

HEALTHWATCH HERTFORDSHIRE

Enter and View Visit Report

Halcyon Days Care Home
The Old Rectory
Graveley
Nr. Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG4 7LU

GCH (Halcyon Days) Ltd

Healthwatch Hertfordshire Enter and View Visit Report

Premises visited: Halcyon Days Care Home

Date and Time of Visit: 14th January 2016 10.30am - 1.45pm

Visit Conducted By: Meg Carter (MC), Roger de Ste Croix (RdSC),
Chris Lindeman (CL)

Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank Laura Adams, Home Manager, staff and residents for the help and cooperation we received during our visit, for the time taken to show us around, answer our questions and making us feel very welcome.

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:

Healthwatch Hertfordshire (HWH) is the independent health and social care champion. Local Healthwatch is in place to gather the views and experiences of people accessing services, to use this information to influence decisions and to provide information and advice to the local community about health and social

care services.

Legislation allows HwH authorised representatives to 'Enter and View' health and social care premises to see and hear for themselves how services are provided.

Healthwatch Hertfordshire is conducting a rolling programme of Enter and View visits to care homes/nursing homes in groups in order to review results, methodology and outcomes at defined intervals.

They are announced visits using questionnaires for residents, staff and observation from 10.30am to 1.30 pm approx.

Hertfordshire County Council, as commissioners, are aware of this planned piece of work and will receive reports and recommendations from our visits. Reports will also be shared with the relevant Clinical Commissioning Groups, Care Quality Commission and Hertfordshire Care Providers Association and will be published on our website www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk.

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)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Halcyon Days is approached down a narrow and winding country lane a half a mile from Graveley village centre. There was no specific signage leading to the home, except for an Elderly Persons traffic warning sign. As this lane isn't served by public transport, access by car or taxi is required. The first sign we saw was on the entrance gate and stated 'Halcyon Days', underneath which was 'The Old Rectory'. The driveway leads to a large pot - holed gravel car park, beyond which are extensive grounds. The original building is the former rectory, to which has been added a large more recent extension.

Halcyon Days is registered for 57 residents with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). However there are currently 39 residents, as a result of an embargo on new placements. This was initially self-imposed by GCH Limited in September 2015 but subsequently placed on the Home by CQC in November 2015, due to serious concerns first raised at their unannounced visit in June 2015. The home is implementing an Improvement plan dated January 2016, of which we were given a copy and is referred to and cross referenced in this report. The Home comprises 2 Units: Nightingale which provides residential care and support for 22 elderly people some of whom are living with dementia and Kingfisher where all 17 residents are living with dementia.

2. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

2.1 Some parts of the exterior of the Old Rectory were in poor condition, in particular window frames, which required painting and renovation. The furniture in the patio area looked shabby and in need of replacement, wheelchair access around the building was very limited and did not extend round to the patio.

2.2 It was difficult to locate the main entrance to the Care Home. The one sign in the grounds was broken and pointing in the wrong direction. There were no signs to the Reception Area ([Recommendation 6.1](#)). We initially went to the porch in the Old Rectory building and signed in there, only to be told by a staff member that the main entrance was further round the building and who gave us directions, but there was no signage to help us navigate there.

We were finally met by the Manager and welcomed in at the entrance to Kingfisher Unit. It was evident that we were expected. There was a Healthwatch poster above the signing in book in the waiting area, but this was not prominent or distinguishable from other notices. On the opposite wall there was a large noticeboard, many of the notices posted were out of date, and were removed by the Manager once this was pointed out.

The Manager confirmed that staff, relatives and residents had been informed of the Healthwatch visit and that Healthwatch information cards had been handed out.

2.3 We signed in but were not asked to show our identification badges though we did show them to the manager when we introduced ourselves.

2.4 The Manager, Laura Adams, explained that she had only been at Halcyon Days for 2 weeks having been transferred from another Home in the Group on the resignation of the previous manager, Trish White, who herself had only been in post for 6 weeks. Laura Adams said that she had been confirmed as the permanent manager the previous day and that she was working towards registration by CQC as the Registered Manager. We were told that there had been at least 4 changes of Home Manager in the last 2 years, although the Deputy Manager, who attended our opening and closing meeting with the Manager, has been at Halcyon Days since 2007.

With all the changes there was a lack of effective leadership, staff morale decreased, staff retention was difficult and there was an increased reliance on agency staffing ([Recommendation 6.2](#)).

Laura Adams said that she had worked at 'Halcyon Days' previously, though in a non-managerial capacity. She believes Staff are pleased about her appointment as they wanted a return of the previous high standards, when the Home had a good reputation and operated a waiting list for vacancies. She added that other agencies, including the NHS and Local Authority commissioners have all been understanding about the current situation and are supportive of the work underway to implement the improvement plan, much of which is still 'in progress'. (We were given a copy of 'Halcyon Days Service Improvement Plan - January 2016' and this is referred to in Section 6, Recommendations)

2.5. Staffing arrangements are as follows:

Kingfisher Unit: 1 senior or unit leader, 3 care staff from 8 am - 8pm. Nightingale Unit: 1 senior or unit leader, 4 care staff 8 am - 8pm. 1 night senior and 4 night care staff work across both units from 8pm - 8 am. Following the CQC report there is now always at least 1 staff member on each floor.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Environment

- 3.1.1 All public areas seen were clean and fresh. Walls and ceilings were reasonably well decorated with rather bland colour schemes (as one resident put it 'one can't get excited about Magnolia'!), doors and skirting boards were mostly very scuffed and in need of a repaint.
- 3.1.2 We viewed a number of bedrooms. Those seen were en-suite with a shower and toilet (though we were advised that some have a wet room and others just a toilet and basin). Rooms had either been completely furnished by the care provider or included furniture brought in by residents from their home. The furniture provided by the care home was standardised but of good quality and fit for purpose. The rooms all appeared to be maintained to a high standard of cleanliness. We noted that one room, (that we were advised is occupied) appeared sparse with no personal belongings evident. This, in contrast, to other rooms that looked more homely.
- 3.1.3 Floors throughout the ground floor were of vinyl, with no carpets in evidence. Part of the first floor was carpeted.
- 3.1.4 We were told by the manager that the Home is to undergo a major refurbishment. The intention is also to provide a more 'dementia sympathetic' colour scheme.
- 3.1.5 There is a safe in the Office where residents can keep valuables and a locked draw in each resident's bedroom. One resident said that they were unaware that there was anywhere in the Home to keep valuables safe ([Recommendation 6.11](#)).

The Manager explained that the safe in the office is used for residents' pocket monies (which they all use) and petty cash. Resident's valuables are kept in the locked drawer in their room.

- 3.1.6 The Manager advised us that residents could control the temperature in their room. Residents spoken to were aware of this and happy with the temperature throughout the home which was maintained at a comfortable level.

- 3.1.7 We viewed a combined lounge-dining room in Kingfisher unit, the dining room, lounge and a quiet lounge in Nightingale Unit. The lounge -dining room in Kingfisher unit had comfortable, traditional armchairs, arranged in a semi- circle, encouraging interaction between residents. There were 2 dining tables on the opposite side (where a couple of residents were doing a jigsaw with one of the activities co-ordinators). The room had a cosy and comfortable appearance with a pleasant rural outlook. In contrast the lounge and quiet lounge in Nightingale Unit appeared rather bleak. There were 3 residents sitting in the quiet lounge - all unoccupied, one of them dozing.
- 3.1.8 Nightingale Unit is part of the older building and the rooms are spacious with high ceilings. Furniture consisted of little more than armchairs placed round the walls perpetuating a sense of space rather than warmth and homeliness. In the lounge, three residents were seated in a row and one resident the other side of the room. No activity was taking place.

3.2 Leisure and Services

- 3.2.1 There was no evidence that there has been any structured activity programme at the Home until the beginning of this week. There were no boards with information about activities or with photographs of recent events.

The Manager told us that there was a fortnightly Music Therapy session at which residents from both units are involved, that a 'singing for the brain' type of activity had been very popular and residents enjoyed trips out, for example to a local Garden Centre, but it seemed that all this had ceased.

We learned that Halcyon Days has a mini-bus which is shared with 3 other Care Homes in the Group and saw a mini-bus in the car park. However this looked very shabby and we were unsure if it was currently in use. One long term resident could not remember when the last trip out had been arranged.

- 3.2.2 We met with 2 full-time activity coordinators (A/C) who have been in post for 2 weeks and will be working across both units. They have already organised a couple of 'fun' activities, including armchair skittles, which evidently engaged the residents involved, prompting laughter and some positive interaction between them. We were impressed by their enthusiasm, ideas and the initiative already shown and they clearly have

big plans for the future.

- 3.2.3 The A/C's are in the process of putting together a monthly programme, with 2 events daily (10-12 am and 2-4 pm) for all residents who wish to attend. This will include chair exercises, quizzes, arts and crafts, music bingo and a cinema afternoon. They would also like to convert an unused space in the cellar into an Afternoon Tea Room. The A/C's are compiling a report sheet on each resident, to record the activity which they have taken part in, which can be used for case reviews, to assess what has worked for whom and for future programme planning. They are planning to get monthly feedback about the programme from relatives and residents
- 3.2.4 The residents spoken to confirmed that prior to the appointment of the A/C's there had been no activity in the Home since their arrival (both have been at Halcyon Days since May 2015) adding 'Care staff stick you in a chair and you nod off - that's it'
- 3.2.5 The Manager said that Hertfordshire Care Providers Association (HCPA) Smile Service will be training the A/C's and support them in the provision of an activity programme. This input is to be welcomed ([Recommendation 6.4](#))
- 3.2.6 Halcyon Days would appear to have good relationships with the local community. A local Minister visits monthly to give residents Holy Communion, the Salvation Army holds an annual Carol Service at the Home, a cake making group visit and links have been established with a local college to enable students to benefit from Work Experience placements.
- 3.2.7 Residents meetings are evidently held on an 'ad-hoc' basis, though the manager said these had been minuted. A programme of regular meetings is now being put together and the long term plan is to have meetings bi-monthly and set up residents' committees. Residents spoken to said that as far as they were aware there had been neither relatives nor residents meetings ([Recommendation 6.5](#)).
- The mobile library no longer visits (as Herts County Council has withdrawn the service), but library resources, such as the reminiscence collection can be delivered if ordered in advance (we were advised that no use is being made of this material or memory boxes at present) ([Recommendation 6.3](#)).

3.3 Digital Inclusion

- 3.3.1 Wi-Fi access in the Home is poor. Although broadband is available the connection is very slow. The manager acknowledged that this was something which GCH Ltd would need to address ([Recommendation 6.5](#)). She said that a PC had been installed in both units and this is available to residents if required. We spoke to one resident who said she would like to use her iPad to 'Facetime' or Skype relatives in her own room and did not want to make this call from the main office. Another resident has a computer in her room - which we saw - but said she couldn't use it as the signal is so poor.
- 3.3.2 We were told that there is no real demand from residents to access e books from the library, but again this may be due to the difficulties in obtaining a signal.
- 3.3.3 Mobile phone coverage from the home was reasonably good, although there were similar difficulties in accessing data via this medium.

3.4 Food and Drink

- 3.4.1 Breakfast and a hot supper are cooked on site, but the main midday meal is supplied by external caterers Apetito. This is delivered in freezer packs and heated up as required. The Manager told us that this offers a nutritious and balanced meal with plenty of choice. Residents can decide what to eat at lunch rather than have to order beforehand.
- 3.4.2 We observed residents having lunch in Nightingale Unit. Whilst the food was plentiful, this wasn't particularly well presented and didn't look appetising ([Recommendation 6.8](#)). We didn't see a menu on the table and as all (four) residents were eating the same meal; it wasn't clear what opportunity they had for choosing something different. However residents told us that the food there was lovely and that special diets were catered for.
- 3.4.3 Residents can choose whether to eat in the Dining Room or one of the lounges and indeed we saw food being delivered via hot trolleys to these areas. They can also eat in their room if they wish.
- 3.4.4 Four residents remained sitting in armchairs in the lounge for their lunch. The meals were left on their tables. One resident was dozing and one resident asked if she was 'allowed to start' One resident received

her meal some time later and was offered one to one support.
([Recommendation 6.7](#)).

3.4.5 We saw a menu board in Kingfisher unit but not in Nightingale unit
([Recommendation 6.9](#)).

3.4.6 We viewed the Kitchen. This was clean and well organised. We noticed that there was a white board on the wall adjacent to the entrance which had a list of names of residents with special diets that had been written with a black ink marker pen and dated 22/12. Some of the ink had faded and had become indecipherable. In addition it was unclear whether this information was still up to date. ([Recommendation 6.10](#)).

3.4.7 We were advised that snacks and drinks are available to residents throughout the day. One resident said 'tea and biscuits are always on the go'. Cakes are baked on site. Residents can ask for a snack and/or drink at any time 24/7.

3.4.8 The manager confirmed there is a Nutrition champion.

4. MONITORS CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The residents appeared well looked after and appear to be treated with dignity and respect. Staff interaction with them was good.

4.2 The Home has clearly suffered from the lack in continuity of management, with so many changes and lack of effective leadership. Standards had slipped and the issues arising hadn't been addressed by interim managerial appointments, including the filling of key staff vacancies (e.g. activities coordinator posts).

4.3 However we were impressed by the commitment of the current Manager, Laura Adams and her deputy to implement the Improvement Plan. They seemed very clear about the issues they faced and to be ready for the challenges ahead, well aware that that whilst a start has been made on implementing changes, much of this is still 'work in progress'.

4.4 The lack of an Activities Programme or any evidence that residents had been engaged in meaningful activities was of particular concern to us, especially in view of the information in the current Halcyon Days brochure about the varied programme available under the heading: 'What's good

for mind body and soul'. We were therefore pleased that two Activity Coordinators are now in post and that they have made a positive start. The input of HCPA Smile project is to be welcomed.

- 4.5 We were also concerned about the lack of an effective Wi-Fi signal and effectiveness of access authorisation code, which is obviously a source of frustration to residents and unless addressed by GCH (Halcyon Days) Limited will prevent the Home from maximising the use of technology, which can now be so effective in work with those living with dementia. This was acknowledged by the Manager as a key issue to deal with, adding that she could envisage a day when all residents are issued with an iPad as standard - but clearly not until more basic mediums can be accessed by them!

5. AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- 5.1 A welcoming, comfortable and friendly environment, and the basic care of residents appeared to be good.
- 5.2 The staff spoken to seemed to enjoy their work and their interaction with residents was on the whole good.
- 5.3 Residents said they enjoyed their food. This was plentiful with drinks and snacks always available.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 External signage must be improved. This includes having a clearer sign on the front gate and mending the sign on the driveway to the car park showing where both Kingfisher and Nightingale units are situated. This sign should also point to the main office/reception. Both units and the main office/reception should be clearly named and we recommend that there is a sign on the entrance to Nightingale Unit which points to the main office/reception.
- 6.2 We strongly recommend that steps are taken by GCH (Halcyon Days) Ltd to ensure the continuity of senior management and staffing at the Home. Agency staffing should be used for emergencies, rather than being relied

on to fill vacancies.

- 6.3 A planned programme of personalised and stimulating activities is required, geared to meet the needs of all residents. Particular attention should be given to the needs of residents living with dementia and immediate steps taken to make use of the reminiscence collection provided by the library service.
- 6.4 We recommend that senior management and the activities coordinators work with the HCPA Smile project to set up and implement a sustainable plan and provide training and support to care staff (see Halcyon Days Service Improvement Plan January 2016, Page 2)
- 6.5 We recommend that residents and relatives meetings are held on a regular basis and at a time designed to facilitate maximum attendance.

Minutes of these meetings should be completed in a timely way with a copy clearly displayed for residents and relatives to read.
- 6.6 We recommend that Wi-Fi coverage throughout the site is reviewed and upgraded as required so that residents can both access digital equipment and are facilitated in doing so.
- 6.7 Management to review the support and encouragement given to residents at mealtimes; this to include preparation for mealtimes and help with eating the meal where this is appropriate.
- 6.8 Management to review the provision of lunchtime meal by external caterers with a view to considering whether this would be better provided in-house (see Halcyon Days Service Improvement Plan January 2016, Page 5)
- 6.9 We recommend that menu boards are placed at strategic points around both units and that these are designed as imaginatively as possible, to attract interest and assist choice. Menus should also be available in lounges, dining areas and tables.
- 6.10 The white board in the kitchen should be replaced with clear information about those residents who require a special and/or soft diet, which is only erased when these needs have changed. This information should also be reviewed by the chef with senior staff on at least a weekly basis

- 6.11 All residents and/or their families to be regularly reminded where they can keep their valuables safe.

Please see the **Halcyon Days Service Improvement Plan** on the following pages that also includes actions for the Healthwatch Hertfordshire recommendations

Action Origin	Date First Raised	Problem Identified	Manager Comments Actions to take	Responsible Person/s	Target Date	Compliance Completed
Management and Administration						
SS	21/12/15	For changes in management to stop, to find a suitable and experienced manager to lead the service and prevent adverse “knock on” effects such as low morale and lack of effective leadership.	Locate and recruit a suitably dynamic and responsive manager and get them established at Halcyon Days	Rob Andrews	29.1.16	13/1/16 Laura Adams will take a perm position.
SS	21/12/15	To ensure the complaints procedure at Halcyon Days is clear and concise and readily available to all residents and family members/visitors.	To ensure that the complaints procedure is clearly displayed in all areas with clear guidance on the hierarchy so that it is clear whom the complaint is to be directed to. To ensure that all complaints are documented, followed up and resolved with a clear paper trail that indicates this.	Laura Adams	11.1.16	Displayed in both entrance and in rel and res packs.
SS	21/12/15	For phones to be answered and therefore information to be passed on more effectively. For residents families and visiting professionals to be greeted and directed upon arrival.	To recruit an administrator/receptionist to the home that is attentive and works office hours. This ensures that the phone is always answered and messages are past on.	Laura Adams Rob Andrews	11.1.16	Admin starts on the 25 th Jan 2016.
SS and HW	21/12/15	Elimination of agency staff	Full and comprehensive recruitment drive in the area, advertising new improved pay rates to take on quality,	Rob Andrews Laura Adams	29.2.16	

			enthusiastic and well trained staff. We are awaiting 7 new starters to start.			
CQC	06/15	Accident and Incident reports to be completed immediately and relevant notifications sent within given guidelines. Accident trends to be analysed on a weekly basis.	Ensure robust systems are in place and all senior staff are aware of process and procedure. Audits to be carried out by manager as well as accident analysis.	Laura Adams Lulu Mthethwa	Immediate	
CQC Internal		Training is not adequate at Halcyon Days in terms of record keeping and actual training.	A training Matrix to be created and a personal Training and Development plan to be created for each member of staff, identified needs found through supervision. The training matrix should prioritise mandatory training initially and then move on to more specialist areas. HCC, HCPA, HDTC and SCILS are all providers that should be utilised.	Laura Adams Lulu Mthethwa	18.12.15	
Internal	10/15	Team leaders and senior carers at Halcyon Days are not clear on their own job role, responsibilities and therefore not ware of what they are accountable for.	Training, guidance and re-induction to all team leaders and senior care staff to be completed so that these key roles are efficient at maintaining the quality of service expected and required.	Rob Andrews	31.12.15	
SS and HW	21/12/15	For residents at halcyon days to receive personalised and stimulating activity throughout the week. This directly enhances both mood and quality of life.	To recruit a suitable, enthusiastic activity team at Halcyon days. This team is to link in with local services and by fun, dynamic and interesting.	Laura Adams Rob Andrews	29.1.16	11/1/16 70hours of activities recruited

						and started, enrolled both on the HCPA engagement pathway.
Internal CQC SS	10/15	GCH audit system is not being adhered to.	All weekly and monthly audits would be completed in expected timeframes. This includes health and safety checks, infection control, care audits etc. Provider visits must also be completed by a senior manager at least every two months.	Laura Adams Rob Andrews Designated staff.	Jan 2016	Planned w/c 18/1/15
SS Internal	10/15	There are no documented contingency plans in Halcyon days for when things do not go as planned.	Contingency plans should be in place, that give specific guidelines and change of normal approach/duty when the following occur ; Food Shortage/Cooking facility Compromised Power Cut Lift out of use Severe Cold Weather Severe Hot Weather		Feb 2016	18/1/15

Internal	10/15	The staff rota is chaotic and does not ensure staff have reasonable time off or ensure that the right amount of staff are on duty	To introduce a fixed rota that ensures staff know well in advance what they are working and also ensures that they have adequate time off during their working week.	Rob Andrews	18.12.15	18/12/15
1/2/16	HW	WIFI signal is very poor meaning residents are unable to access the internet from there rooms.	Look at installing a booster so residents can access WIFI in the comfort of there rooms.	Laura, Mohan and Sandip	30/3/16	
Environment and Hygiene						
Internal	10/15	Infection control has been found severely lacking at Halcyon days. This pertains to both resident care and the environment itself.	To attain a level high enough to achieve IPC Accreditation. Self assessment has been completed. For senior staff to work through each area to become IPC accredited.	Laura Adams Rob Andrews Lulu Mthethwa All Staff	29.1.16	
Internal CQC	10/15	The care giving and laundry process involves walking around the home to gather resources and take "soiled" or "dirty" items around the home in bags.	To order and have delivered a new care trolley system as well as a new laundry system. This will minimise movement around the home whilst dealing with potential infection control risks and make for a safer environment	Laura Adams Rob Andrews Lulu Mthethwa	18.12.15	Trolleys introduced along side red bags.
SS	12/15	There are inadequate first aid boxes within the home.	For each floor on each unit to have a first aid kit, clearly marked and audited monthly to ensure the unit has what it needs in the event of a first aid requirement.	Laura Adams	29.1.16	15/1/16

SS	12/15	Tea making facilities for visitors are no longer available.	For Halcyon days to seek a safe and appropriate area to re-install tea making facilities for visitors and ensure that this is kept well stocked and all visitors are aware of its existence.	Laura Adams Hotel Services	29.1.16	
1/2/16	HW	Signage leading to the home is poor and the singe to direct you to the units in lacking	To arrange a quote to put signage in place and for signage to be fitted. (a temporary sign has been placed in the car park).	Laura Adams Mohan	30/4/16	
Care Quality						
CQC	06/15	Care Plan recording not always reflective of care given and information sometimes absent.	Group Ops implementing new care plan system and “ <u>global</u> ” care plans that are usable documents at “floor” level. A huge amount of education and training to be given to all key staff to ensure this system is implemented correctly and maintained at high standards. All care plans will be person centered, involve both resident’s and families and be a true reflection of care needs an care given.	Rob Andrews Laura Adams Lulu Mthethwa Team Leaders Senior Care	18.2.16	K/f completed 20% of n/g completed.
Internal	10/15	There is no system in place that ensures that all residents are receiving all care they need at specific times during the day. The care giving process is not structured and can be random and even chaotic at times.	Daily Routines including lounge observations to be introduced on both wings of Halcyon Days	Rob Andrews Laura Adams Lulu Mthethwa	30.11.15	Allocation sheet and room check

				Nicola Gill		sheet introduced.
Diet and Nutrition						
SS	21/12/15	Despite Appetito being nutritionally proven and sound, Halcyon Days is to work towards cooking its own food, creating its own menus in conjunction with residents wishes.	To review all kitchen areas, to recruit chefs and when confident, begin to cook fresh food on site.	Laura Adams	31.12.16	
SS	21.12.15	Fresh fruit and fruit smoothies to be available daily to residents.	For a planned and varied fruit supply to be created and implemented within Halcyon days for both units and such fruit to be available throughout the day as well as offered with drinks rounds.	Laura Adams	29.1.16	