



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: The Independent Learning Centre (ILC)
Provider: Care Worldwide Staffordshire
Address: 360 Rosliston Road, Stapenhill, Burton on Trent,
Staffordshire, DE15 9RJ
Service Type: Day Service for People with Learning Disabilities
Date of Visit: 14th March 2019

Authorised Representatives

This visit was made by two Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch Staffordshire.

Dave Bassett (Authorised Representative)

Ian Wright (Community Outreach Lead and Authorised Representative)

Purpose of Visit

Healthwatch Staffordshire is making a series of visits to Day Services throughout the county in order to report on the range and quality of these services. Each service will have an individual report and an overview report on Day Services in Staffordshire will be compiled once the visits are completed.

A good service should...

1. Have strong, visible management
2. Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs
3. Have good knowledge of each individual client, their needs and how their needs may be changing.
4. Offer a varied programme of activities unless a specific service is offered.
5. Offer quality and choice to their clients around food and mealtimes, where applicable.
6. Accommodate clients personal, cultural and lifestyle needs.
7. Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used

The methodology to be used is to;

- Consider the care and services offered and whether this is delivered in a way that promotes dignity and independence.
- Consider staffing levels and the level of the care provided.
- Talk to people using the service, if they are happy and willing to do so to gain their views on the opportunities available to them.
- 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.
- Consider staff training and the support offered to enable staff to do their jobs well.
- Observe interaction at all levels between clients, staff, Manager, and visitors.

Physical Environment

External

The Centre is based in a detached house which has been extended. It is situated on a bus route close to the border of East Staffordshire and South Derbyshire. The building is set back from the road with parking outside and level access and is adjacent to two care homes for people with learning disabilities run by the same company. The building is accessed through a front porch with a door bell and a visitor's book. There is no CCTV on the premises. There is a garden at the rear of the property which is mainly paved with some raised beds.

Internal

The day service is provided on the ground floor with the first floor primarily consisting of a meeting room and an administrative base for the day service and the residential services provided by the company in Burton. There are two toilets upstairs but access is via a steep staircase and there is no lift.

At the front of the property are a quiet room, often used for meeting clients individually, a sensory room which is used by clients to relax and is available for hire. To the rear are two activity rooms, a conservatory, large kitchen, utility area, dining room plus two toilets, one of which incorporates a shower and hairdressing facilities. All the building appeared to be in good decorative order with a welcoming feel to it.

Client Numbers

The service operates across a five-day period offering two sessions a day for up to 10 people. This equates to 120 sessions per week of which around 95 are currently taken up. Clients can purchase as little as half a session up to 12 sessions a week according to needs, preferences and affordability.

Sessions run from 10am - 1pm and 1.15pm -4pm

The Centre is open from 9.30am to 4 pm.

Staff Numbers

There 10 trained activity leaders / support staff and two management staff. Maintenance and administration provided from within the group of Burton services, Staffing ratio minimum of 1 staff to 5 clients. 1 to 1 care can be purchased if required.

Management

Management - A good service should have strong visible management.

The manager should be visible within the service, provide good leadership to staff and have the right experience for the job.

Our findings

We met the General Manager, who is responsible overall for the day service plus two care homes, two supported housing schemes and another under development. There is a specific manager for the day service, however she is currently on maternity leave.

The general manager has a unique background as her parents set up and ran the adjacent care homes in 1994 and sold them in 2008 to Care Worldwide Staffordshire. She has been associated with the service for 25 years and held managerial roles for 9 years. She holds two psychology degrees.

She started the Activities Centre in 2011, partly in response to clients in the residential services feeding back that they were not getting a great deal stimulation from attending the traditional council provided day service in Burton. It also coincided with Staffordshire County Council changing its day services commissioning intentions and the building becoming available to purchase. When starting up the service she was surprised to learn that, unlike residential services, day services are not regulated by the CQC. She has, however, adopted the CQC standards and adapted them to the day care scenario. This she believes gives a solid, consistent underpinning structure to service delivery whilst recognizing that day services have a different focus to residential care.

She showed an excellent knowledge of the clients and staff and had a clear vision as to how the service should operate.

She told us she was well supported by the company.

Comments

We were impressed by the manager's commitment, knowledge, resilience and enthusiasm in taking the service from an idea to reality.

Staff Experiences and Observations

Quality Indicator 2 - Have the staff the time and skills to do their jobs

Staff should be well-trained, motivated and feel they have the resources to do their job properly.

Our findings

We met several staff during our visit and sat in on part of a music session they were running. Due to the sessional nature of the service staff appear prepared and focussed on delivery of each session which lasts three hours. We observed they had good rapport with the clients they were supporting and demonstrated good knowledge of their needs and how to respond to them. They are also assisted by volunteers from Burton College and a local secondary school.

The General Manager told us that staff turnover is low and several members who left to work in other services have returned to work at the centre, one only two days after moving on. She employs two bank staff who cover across both day and residential services as required. She maintains rigorously a policy of not employing agency staff.

Staff are encouraged to share their talents for the benefit of clients. One is currently putting together a video involving local companies using Makaton to show that people with a learning disability can fully participate in community life.

Staffing to client ratio is a maximum of 1 to 5 and 1 to 1 can be made available at extra cost to the client/family. All staff have up to date DBS clearance with a system in place to update when necessary.

Staff are also supported in meeting individuals needs by the Community Learning Disability Team.

A structured training programme is in place and is audited by the company centrally on a monthly basis.

Mandatory Training includes:

- Health and Safety
- Infection Control
- Food Hygiene
- Fire Safety
- COSHH
- Safeguarding
- Data Protection
- Dignity Through Actions
- Equality and Diversity
- Medication Awareness
- Mental Capacity and DOLS
- Moving and Handling
- First Aid

Additional Training available includes:

- NVQs
- Activities Training
- Makaton
- Use of ABC charts
- Managing specific conditions e.g. Epilepsy, visual impairment, autism
- An externally delivered Learning Disability Certificate which was undertaken by most of the staff

Comments

Staff appear well organised, motivated and appropriately trained.

Quality Indicator 3 - Do staff have good knowledge of each individual client, their needs and how their needs may be changing

Staff should be familiar with clients' histories and preferences and have processes in place for how to monitor any changes in wellbeing.

Our findings

There is a documented file for each client which contains personal details, an individual plan, reviews and risk assessments. There is evidence in the files that staff have signed to confirm they have read them. We were told that staff work on two or three agreed specific outcomes for each client at any one time to ensure focus and achievability. Some clients have day books that they take between home and the centre.

There are structured sensitive ways of managing behavior that is challenging including the use of ABC charts.

Arrangements are in place to support clients with medication administration.

Clients come from various settings including family homes, supported living and residential care and can use a variety of day service providers during the week. Staff are aware of this and conscious of the fact that a considerable number of clients are paying for the service out of their Benefits. Some difficulty is experienced in getting timely information from some carers and social workers when changes occur, but the manager is proactive in chasing this up when necessary.

The staff we met demonstrated that they knew about the preferences of individual clients and were able to describe examples.

Comments

This indicator was fully met with staff having good knowledge of individuals, their needs and preferences.

Activities

Quality Indicator 4 - Activities - Does the service offer a varied programme of activities?

Services should provide a wide range of activities and support clients to take part in activities, unless the service offers a specific type of service rather than a wider range of opportunities.

Our findings

A timetable of sessional activities across the week is available in "Easy Read" format which enables clients to make an informed choice as to which ones they attend. The timetable is regularly reviewed with feedback from clients and staff taken into account in planning changes.

Clients can choose to attend a minimum of half a session a week up to a maximum of ten. Charges are based on half day sessions including lunch refreshments and materials. Holistic therapy and individual hire of the sensory room can be made available at extra cost although currently there are no takers for this. One to one support can be provided subject to assessment and charges. Clients travel to the centre by a variety of means and the centre has its own vehicle that can be made available if required.

During our visit one group was enthusiastically enjoying a music session. After introducing themselves, they proudly performed a song for us using Makaton signing as well as singing. Another group had gone to the supermarket shopping in preparation for a cookery session in the afternoon. One client was enjoying doing some art in the quiet room which she was pleased to show us.

There is a balance between activities taking in place in the centre and in the wider community. A local community centre in Stapenhill is used for dancing sessions, Rosliston Forestry Centre is used for walking groups and concerts and Meadowside Leisure Centre is used for sport.

Independent living skills are taught - for example, one parent had particularly asked that her daughter should learn washing and ironing skills. Cooking is a favorite session, we were told by staff, as clients can eat the results of their efforts. Two clients have undertaken some work experience and one of the supported housing residents volunteers in the centre one day per week

The building is well equipped with art materials, musical instruments, a hairdressing salon, snooker table and two computers for general use. Clients frequently use the sensory room to relax after lunch.

In addition to day activities which are listed below clients are invited to join in evening and weekend activities that are accessible to all clients of Care Worldwide Staffordshire. These include a Makaton choir on a Monday evening, concerts and fayres put on for the local community during the year, concert and cinema trips and occasional seaside excursions.

Types of Activities on offer				
Indoor	Outdoor	Off-site	Visits/Trips out	Other Activities
Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Community Centre	Sea life centre	Discos, Fayres
Dance		Leisure Centre	Concerts	
Arts & Crafts	Arts & Crafts	Shopping and use of public transport	Cinema	
Independent Living Skills	Gardening	Rosliston Forestry Centre	Garden Centre	
Sport	Sport		Seaside trips	
Leisure				
Cooking				
Music				
Hair & Beauty				

Comments

Activities appeared varied and relevant catering for a variety of interests with a mixture of learning and fun.

Catering Services - where applicable

Quality Indicator 5 - Catering - Does the service offer quality, choice around food and mealtimes?

If relevant, Services should offer a range of meal choices and adequate support to help clients who may struggle to eat and drink and accommodate different preferences and needs around individual dietary requirements.

Our findings

Clients have access to a choice of drinks during the day and pay for a lunch as part of their sessional fee. There is a choice of food with diets and special needs being catered for. This was evidenced by one client who has a regulated diet and two other clients who have swallowing issues which are being worked on with advice from a speech and language therapist. The manager told us they have experience of catering for many diets including Gluten Free, Diabetic, Low Potassium, Vegetarian and Halal.

On some days clients can cook their own food in cookery sessions and either eat it on site or take it home with them. The sessional staff have received food hygiene training.

There is a choice of two dining areas to have lunch with friends. Specialist cutlery is made available if required.

Comments

Clients told us they were happy with the catering and individual needs and choices are met.

Quality Indicator 6 - Does the service accommodate clients personal, cultural and lifestyle needs?

Services should be set up to meet residents cultural, religious and lifestyle needs as well as their care needs, and shouldn't make people feel uncomfortable if they are different or do things differently to other clients.

Our findings

It is recognised by staff that clients come from a diverse range of backgrounds and living arrangements with differing lifestyle and cultural needs. An individual assessment of each clients needs and preferences is made prior to joining the service with a plan put in place accordingly. There are currently no specific cultural or religious needs.

Personal interactions are closely monitored and friendships are encouraged. Clients are welcome to have friends in for coffee and socialisation. There are opportunities to join in some evening activities in the local area such as the Makaton choir held nearby on a Monday evening.

We also saw evidence that where a client preferred more solitary activities rather than participating in groups and this was accepted and accommodated.

Comments

All the clients we saw were treated as individuals and with dignity and respect.

Client Experiences and Observations

We were able to sit in on a music session that was in progress during our visit and speak to clients about the service. They told us that they enjoyed coming to the centre for the activities and the social life. They also told us they attend a variety of other activities such as college, social clubs and other day services. One client attends a Derbyshire Council run centre one day per week.

One client had attended a local junior school with the manager to speak about careers in care. He apparently had a positive impact on the children as well as boosting his self-esteem.

There appeared to be positive interaction between clients and staff. Learning and fun were coming together.

Family / Carers experiences (if available)

We did not meet and family members or carers during our visit although we talked to both the manager and staff about their experience in this area.

For some families /carers the service is seen as providing respite care during the day and they have minimal contact. Some clients are brought to the centre by personal assistants who liaise with staff. The centre produces a regular newsletter that goes out to families and carers, contact is also made by letter or phone.

The manager told us about one incident where a client had to cease attending as their family member persistently failed to pay their attendance fees.

Quality Indicator 7 - The service should be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and use.

There should be mechanisms in place for clients and relatives to influence what happens in the service, such as a Clients and Relatives Committee or regular meetings. The process for making comments or complaints should be clear and feedback should be welcomed and acted on.

Our findings

Clients and staff jointly plan activities and various ideas have been tried out, some of which have worked and others that have not.

Volunteering at the Activities Centre is encouraged and links are being made with local schools. Some intergenerational work is being planned with a local day nursery around a Makaton choir. Local businesses are also getting involved in some video production.

There is a formal complaints procedure which is displayed on a wall in the building. Clients and carers are encouraged to raise any concerns with the staff or manager and we were told they are usually they are resolved by dialogue.

We were advised that most Staffordshire clients paid the sessional charge from their benefits with a limited number receiving direct payments.

The manager observed that in recent times social care assessors appear to have less knowledge about service options for clients. We discussed that this could possibly be remedied by having a market place event for professionals, families/carers and potential service users in the East Staffs area which may encourage further take up of sessions.

Comments

There is possibly a need for an opportunity to increase the awareness of some social care staff about the day service options available in Burton.

Summary, Comments and Further Observations

This is a dynamic day service built around a sessional programme of imaginative activities held both in the community and in the building. It is not a service that is formally regulated by the CQC but it is pleasing to see the spirit of CQC regulations being applied and adapted by the manager.

Although part of a group of services for people with learning disabilities provided by Care Worldwide Staffordshire, the Independent Learning Centre it has its own unique identity where learning meets fun.

Comments

We would like to thank the manager, staff and clients for making us welcome on the day.

We felt it was a very useful, open and informative visit.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Action

It may be useful for a “Market Place Event” to be held to raise awareness amongst social care staff, carers and services users about the range of day service opportunities in East Staffordshire and possibly beyond.

Provider Feedback

The General Manager gave Healthwatch the following feedback about the visit; When asked what they felt worked well about the way our Authorised Representatives carried out the recent Enter and View visit, they responded;

I felt the representatives were very thorough and enabled me to go into detail about what we do and our background. Also offering their own experience into the conversation. I also felt they were informative about why they were visiting and what the intentions were.

When asked if there were any aspects of the Enter and View visit which you felt did not work well or could be improved, they responded;

I did feel they came across as very official and it was hard to get any idea of how they felt about the visit at the time. I was not offered any feedback however I'm sure they would've done had I asked.

When asked, as a provider of a service, did the Enter and View visit help you to identify areas for improvement and if so, in what way, they responded;

Yes, although I try to run The ILC as our other businesses, unlike our other homes where we ask for group feedback as in residents or clients meetings at the homes, the ILC does not currently have a client group feedback platform and I think this would be a good idea. We currently have questionnaires and reviews but nothing where clients can sit together and offer out group ideas etc.

The General Manager also added the following comment;

Really happy with the report it reads well, very grateful.

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.



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