

## HEALTHWATCH HERTFORDSHIRE

Enter and View Visit Report

Tara's Retreat Care Home

High Street

Sandridge

Hertfordshire

AL4 9DQ

Colleycare Ltd.

(Trading as B & M Care)



## Healthwatch Hertfordshire Enter and View Visit Report

**Premises visited:** Tara's Retreat  
**Date and Time of Visit:** 27th March 2014 11.00 am  
**Visit Conducted By:** Doreen Bratby and Meg Carter

### Acknowledgements:

We would like to thank Annette Sudbery-Smith and Karen Hopkins for their time and positive approach to our visit and the other residents for their forbearance while we looked round their home.

### Purpose for the Visit:

Monitors will look at the residents' quality of life, in respect of the 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 11am 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)

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tara's Retreat is situated on the busy B651 at the end of the High Street in Sandridge. It is a care home offering residential care for the elderly and provides accommodation and personal care for up to 46 people, some of whom have dementia. The home was purpose built and opened in 2006.

Meadows provides residential care and The Paddocks and Hillview specialise in caring for residents with dementia related needs. Bedrooms are single occupancy with en suite and the building can be accessed with a wheelchair throughout. There are secure garden areas with seating. There is parking at the front of the building with an 'overflow' car park to the side of the building.

### 2. FIRST IMPRESSIONS

**2.1** While the front entrance is easily identified and secure, the doorbell was not very easy to find as it is located as part of the mechanism for the night bell and easily overlooked (*Section 4 Recommendations and Areas of Good Practice*).

**2.2** First impressions are of a warm, bright, clean environment within which there are distinct living areas that help to create a more homely environment than might otherwise be the case within a large care home. Residents' names and sometimes their photographs are on room doors. Generally, the decor, furniture and fittings appeared to be of a good standard.

### 3. FINDINGS

#### 3.1 Environment

**3.1.1** There are notice boards within the reception area, including a notice board indicating senior staff on duty (by title not name). Healthwatch cards are displayed on a table and a Healthwatch poster about this monitoring visit was pinned on the notice board, although not prominently.

**3.1.2** The manager confirms CCTV is in place and the home has coded locks throughout. As an additional safeguard, people are asked to be alert to a resident leaving the building unexpectedly. ‘Signing in’ arrangements are in place and were being used during our visit.

**3.1.3** We visited the three living areas. The Meadows has a separate lounge and dining room. We were advised that the residents had been consulted and chosen this arrangement. The lounge is arranged informally into three areas. Residents can gather to chat and look out across the grounds and beyond or choose to watch television or make use of a small area with books, a table and board games. Along the corridors, there are one or two small alcoves with a chair and small table where residents can sit and we were shown a large training room that can be used for special family gatherings. The dining room is arranged with tables of four. Flowers are on the tables.

**3.1.4** We were invited into a residents’ room. Design, décor and essential furniture are uniform throughout. We noted that one resident said she had chosen blue for her walls but the walls had been painted cream. Residents can bring their own bedding, items of furniture (subject to Health and Safety), personal belongings and pictures for the walls.

Room temperatures appeared comfortable and one resident told us she could vary the temperature in her room.

**3.1.5** The Paddocks has a shared lounge and dining area with furniture arranged fairly informally. We had an impression of less space in Paddocks than the other lounges.

**3.1.6** The garden appears accessible with seating areas and a gazebo with an eye catching ‘bus stop’ sign.

**3.1.7** We observed residents interacting with each other and with staff. Two residents were talking with a new resident in Meadows and we spent time with one resident to complete the questionnaire.

During our visit there was a sense of ‘smooth running’ throughout and of a comfortable environment.

## **3.2 Leisure and Services**

**3.2.1** There is a planned weekly schedule of activities for the three community areas. We saw this clearly displayed on an office window (Meadows). When we arrived, a 'PAT' dog session was just finishing in Paddocks.

**3.2.2** Outings include visits to a local garden centre, pub lunches and the coast. The activity schedule includes physical activity and caters for residents different levels of coordination, for example, skittles, throwing a ball and brass polishing. One resident said that she is asked if she wants to join in activities.

**3.2.3** We observed a positive rapport between staff and residents. This included three residents dancing in a circle with a member of staff (Hillview) and a member of staff quietly comforting another resident in the same lounge. Conversational buzz in the dining room (Meadows) while lunch was being served.

**3.2.4** Residents meetings take place three times a year on each floor and one resident told us that family members can attend and that her daughter always attends.

**3.2.5** The Manager told us about efforts to help residents use their skills and do what they like doing. For example, one resident painted the garden benches and someone else enjoys sweeping in the garden. Residents help with the preparation of food where this can take place within the living areas. There is work in progress on developing the homes own memory/ reminiscence boxes. (*Section 4 Recommendations and Areas of Good Practice.*)

**3.2.6** The mobile library visits the home regularly. Local school students have work experience placements as does the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

**3.2.7** Tara's Retreat is a member of the Herts Care providers Association (HCPA) and does have an HCPA Dementia Champion. The home does not have an HCPA Nutrition Champion and does not use the HCPA Smile service. There is an 'End of Life Care' champion and an 'infection control' champion (*Section 4 Recommendations and Areas of Good Practice*).



### 3.3 Digital Inclusion

3.3.1 Tara's Retreat offers Wi Fi access to residents and staff and residents can use Skype if they choose to. A computer is available to residents in the activities room. The manger has not to date considered using an iPad to support communication and work with residents but plans to take this option forward (*Section 5 Recommendations and Areas of Good Practice*).

### 3.4 Food and Drink

3.4.1 Meals are prepared on site and there is a choice of dish for most courses on the menu. We observed lunch being served in Meadows and it looked appetising.

3.4.2 Residents can have snacks between meals and we observed that one resident had water and biscuits available in her room. A jug of fresh water and tumblers was clearly visible in the lounge (Meadows) One resident told us she can choose where she eats her meal and the manager confirmed that this is so (dining room or own room) and will be helped to eat and drink when that is necessary.

## 4. MONITORS CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We are satisfied that NICE guidelines 1 and 2 of Quality Standard 50 (Mental Wellbeing of Older People in Care Homes 2013) are being considered by providers.
2. We recommend that further attention is given to the following :
  - Review the potential benefits for residents and staff in having an HCPA Nutrition Champion ( work in progress)  
**UPDATE: This course has been booked for September 2014**
  - Review the potential benefit for residents and staff in using the HCPA Smile Service (work in progress)
  - Introduction of iPads /notebooks etc. to facilitate communication with residents with dementia care needs.



- Consider fixing a doorbell sign (as distinct from night bell).  
**UPDATE: The day bell at the main entrance has had a new sign installed**

## 5. Good Practice:

The following were commended as areas of good practice:

- Personalising activities so residents can continue to use their skills and/or pursue favourite pastimes (painting the benches /sweeping leaves).
- Organising lounge furniture to allow different kinds of interaction to take place reasonably comfortably ( Meadows)