fresh, bright and imaginative, the ambient temperature was very comfortable and there were no unpleasant odours.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Environment

3.1.1 There was a very pleasant atmosphere with good decoration. As well as the café and orangery, there were other communal areas, dining areas and lounges where all the chairs were nicely arranged in groups and residents were moving around freely.

3.1.2 The temperature was neither too hot nor cold and residents told us they could change the temperature in their rooms if they wanted to.

3.1.3 All residents that we spoke to were very happy with the accommodation and decorations, none had changed the colours, but we were told by the management that they could if they wanted too. All had pictures, ornaments etc of their own and some had some of their own furniture.

3.1.4 All rooms had lockable drawers, although a couple of residents didn't seem to realise this, and all had an en suite wet room. **There was at least one bathroom** on all floors and residents could request a bath whenever they wanted.

3.1.5 There was a colour scheme for each floor, but there were no signs to other areas such as lifts, dining rooms, lounges etc. and no ways of distinguishing different areas within each unit.

3.1.6 The secure dementia unit has keypads for doors, with the code written on the pads in reverse to keep residents safe but allow guests to get in and out.

3.1.7 There is also a lovely enclosed garden which has open access from the unit.

3.2 Leisure and Services

3.2.1 There is a busy timetable and each resident has a monthly programme in their room, all the residents that we spoke to told us this. There is a notice board on the ground floor, with some information on it, but not a copy of the full timetable. There are excursions arranged for residents and they are involved in choosing destinations, which have included garden centres and strawberry picking. There had been a very large BBQ recently for residents and guests which every-body talked about without being asked and was clearly very enjoyable.

3.2.2 We saw a bingo session and there are pots on the window sills of seedlings planted by the residents. There is an area for a baking club where those who want to can cook under supervision.

3.2.3 Various local groups visit, for example, a local school choir and a local band have come recently.

3.2.4 There is a hair salon, shop, film room for the film club, other TV lounges and a library. The mobile library calls but this a new development and some residents were unaware of the service.

3.2.5 There are monthly residents meetings, where residents can say what they would like to be included, monthly relatives meetings, where the relatives can voice general concerns and suggestions, and every 6 months a joint residents and relatives meeting. There are also monthly staff meetings and frequent surveys.

3.2.6 There are 2 members of staff organising activities and a new activity co-ordinator due to start in the near future.

3.2.7 All the residents we spoke to were aware of all that was going on, but only rarely took part, as was their choice.

3.2.8 Residents are allowed to help with such tasks as cleaning and gardening if they would like to, and some do.

3.2.9 A local GP practice looks after all the residents and a partner calls regularly (who was there while we were there). They also have visits from a chiropodist and physiotherapist.

3.2.10 The home is a member of the Herts Care Providers Association. There was a Dementia Champion, who has recently left so the position is vacant at present, there is no Nutrition Champion, but the manager is going to look into this, and they use the Smile service.

3.3 Digital Inclusion

3.3.1 There is internet access in the rooms, but none of the residents we spoke to used it, either because they had no computer, or couldn't use one. Help from the staff was available to those who wanted it. Downloads of eBooks were available but not used. iPads are not currently used to engage people with dementia, but it is being looked into. All residents that wanted one had a phone in their room, and all had TVs.

3.4 Food and Drink

3.4.1 Residents were consulted about menus at the monthly meeting and there was 2 choices of lunch, but residents could request something different if they did not like either. Food is prepared on site. A couple of residents felt the choice was a bit monotonous, same menu every week, but all felt the food was very good, tasty well-presented and plenty of it. There is a new chef starting in the very near future who intends to talk to all the residents at breakfast to see what they would like for lunch. There are menu boards that are not filled in, because the residents requested menus on the table instead, which there were.

3.4.2 We tasted the food, which was very tasty and well-cooked, but a little cool. The staff in the dining room were very attentive, helping those that needed help with no fuss, changing meals provided if requested. We were very impressed with one Health Care Assistant in particular in the way she encouraged a resident not eating to eat.

3.4.3 However, the serving of food was a little slow, with 3 staff taking food to the tables but only one dishing up.

3.4.4 Residents could eat anywhere they requested, and could ask for the meal to be kept for them to eat later if desired.

3.4.5 There were plenty of snacks around the home and jugs of squash in the rooms, as well as the café there were lounges where residents and visitors could make drinks, and food or drink was available all day and night if requested. Special diets were attended to.

4. MONITORS CONCLUSIONS

The home is a very pleasant place. Exceptionally clean with bright and tasteful decoration.

There is a generally friendly and welcoming atmosphere with furniture arranged in a manner to encourage social interaction.

The staff all seemed very happy in their work and very caring, empathetic to the residents.

All the residents seemed very content.

5. AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. The arrangement of public areas particularly on the ground floor is excellent as is the décor in general.
2. The attitude of all the staff and general inclusive and friendly atmosphere.
3. We were impressed by the efforts made to get opinions by all the users of the service, both residents and their relatives.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Some signs on walls indicating the way to different rooms, areas and facilities. Maybe different decoration, either colours or pictures/ornaments to differentiate the areas within the residential areas, particularly the dementia care unit to enable residents to find their way around.

The Manager has commented:

‘We believe that putting more signs will take away the homely side of the Home and will have a more institutional effect.’

2. Speeding up the serving of food, perhaps having 2 people dishing up the food.

3. We would like to re-visit in 9-12months to see how the opening of the remaining unit affects the home.