

Report of Enter and View Visit

Eric Williams House Report

Published 07 October 2015



Care Home Visited	Eric Williams House
Date and Time of visit	Wednesday 12th August 2015, 9.30am - 3.30pm
Address	Brookside Avenue, Whoberley, Coventry. CV5 8AP
Size and Specialism	43 places for older adults requiring personal and dementia care.
Authorised Representatives	Kerry Vieira, Ravinder Singh Kundra, Karen Keates and Robert Bicker

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

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What is Enter and View?

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe and report on service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers in premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. This is so we can learn from the experiences of people who interact with these services at first hand.

The Healthwatch Coventry Steering Group has agreed that Enter and View Visits to care homes for older people form part of the current Healthwatch work programme.

Healthwatch Authorised Representatives carry out these visits to find out how services are being run and to gather the perspectives of those who are using the service.

From our findings we look to report accurately a snapshot of users' experiences, highlight examples of good practice and make recommendations for improvements.

Reasons for the visit

To gather information about the experience of living in care homes in Coventry including quality of life factors such as activities and choices. To look at homes from the perspective of 'would I wish my relative to live here?'

Methodology

We collected our information by splitting our team of four into two pairs and each pair visited two suites. We spoke to 6 of the 43 residents, 1 visitor, 2 volunteers and 6 members of staff. We have received 2 completed visitor questionnaires.

Information was recorded on semi structured questionnaires asking open questions to establish what people liked most and what people felt could be improved.

Before speaking to each person we introduced ourselves by name, explained what Healthwatch is and why we were there. We established that the resident or staff member was happy to speak with us. We confirmed that their name would not be linked with anything they told us and that they were free to end the conversation at any point.

We carried name badges to identify who we were and provided the care home manager with a letter of authority from the Healthwatch Coventry Chief Officer.

We made observations throughout the visit and made notes of what we saw around the home. We left some questionnaires for completion by visitors which can be posted back to our Freepost address.

Summary of findings

The home is owned by Coventry City Council and all residents have some level of dementia. There is one short stay and three long term units in the home.

We found this to be a relaxed, homely and friendly home. The home had recently received some investment in refurbishment and incorporated many attractive features, such as a 1950s cafe and cinema area and a secure dementia friendly garden.

We found the home to be secure and residents and staff appeared happy and comfortable. We received positive feedback from two relatives who completed our questionnaires and residents told us that they like living at the home.

The home is a mixed gender facility. It was clean with no unpleasant odours. The home benefitted from all rooms being single rooms and not shared.

There was a positive culture of volunteer involvement in the home and these volunteers had recently helped the home to raise money via donations with which they purchased two PARO therapeutic robotic seals.

Staff told us that they do not feel they have enough time between shifts.

We identified that the signage around the home needed to be reviewed and that more resources need to be invested in arranging outings and activities for

residents. Residents and staff told us they would like to go for picnics, to a beer garden and the seaside.

None of the Staff wore uniforms or badges, the manager made this decision because she found that uniforms created barriers and caused residents to be more confused.

Overall Impressions

The home was brightly decorated, airy and spacious. The staff appeared to be very knowledgeable, professional and caring.

There was a fun, relaxed and cheery atmosphere in the home among residents and staff alike.

Findings

The home is owned by Coventry City Council. It does not have a website so we were not able to compare our findings with this.

We entered through one door and were greeted by the friendly staff and asked to sign in on arrival. We were then let in through a further secure entrance. One resident was standing by the door with her coat and hand bag, staff alerted us that we needed to be careful not to let this resident leave the building. The resident thought that she was going out to church but was not able to go out alone due to her confusion. The manager told us that a priest visits the home to see this resident and support her with pastoral needs.

We were shown into the main communal dining/lounge area which had recently been refurbished and was decorated in a 1950s theme with red furniture, a jukebox which played 1950s music and was referred to as 'the café' area. We were told that this area is used for parties and social gatherings. One end of the room was laid out with high backed chairs in two rows in front of a large screen television creating the impression of a cinema. On the wall outside the room, there was a replica Odeon sign showing posters for some 1950s films such as singing in the rain. We also saw a popcorn machine was available in the room.

On one side of this room there are large windows which look out onto the garden. On the other side are large sliding glass doors which can be opened up, making the room more spacious and airy. There was a piano situated in the main lounge, the manager told us that it only gets played if a resident wishes to do so. These features contributed to the fun and light hearted atmosphere in the home. It was unfortunate that we did not see anyone using this room during our visit and wondered if it was not being utilised enough.

The home was all on one ground floor level with two suites at each end, each suite had a lounge area and each of these were decorated in a different theme such as a work theme with pictures of items such as 1950s style typewriters and telephones

on the walls and a gardening theme. All of the lounges were furnished with a television, dining tables and chairs and also high back chairs; each also has a kitchenette where staff would serve drinks for residents and chat with them. Each unit also had a bell by the entrance which we observed the manager ringing to let them know she was coming in. The manager told us that the bells were used to create a homely feel so that visitors to each unit can ring them as they enter but not everyone uses them.

One of the suites had a fish tank and a resident told us that they like watching the fish.

Residents told us that their favourite thing about the home is that they have the freedom to wander around and the staff listen to their concerns. One resident said "I like it here, it's nice". Another resident showed us a model ship that he had made and said he was very proud of it and enjoyed making models.

We observed that there were memory boxes on the walls outside each of the residents' rooms. Some did not have anything in them and others contained photographs or trophies and other things which related to their individual interests and hobbies.

The manager told us that all of the residents have some level of dementia. The home is split into 4 units/suites with up to 15 residents in each suite. One of the suites is a short stay unit and residents usually spend up to 6 weeks on this unit whilst they are being assessed in order to decide where is best to accommodate them. The residents on the short stay unit were usually experiencing or being assessed for early stages of dementia.

The manager also told us that the staff do not wear name badges or uniforms because many of the residents do not recognise that they are in a care home due to their dementia. The staff feel that it is better to blend into the home environment by not making themselves look different to the residents and that this makes the residents feel more comfortable. It was recommended that we kept our ID badges in our pockets rather than having them visible, we kept our badges with us at all times.

There was a mixture of male and female residents. The home was clean and there were no unpleasant odours.

There was a spacious and secure, dementia friendly garden which had recently received a makeover by staff and volunteers. Each unit also had access to their own separate patio area which had also been improved recently and were maintained by staff and volunteers, each contained patio furniture and plants and were ideal areas for residents to relax in. The garden benches and chairs were painted in bright colours and a member of staff had painted the pebbles in a water feature in gold and silver.

There was also an aviary in the garden which contained brightly coloured rare birds. One of our Authorised Representatives noticed that there was a large willow

tree over hanging the path in one area of the garden and that this could be a trip hazard and could also be problematic for any residents with sight a impairment so needed to be trimmed back further and kept under control to reduce these risks.

We were shown some of the spacious and bright bedrooms, all of which were single rooms with a sink and a commode. Each of the 4 units has access to a communal bathroom, toilet and shower room. The manager told us that most of the residents are doubly incontinent and need assistance with personal care. There are 12 communal toilets around the home.

A member of staff showed us that one of the communal bathrooms had a customised bath and we noticed that the sign on the door said "shower" and had a picture of a shower. Staff told us that most residents prefer a shower and that they would prefer this room to have a shower rather than a bath; staff also said they found this particular bath difficult to use with residents who need assistance getting in and out of it. Staff said that they have raised these issues with the manager but it has not been addressed 'yet'. We pointed this out to the manager who said that all units have access to a shower so staff and residents can choose to use the shower room rather than the bathroom if preferred. She also said that they are aware that the signs on some of the doors need changing.

We were told that there is a low turnover of staff and that the manager has been at the home since 2001. Staff and residents told us that they find the manager and deputy manager easy to talk to and that they work well together.

The manager told us that there are 72 staff and 3 volunteers working at the home. There are 4 male staff (3 catering and 1 carer) and the rest are female. The home does not use agency staff and if they need additional staff to cover they call on their bank of relief staff. She also told us that there is a room available for residents' relatives if they wish to stay overnight and visitors are welcome any time. Staff will accommodate visitors wishing to have a meal with their relatives by allowing them to use a separate room so that the other resident's mealtimes are not interrupted.

We saw that the compliments and complaints register was kept in the reception area. This contained various comments and compliments from visitors.

The manager told us that the home had passed their fire safety inspection this July.

When we arrived at the home a funeral hearse was just preparing to leave. The manager described how she felt a sense of pride that the family wanted the funeral procession to leave from there and had told her that they thought of this as their relative's home and the staff and residents as part of their extended family.

Staff told us that they receive regular training and this is done in their work time either at a local training venue or using computers in house. Recent training has included manual handling, dementia awareness and safeguarding. The team

leaders carry out supervision with staff every 3 months and staff meetings are held every month.

Some staff also told us they felt that they do not always get a long enough break between shifts. E.g. Sometimes they work a 2.30pm to 10pm shift and then start again at 7.30am until 3pm. They believe that there should be an 11 hour gap between shifts. For each unit there are two care staff plus one carer who floats between two units.

Staff said that "it is a lovely home" and added that there have been lots of improvements recently to the home and this has impacted positively on residents and staff.

Our visitor questionnaires ask for areas of the home to be rated 1 - 5 with 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent. Both of the visitor questionnaires rated the standard of care = 5; quality of meals = 4; quality of activities provided = 4 and the facility as a whole = 5. One completed questionnaire said that they visit the home twice a week and have not witnessed anything negative at any time, they also said that the home is "a credit to Coventry City Council".

Food and drink

We were given copies of the menus which are planned over a 4 week rota and had plenty of variation. Vegetarian options are included on the daily menu and we were told that residents can request something else such as an omelette or salad if they do not fancy what is on the menu. We were told that residents can request snacks outside of meal times such as fruit, yoghurt, biscuits.

During our visit we were given some lunch, one of our Authorised Reps tried a vegetarian meal which was veggie burgers with mashed potato and vegetables. Staff told us that they do not very often have to cater for vegetarians.

Each day the residents are served breakfast, lunch and evening meal plus supper which consists of hot drinks and a snack such as crumpets, scones or tea cakes.

Residents told us that they like the food and they never feel hungry. One resident told us that their family sometimes bring food in for her. Another resident told us that they were once out at a hospital appointment during meal time and their meal was served to them when they got back home.

A resident told us that their favourite meal is sausage and mash and that they are given a drink whenever they ask for one.

A relative told us that they can visit at any time but that staff like residents to sit together at meal times so that they interact with each other.

Staff on one of the units told us that once a week they go out and fetch fish and chips from the local chip shop for themselves and the residents.

Care

We spoke to a relative of one of the residents who told us that even though residents have dementia and are confused, staff always support and respect resident's choices about what they wear and what they would like to do. The manager consulted with them about issues with their relative's medication as well as with the doctor and any problems have been easily communicated over and rectified. They also told us that there is always a waiting list for getting places at the home and they knew this was the right place for their relative after seeing other homes.

Staff told us that the home has a good relationship with the local GP who is located nearby and visits the home regularly. The manager said that the GP has a good understanding of dementia and is very helpful.

The manager described how medication is reviewed for each resident when they arrive at the home to ensure that they are not being prescribed unnecessary medication which they no longer need and looking at what could be a side effect of medicine and what is a characteristic of their condition. This is reviewed with help from the GP and in conjunction with the resident's family to assess whether medication can be reduced and symptoms or conditions managed in other ways.

We observed one member of staff speaking to a resident in Ukrainian, the manager told us that staff will look up phrases on Google translate so that they can make an effort to communicate a little bit with residents in their own language if their first language is not English.

Staff told us that they like the way the home is split into small areas because it is easier for them to get to know the residents.

Residents appeared to be happy and comfortable. All of the residents were well dressed and clean and told us that they are given a choice of what clothes they want to wear each day. Residents also told us that the staff take very good care of them and will get them what they need if they ask them.

One resident told us that they had concerns that someone may wander into their room because they were not able to lock the door. We mentioned this to the manager at the end of our visit and were told that this particular resident is a smoker and does not always obey the rules about not smoking in their room. Therefore they have had issues with their door being locked. They felt that it was a fire hazard if staff could not easily see into the room periodically to check that the resident was not smoking. It was also explained that this resident, who is in the short stay unit, will soon be moving out of the home. No smoking is allowed in the building and staff, visitors and residents can go out in the garden if they wish to smoke.

A volunteer at the home told us that staff are friendly, approachable and caring and that the managers have a positive attitude towards their work and the residents "nothing is too much trouble".

Staff told us that they protect the dignity and privacy of the residents by ensuring that their door and curtains are shut when they are receiving support with personal care. They also knock resident's doors before entering their rooms.

Staff also told us that they feel able to raise any concerns with their team leader or the home managers. They have not experienced the home being short staffed.

A member of staff described how one resident had fallen out of bed this morning and had to be taken to hospital, staff were alerted by the mat next to his bed which is alarmed and the staff pulled together to help and work as a team.

Activities

The manager told us that activities are organised and ran by volunteers. Volunteers will encourage residents to use the garden and will arrange activities outside. She also told us that the home had taken part in a study conducted by Warwick University Medical School called "OPERA" (Older People's Exercise in Residential Accommodation).

A volunteer told us that the home runs reminiscence therapy sessions every week and that staff make an effort to find out about resident's individual interests and encourage them to take part in activities.

We spoke to another volunteer who told us that they started going to the home two days per week three years ago and now go to the home five days per week and undertake various tasks. Most recently they have been helping with work in the garden. They also said they are delighted that the residents are now spending more time outside in the gardens and that having the newly refurbished gardens has had a positive impact on residents and staff.

Some staff told us that they do not take residents out of the home, they used to be able to take them on outings but because everything has be risk assessed they have not had any outings. Other staff and the Manager told us that they are able to take residents out to the local hairdressers, opticians, doctors, shops etc and have previously hired a minibus and taken residents on barge trips.

One resident told us that they do not go on trips and if they were available they would not go anyway. They also said that a carer had offered to take them for a walk to the shops but they hadn't got any money "so what is the point in going".

Another resident told us that they used to go out to the pub and to the shops but they have not been out since living at the home. We asked if they would like to go out and where they would go if they had a choice, they told us that they would like to go to the seaside or to the pub and sit in a beer garden. This resident also

enjoys singing and told us that they take part in sing-alongs when they have this activity at the home.

Another staff member told us that residents enjoy playing cards and dominos or doing word searches. Some like to do knitting, colouring or making cards. Staff said they try to encourage them to take part in activities and usually if they see others taking part they will join in.

From talking to staff and residents in the different suites, we established that the activities available varied depending on the staff on each of the unit.

A resident told us that they like to just sit and watch television in the lounge but they had not got their own television in their room. They would like to have a television in their room. The manager told us that residents can have their own television in their room if they wish.

The home has recently raised funds and purchased two PARO therapeutic robotic seals. We were shown these seals and observed the residents using them. These seals are cuddly and respond to residents when they interact with them. Staff described how one resident had not spoken for 2 years and when they were holding one of the seals they spoke to it.

Another resident was very restless and would walk around the home constantly, when they were given one of the seals to hold they managed to sit still and calm for more than 30 minutes. The staff describe the seals as being therapeutic. More information about the PARO therapeutic robots is available online via <http://www.parorobots.com>

The manager described how they raised £4000 to purchase the first seal via events which were ran and organised by volunteers. A generous anonymous donor heard about their fundraising and gave the home another £4000 so that they could purchase a second one. The week before our visit the home held a celebratory open day to launch the purchase of the seals to the local community, they called it "meet the PARO seal" event.

The seals were popular with staff and residents. Some of the residents were showing us how the seal was looking at them and responding to them when they spoke to it and stroked it. We observed a resident calling the seal by its name and saying "isn't he lovely?"

We observed a group of residents sitting in the garden and talking with one of the volunteers. It was a warm sunny day when we visited and most of the windows of the home were open to circulate some air and regulate the temperature.

Some of the residents were sitting in the lounge areas watching television and others wandered around the home. Residents were able to spend time in any of the lounge or garden areas and were not restricted to the lounge within their own unit/suite areas.

We observed one resident looking at a magazine, we sat with this resident for a while, the conversation did not make much sense due to their level of dementia

but they seemed content and the atmosphere throughout the home was calm. We also observed staff speaking softly to residents and treating them with respect.

Staff described how the main cafe lounge area is used for special birthday celebrations and the home provides a birthday cake and buffet for residents. They also use this room for group activities such as dancing, fun days and watching films.

Staff told us that a chiropodist visits the home and also a hairdresser comes in every week on Mondays and Tuesdays. A barber will also come in on request, one male resident confirmed this.

All of the staff, volunteers and residents that we spoke to told us that they would like trips out to be arranged and more resources put into organising activities. They gave ideas such as going to a park for a picnic, a beer garden and the seaside.

Dementia Friendly Design

We noticed that there were some dementia friendly signs around the home, on the doors to bathrooms and shower rooms but that some rooms had the wrong signs on them.

Furniture and decor were in contrasting colours around the home.

There were handrails around the walls and corridors of the home and also in the gardens, these were in contrasting colours and easily visible.

Healthwatch Recommendations

Following our visit we would like to recommend:

1. A review of the signage around the home so that signs on doors relate to the room they are referring to i.e. one room had a sign for a shower but there was not a shower in there, only a bath.
2. All of the people we spoke to said that they would like more trips out to be organised and would like to be given the option to go on outings to the park, beer garden or seaside for example. Perhaps this is something the volunteers could plan along with more one to one or group activities.
3. One resident expressed that they would like a TV in their room but do not have one. We were told that residents can have a TV in their room but did not see many who did have them. This should be discussed with each resident to ensure that their preferences are being met.
4. Staff would like to ensure that there are sufficient gaps between their shifts so that they have chance to rest and don't feel tired when they are at work.

Management should have a review of the staff rotas to ensure that staff have sufficient breaks between shifts.

5. The home could benefit from having their own website showing images of the attractive features so that people looking online for local care homes could see what is on offer here.

Response from Care home Manager

Thank you and the Healthwatch team for their recent visit to Eric Williams House. We are always striving to improve our quality of service to our residents here and welcome your recommendations.

In the report you made five recommendations. Please find our responses and actions for these:

- Correct special Dementia friendly signage for the bathroom was on order and we now have confirmation that it has been despatched to us, all other signage is correct.
- We have had events which have enabled residents to enjoy a pub lunch, or trips to the Coventry Car museum, Herbert Art Gallery and are planning more in the future.
- Yes this is something we do discuss with residents and their advocates prior to people coming here to live with us. Residents will then be asked again periodically in case they have changed their minds.
- Staff rotas are regularly reviewed and wherever possible a member of staff's request to change a shift, with any colleague, when they "feel tired" is taken into consideration. The rota's are drafted in line with working times directorate, with all staff having 2 days off each week as part of their rota. Staff are reminded that if they have specific issues in relating to their own rota and ability to manage, they should discuss these with their line manager at the earliest opportunity.
- Coventry City Council, have the responsibility for promotional images of the service which Eric Williams House, this has been an on-going piece of work.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Coventry would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View visit.

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