

ENTER AND VIEW

Ashcroft Hollow Care Home

Part of the Healthwatch Staffordshire remit is to carry out Enter and View Visits. Healthwatch Staffordshire Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand. Healthwatch Staffordshire Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Staffordshire safeguarding policy, the service manager will be informed and the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

Provider Details

Name: Ashcroft Hollow Care Home
Address: 18a Stafford Road, Huntington, Staffordshire. WS12 4PD
Service Type: Nursing Home
Date of Visit: 25th July 2017

Authorised Representatives

Name: Chris Ralston *Role:* Author
Name: Val Emery *Role:* Observer
Name: Pauline Blackmore *Role:* Observer

Purpose of Visit

The latest CQC report had highlighted some areas that required improvement, in particular they were concerned about staffing levels and how these were determined. It was reported that residents were not being offered assistance to bathe or shower as they would wish. There were also concerns about the administration of medicines.

We would like to check on staffing levels if the residents are happy with the care they receive. We would like to know if residents are now able to bathe or shower on a regular basis, in line with their wishes.

The manager had said that they wanted to source a different dependency tool in order to assist in determining appropriate staffing levels. We would like to know if this was done and the results.

We would like to know how the staff feel about staffing levels and whether they have sufficient support and time available for the residents.

The methodology to be used is to;

- Talk to residents about all aspects of their care and whether this is delivered in a way that promotes their dignity and independence including the ability to make choices about their daily lives.
- Talk to residents about staffing levels and whether they feel safe with the level of the care provided
- Talk to relatives, if they are available to ask if they are happy with the care provided to their relatives and whether they are aware and feel able to report any concerns/ complaints
- Speak to staff about training, turnover, support staffing levels
- Observe interaction at all levels between residents, staff manager, and visitors

Physical Environment

External

The home is situated on a slip road off the main Stafford to Cannock Road. It is a well maintained building with gardens at the front and rear that are well tended and at the time of this visit the flowers were in full bloom. There is a large carpark at the front. It is well sign posted with a bell system to gain admittance.

Internal

Internally, the home is spotlessly clean and tastefully decorated and free from clutter. Furniture and fittings are very well maintained. All resident's rooms have ensuite washing and toilet facilities, but not bathing and showering. There are two wet rooms and a bathroom to cater for residents preferences. There are very pleasant small lounges and a large, well equipped, dining room. There is a very well equipped kitchen. There is also a large conservatory. All the rooms are very light with windows overlooking the gardens.

Resident Numbers

The home has a capacity for 43 residents and currently there are 38 residents.

Staff Numbers

There are 3 nurses on duty in the mornings, afternoons and evenings and 1 on duty at night.

There are 7 carers on duty in the mornings, afternoons and evening and 3 at night. There is an additional carer who overlaps shifts to ease staffing at busy times.

There is 1 Activity Coordinator.

There are 2 domestic staff.

There is 1 maintenance person and a part time gardener.

There are 2 chef cooks and 2 catering assistants.

Agency Usage

Agencies are only used on a very limited basis as regular staff try to cover holidays etc. If needed, only one agency is used and they request people who know the staff and residents.

Resident Experiences and Observations

We spoke to lots of residents who all said that the care they received was very good and they liked it there. Although, as many commented that “it isn’t home”.

From our observations, they had a very good rapport with the very friendly staff and they were handled very well when the hoists were needed for lifting, the staff were very gentle and aware of residents individual needs.

The residents said that the food was good with varied menus and most of it was very enjoyable. We saw lunch being served, which looked very appetising and well presented. Drinks were available at all times.

The residents said that they enjoyed the new activities programme, which they said made things less boring.

One gentleman, who came to see his wife and eat with her at lunchtimes, said it was like a hotel, with excellent services.

Family and Carer Experiences and Observations

All family members that we spoke to were very happy with the care and cleanliness in the home and complimented all staff on their friendliness and the amount of time they spent supporting the residents. They said that it seemed that nothing was too much trouble. If there was a problem they always felt able to raise and discuss it with the manager, who was very proactive and any issue was always sorted out to their satisfaction. One family member advised that he had made a minor complaint which was addressed immediately.

There is a small private lounge which can be used by families for birthdays and other special occasions.

Activities

We were shown the activity programme covering an eight week period, with the main scheduled activities taking place on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

A hairdresser attends every Monday and there are hands and nails session every other week.

There are a wide range of activities, including exercises and other sports such as hoopla, net/basket ball, skittles and darts. There were gardening sessions, film afternoons, quizzes and musical bingo. There were Church Services of different denominations. There were also tea and chat sessions and a Cheese and Wine afternoon. In addition there were a guest entertainers scheduled for sessions on some weeks.

There are currently no group outings arranged, we were advised that they did not have capacity for this and there was not requirement for this, although residents are able to go out on an individual basis if they were able to.

Catering Services

The kitchen has a 5 * hygiene rating. The menus were run on a rolling four week programme and there were daily choices available.

The kitchen was well managed and most meals were cooked from scratch. We were advised that the chef tried to source all ingredients locally.

Special diets were available for people with specific needs. Nutrition and hydration were monitored with charts and weighing on a weekly and monthly basis.

It was lovely to see the dining room so well laid out with the tables set with napkins etc, which added to the ambiance of the dining room.

Staff Experiences and Observations

Staff felt they were very well supported by management and directors, who often showed appreciation with decent wages, nights out and special gifts at special times.

They were also very supportive of the training programmes offered, besides the mandatory training, and were encouraged and paid to go on them.

It appeared to be a very good staff team, where carers regularly supported each other. They also said that they were encouraged to interact with the residents whenever they could. This was very apparent with the chat and banter between staff and residents.

Summary, Comments and Further Observations

Ashcroft Hollow is a very friendly, efficient and well run home with a very calm and relaxing atmosphere. The manager was friendly, welcoming and on the ball. She seemed to have her finger on all the pulses and this led to the success of the team on all fronts.

We discussed the issues raised in the last CQC report and she disclosed that all of these had been addressed, although she had thought that some of the report was unfair.

We discussed the dependency tool and she advised that this had resulted in very positive results and staffing levels, and that she was always looking for improvements.

We were advised that all record keeping has been updated, i.e. bathing etc.

The home, having such a charismatic manager, had a very positive feel to it, as her enthusiasm cascaded through the team and in hand with the relatives the home could go from strength to strength and become a really good model care home.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Action

We do not feel that any follow up action is necessary.

We would like to thank the home for a very welcoming, open visit and trust that the positivity of the staff and management continues and maintains a comfortable and happy environment for the residents.

Provider Feedback

Healthwatch received the following feedback from the manager after the visit.

“Being able to meet the representatives properly and answer all relevant questions about our home, before they looked about, was very organised and pleasant.”

“They were pleasant and engaging. Staff all commented on how nice the ladies were. This created a far less intimidating atmosphere for them than I have seen, for example, when CQC have visited.”

“The visit was timely, pleasant and seemed to go well. It was nice to demonstrate all the things we feel we do well as a care provider.”

“We do not feel there are areas to change - we always strive to do things well and will continue to work towards this.”

“It was a very positive experience for us. Staff seemed relaxed about the visit and this is a credit to the ladies who attended to view. They seemed genuinely interested in our home and how we related to all our service users and each other.”

DISCLAIMER

Please note that this report only relates to findings we observe on the specific date of our visit. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all residents and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.