

Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report - Social Care	
Enter and View Visit to	Bank Hall Farm Swallow Lane, Bank Hall Farm, Winsford Cheshire CW7 4BP
Date	4th March 2014 arriving at 10.00am
Authorised Representatives	Richard Berry, Caroline Jones, Margaret McDermott supported by Neil Garbett from the Healthwatch Team.
Service Provider Staff	<p>On arrival we did not seem to be expected - this was an announced visit with details sent six weeks prior to the visit stating both date and time.</p> <p>Joanne Beresford (Team Leader) and Gary Arnold (Resident Support Worker), at short notice stood in for Emma Cox, Manager who was on sickness leave. Representatives were told that the Team Leader was in direct contact with Ben Blackburn who is the regional manager for Priory and that a relief manager comes twice a week at present. Joanne Beresford stated that there is a monthly provider review meeting with Ben Blackburn once a month. Authorised Representatives spoke to all staff on duty at the time of the visit.</p>
Background	<p>Creagmoor, which is now part of the Priory Group, acquired Bank Hall Farm in 2010. The establishment provides care for people with mental health needs, such as learning disabilities and autism. It provides six en-suite bedrooms and is currently home to six residents (five males and one female). The male residents live in the main residence; all have their own en-suite rooms decorated to their personal tastes. The female resident lives in a small separate bungalow again furnished to her personal taste.</p> <p>Sitting in 1.7 acres, the property is located in a semi-rural residential area of Winsford, with easy access to local shops and amenities including a library, cinema, and the lifestyles leisure centre.</p> <p>The website for the establishment advertises; <i>“... a variety of on-site activities which residents can participate and enjoy including; sensory allotment, orchard, 3 stables and independent kitchen skills area ...</i></p> <p><i>... Everybody living at Bank Hall Farm is assigned a ‘key worker’, who looks after each individuals care plans. Key workers encourage and support individuals to attain their personal goals, which could include; cleaning, volunteering and paid employment.”</i></p>

<p>Overall Impression</p>	<p>Due to nature of client group, interaction with residents was limited as residents either had communication problems and/or severe difficulty in holding their concentration.</p> <p>Staff were of different ages and experience and appeared open and honest. Representatives felt that they appeared to seem supportive to those in their care. However, at the time of the visit, Representatives did not feel that activity and facilities matched those as advertised on the website and that more could be done to encourage independence.</p>
<p>Any ideas or suggestions for improving service?</p>	<p>Activities advertised on the group's website do not appear to match actual practice and resource availability - this should be put right.</p> <p>Greater efforts should be made to involve residents in independent life skills activity and this should involve cooking, cleaning and basic gardening.</p> <p>Points raised in the additional comments section of this report should also be given a high priority by those in charge.</p>

Environment

We were told that all residents are supported by Residential Care Workers (RSW) providing daytime staffing ratios of one to one for the male residents and two to one for the female resident, with a 50% staffing reduction at night. In addition to these support staff, we were told that there is an additional member of staff on-site; to provide additional support, to allow staff breaks and to provide residential catering and janitorial services.

We were also informed that all staff rotated amongst residents to alleviate any 'dependency' issues between member of staff and resident. Authorized representatives felt that this seemed a good idea.

Representatives asked about hours of work for staff and it was explained that these were usually; daytime - 08.00 -20.00 hrs or 10.00 - 22.00 hrs. and that those on night-time worked 20.00 - 08.00 hrs. We were told that that all staff are either NVQ trained or working towards a recognised qualification in the care sector and that part of this training involved online contact with a tutor on a monthly basis. Authorized representatives felt that these shifts seemed quite long; considering the needs of the clients and the stresses involved; and that the pattern of working, on occasion, may involve a break of only ten hours between shifts. Staff stated additional training provided to workers had included Epilepsy, Safeguarding and Mental Capacity Training.

Observations on the outside environment of the property -

On the roadside - A gate was closed. The front entrance to the property would benefit from a general tidy up with observations of weeds around front of property.

Three planters at front entrance were in need of attention. Ivy was growing up the side of the property into barge boards at top. An electricity meter box was open and appeared damaged.

Garden area - Observations included an empty lake that was safely fenced, grass cut neatly, a pleasant seating area and a lovely, well built swing, being used by male resident.

Weeds grew in abundance around other sides of the main building and the adjacent small bungalow. The sensory allotment appeared neglected and full of old pieces of wood.

Representatives noted that the stables, at the time of the visit, were used as storage facility and that the main gate was not padlocked. When questioned on the stables, a number of staff commented that, "They did not know what was going to be done with them."

Representatives did not see the Orchard during the visit.

Observations on the Inside Environment -

The home appeared generally clean and decorated although some specific improvements are noted below. A communal lounge area was fitted with a large TV and tuned to MTV type station; a remote control was available to change.

Representatives were shown a small kitchen, where food is prepared on site by a member of staff. The ceiling of this room seemed very low - only 5cm above door height. There was no food mixer present and equipment seemed basic with storage also limited; a fact endorsed by staff comment to representatives - "There was a need for more storage space."

Representatives query the amount of fresh food cooked on the premises and felt that many meals must be oven prepared or created from mainly frozen or tinned ingredients.

It was noted that there was a set routine, where male residents eat communal lunch/dinner. We were told that a choice of two mains and one dessert was available within context of three week menu programme. It was noted that no residents were allowed in the kitchen area and that in the main, service was through a hatch. The independent kitchen area (originally part of the bungalow) had now been converted into female accommodation and was no longer available for residents to use.

All drinks were brought to residents by staff on request. Our observations were that no effort was made in helping or encouraging independence on this. In one instance, Representatives felt that a resident who had requested a cold drink, who seemed to have good mobility and dexterity, could have been involved in the process by at least holding the cup as juice was poured. Representatives wondered if the aims of the centre - as expressed on the website in terms of supporting independence - do not really match practice in reality. In terms of cleanliness, representatives observed toilets downstairs had faeces stuck to the toilet, no hand towels, no toilet roll, no hand washing gel and the hand cleaning leaflet information was peeling off the wall. The floors of one of resident's room, was extremely dusty and in another resident's bathroom mastic sealant was peeling from the wall and bath. In terms of staffing our overall impression that the RSW's are under-resourced and not able to effectively deliver the '*personal goals, which could include; cleaning, volunteering and paid employment*' as stated on the web-site and in the individual care plans.

Health and Wellbeing

Residents were observed using PECs system of communication.

Residents free to move in and out of building under supervision. This was observed.

Although one resident was observed tidying up clothes left in the living room area, no formal structured programme seemed to be in place for residents to be involved in cleaning to develop '*independent living skills*', they were just encouraged to do so. One member of staff commented that some residents may ingest janitorial supplies. Similar principles seemed to apply to the laundry room. Residents were encouraged to put their dirty washing in their individual baskets but could not participate in supervised activity within the laundry room.

Activities and Community Links

In terms of resident's personal development it was noted that an on-site mini-bus was used to transport residents to community resources. There did appear to be one complication with transport, that being - if the female resident went out using the mini-bus, any male residents could not go on the same journey, as she had to be on her own. As a result of this staff commented that, "Extra transport was needed."

Representatives were told that client's parents met quarterly and arranged special events and theme days and that they had recently had an Italian night. Parents also raised funds for the Home.

We understand that residents do go on holiday each year with carers usually in groups of two or three.

There were many activities organised with planning shown to representatives for these, however, unfortunately the entrance hall was being decorated, so the information boards were not up. We were told by staff that they were being put up at the end of the week. One representative did see activity board in staff sleep-over room and also a statutory compliance board and staff board.

We were told that clients all had home visits and were taken out for various activities e.g. swimming, walking, restaurants and the pub. We were told that each resident is taken out for at least one meal per week and that a venue is chosen from a book that included a list of local food establishments / venues.

Representatives saw no evidence of this other than one resident who had been to Winsford that morning to have breakfast in a pub.

A staff sleep-over room was in the process of being turned into a sensory room.

Pets are known to sometimes have a beneficial effect on people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder with this in mind representatives were surprised when a staff member stated that a rabbit had been removed from the premises and that the website for the establishment states - '*... pets by arrangement*'.

We were told by staff that one resident does 30mins work experience at a local Post Office. Staff members spoken to were not aware of the Delamere Forest volunteering experience listed on the organizations website as an activity.

Additional Comments / Actions

Suggestions

- Janitorial/Cooking duties to be done by dedicated person.
- Independent Kitchen Skills Area which was converted into female living accommodation to be reinstated (possibly in Stables).
- Sensory Garden to be improved and tidied up.
- More volunteering opportunities for residents to be developed.
- Priory Group needs to clarify its Pet Policy, Representatives are not sure why it advertises stables on their website if they don't allow pets, the area is currently just used as a storage area.
- As facility is not purpose built - investigate installation of automatic door openers in event of a fire.

Environment

- Fix electricity meter cubicle door.
- Plant up unkempt planters. Representatives felt that tis could be an activity for

clients.

- Get rid of ivy going up RHS of property and remove weeds around the properties in general.
- Mastic sealant around bath in one room needs attention.
- Address issues re downstairs toilets.
- Photographic displays of activity should be considered.

Website

- Update with actual facilities and activity.

Transport

- Priory Group to address transport issue regarding female resident.

Healthwatch Cheshire West considers it important to re-visit this establishment within a six month window.