

Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report - Social Care	
Enter and View Visit to	Dee House Garden Quarter Sealand Road Chester CH1 4LB
Date	4 th February 2014
Authorised Representatives	Pamela Fox and Joanna Brookes
The Authorised Representatives would like to thank Joy Swainson, Manageress, also Liz Ardern and Pat Graham, Project Assistants, for the help given to us during this visit.	
Background	Dee House is a member of the Muir Group (a registered housing association) and provides supported community residential accommodation for adults with long-term mental health issues. The residents have a range of moderate to severe mental illnesses. The residents are of mixed sex - two women and seven men. There are nine beds available all of which were occupied at the date of visit. (The service does not cater for the physically handicapped.) Residents are able to stay in Dee House unless their condition deteriorates physically and requires more nursing. The staff, however, endeavours to keep the residents as long as possible.
Overall Impression	We were made welcome and instantly got the impression that Dee House was a happy community.
Any ideas or suggestions for improving service?	None at this time.

Environment

Dee House has a homely and friendly atmosphere and appears eminently suitable to provide a safe and secure environment for nine vulnerable residents. Residents appear very comfortable in their interactions with staff and with each other. The small, family structure is particularly suited to the needs of this category of residents. They have the security of knowing that it is their home for as long as they need it. Some have been there for many years (more than ten) and the newest resident for just 8 months

Residents spoken to said that they are happy in Dee House and praised the staff.

There are two television lounges, a small dining room and a garden at the back of the property. In the Summer residents enjoy gardening and having BBQ cooked meals outside. The property is old, with narrow corridors and steep stairs, but throughout appears clean and well maintained. As the property comprises two adjoining houses melded into one unit, it has in effect two front doors either end of the property. This could potentially be a safety issue; however, the second front door is locked and alarmed, therefore, should a resident decide to exit the property this way, staff would be alerted. Similarly the gate to the back of the property has a double lock on it. The two houses are joined by a glass enclosed walk way which residents have utilised into a light airy space to sit read or talk.

A hairdresser and chiropodist visit Dee House.

There were plenty of photographs on display of present and previous residents.

Each resident has their own bedroom, individually furnished and equipped. They are encouraged to keep it as their own personal space. Two residents were happy to show us their bedrooms. Each bedroom has a staff call button and smoke alarm.

A fire drill is held regularly. Residents are fully conversant with the fire drill and where to gather.

Health and Wellbeing

Staffing and Care:

We were made to feel very welcome by staff on our visit and they appeared comfortable in their relationships with each other and with all residents. There was a special "family" atmosphere. Some residents had been there for many years and every effort was made to make it "home" for them.

We did not meet any relatives of the residents. However, one resident gets a weekly visit from her mother and one resident spends a weekend at home helping his mother with his dad - who isn't well.

The manageress is a Registered Mental Health Nurse, although is not primarily employed in that capacity. No nursing care is provided. Support can be accessed from the Psychiatric Home Treatment Team (Crisis Team) or Physical Health Crisis Teams if necessary.

Two or three staff members are present throughout the day, and one staff member sleeps in overnight.

Each resident is responsible for their own personal hygiene and getting themselves dressed. All residents interacted quite freely with the staff no one appeared guarded or apprehensive with staff members. They took staff hands and asked questions and got answers.

Food and menus:

No "chef" was employed, staff cooked the meals. (Food hygiene certificates were displayed). Residents were involved in meal planning. Although not allowed in the kitchen during main cooking periods, for health and safety reasons, they could make snacks and drinks at other times for themselves. Residents ate in the dining room at four tables for the nine residents. There was an alternative choice of food if an item was disliked. A monthly menu rota was in operation. The Sunday lunches received special praise from residents.

Activities and Community Links

On a notice board in the dining room was a list of daily activities - sedentary and more active pursuits, both on and off the premises. The list indicated names for which residents were due to partake that day. The residents were not directly involved in any activities at the time of our visit; they watched television and then had lunch. However, they had got a visitor from a nearby larger home who was visiting his friend.

A project worker was accompanying a resident to the GP surgery to sort medication. It was explained that the resident would do this for themselves, with the staff member there as support. A resident had a job to do in sorting newspapers for re-cycling.

With support from staff residents are encouraged to do their own laundry (there is a rota) and keep their bedrooms tidy. They also assist with housework and gardening as befits a family household.

Activity plans are varied and included several outings in the form of meals out, trips to the pantomime and shopping expeditions. Also summer holidays, when the Lions Club helps with the cost of a mini bus. The local Methodist Church has involvement with Dee House and residents usually attend the monthly coffee morning for the nice cakes. They also benefit from funds from one coffee morning per year towards the residents activities.

Service user meetings take place every 10 - 12 weeks a fact evidenced by the minutes on the notice board.

Feedback

Service users are very happy with the service they receive as they see themselves as living in a family home. They feel secure and if they have a problem/complaint/report of abuse they know who to go to. It is dealt with promptly. They appear to be treated with dignity, respect and friendliness by staff and were always asked for their permission before we entered their rooms. Food and activity choices are taken into consideration. We did not have the opportunity to speak to any relatives as none were present at the time of our visit.

Apart from the manageress, Mrs Swainson, staff are referred to as Project Assistants/ Support Workers. They report that staff tended to stay in post for a long time and enjoy working at Dee House. A male member of staff has now been appointed to complement the team and this is seen as a positive improvement. They can receive additional support from Muir Housing for extra staff but also have their own small reserve of bank staff. Medication is via blister packs supplied from a pharmacy. One resident self-medicates and staff supervise drug administration and compliance to the other residents.

Staff explained to us about Care Plans and Risk Assessments. One staff member showed to us the Person Centred Plans which she had drawn up for each resident and which were more personalised.

Additional Comments

We felt it was important for this type of client to be cared for in a small homely establishment.