

Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report - Social Care	
Enter and View Visit to	Whitby House Care Home, 99 Pooltown Rd, Ellesmere Port. CH657AE.
Date	20 th May 2014 (unannounced visit)
Authorised Representatives	Rhiannon Wilson and Betty Shepherd
Staff Present	Manager: Angela Earlam
Background	Whitby House is an older purpose-built house with 36 bedrooms. Whitby House is owned by Larchwood Care who work in partnership with Orchard Care. It offers a range of specialist care provision to older people.
Overall Impression	The layout of the establishment is on two levels, a ground floor and first floor. The corridors are fairly narrow with bedrooms off. On the website it stated there were 36 en-suites. This was found to be an error as there were no en-suites in any of the bedrooms. The manager said she would have this amended on the website. The establishment is presently undergoing a refurbishment programme in some bedrooms and areas of the general internal environment. The lounge area is adequate and looks onto a patio. We were told that the lounge furniture is also scheduled for replacement.
Any ideas or suggestions for improving service?	There were two small dining areas, both of which presently only seated eight residents for each sitting per area. This did not allow for the possibility of increased numbers or 36 residents dining together on special/other occasions. We were informed that many of the residents chose to eat in their rooms or due to personal care needs, had to be supported with meals in their rooms. One of the dining rooms is divided to accommodate hairdressing provision. We felt it important to be able to offer the option of larger numbers of residents to dine together, as this can be a very interactive and social occasion. This would enable more choice in a residential setting, for residents and their families. Also the investment of en-suite provision in the larger bedrooms, which are being refurbished, would further support the resident's needs and wellbeing.

Environment

Although the building appeared to have some shortcomings due to its age and design, the residents appeared comfortable, well-supported and looked after. There was good staff and resident interaction during the visit.

Health and Wellbeing

The establishment offers predominantly nursing care but also caters for disability and those residents suffering from Dementia. Residents are offered, on admission, a choice of retaining their own General Practitioner or registering with the GP who covers the establishment. We were informed that Initial Assessments are completed with residents prior to admission - with regard to their person centred care plan and this is reviewed and updated as their needs change. An end of life programme is in place which tailors the needs of the individual to the equipment or extra resources they may need. The staffing structure, we were informed, during the night, was an RGN with a senior care and two care assistants. During the day there were two RGNs and six care staff which included a senior care staff member. All staff have to complete the mandatory training programme and are required to complete NVQ training. We noted staff training is documented on a staff matrix. The manager told us that all new staff have a two day induction and are subject to supervision and ongoing staff appraisal. Medication is in a locked office area and dispensed by the RGN. There is an infection control programme and associated documents are recorded and kept. There are also visits carried out by the tissue viability nurse which is acknowledged as an important support to the staffing team.

All religious denominations of residents are supported and visits to the establishment by clergy are encouraged.

Activities and Community Links

There is a range of activities and trips out offered to the residents. The more recent visits have been to the Zoo at Upton and to the Blue Planet aquarium. Wheelchair taxis are ordered for visits. Also visits are made to Morrison's supermarket which is in the vicinity of Whitby House. The activities coordinator is presently on maternity leave but the activities continue to be offered by the manager and staff and are seen to be very important. There are no volunteers at present visiting regularly but students from the local college complete short placements as part of their course criteria. The mobile library visits on a regular basis to enable residents to change their books.

Feedback

The residents we spoke to appeared to be well supported and had lived at Whitby House for some years. We also spoke to two sisters who were presently living at Whitby house and were able to spend time together in their room. It was evident during the visit that some effort to improve the environment which would support residents' needs and comfort was in progress.

Additional Comments

There is a four week summer and winter menu rotated which supports use of seasonal vegetables and choice.