

Healthwatch Blackpool

Domiciliary Care Report

December 2015

www.healthwatchblackpool.co.uk



Introduction

Healthwatch Blackpool is an independent consumer champion of health and social care services across Blackpool. Our aim is to represent the voices and experiences of those using services, to take these to the commissioners and service providers to improve the way they operate. We believe that the best way to improve service is by listening to those using them.

We held a public consultation in April 2015 asking which areas of health and social care were a concern and needed looking into. We then collated these responses and prioritised those which most people were concerned about. During our consultation, home/domiciliary care was highlighted by many as needing an independent review.

Further to this response domiciliary care has been in the national spotlight in 2015 following reports of care agencies not allocating the full amount of time to their service users, and care workers having to care for many people in short spaces of time.

Following the national news coverage of domiciliary care, along with the response we had from the public we felt that we should look further into domiciliary care.

Our aim:

To identify the current standard of domiciliary care in Blackpool, to discover what people who receive home care think of the service they get, and what - if any - areas need improvement.

Our approach:

We developed a survey with a set of questions which asked people about all aspects of their home care. We included the question of which service provider they use, with an option of preferring not to say. We wanted to know about people's choices, if they were in control of when services

were provided to them. Questions were also asked about the consistency, capability, presentation and attitudes of the care workers, as well as if they arrived on time and stayed for the full duration of the visit they were meant to.

One of our ultimate aims was to discover if the service met the needs of that person, and if not, why not. All of the questions we asked came with the option of adding further comments, and there was a section at the end of the survey to highlight any issues we did not ask about.

We wanted to reach as many people in receipt of domiciliary care as possible. We approached individual care providers, as well Blackpool Council who together were able to send out over 750 surveys to people's home complete with a prepaid envelope for returning to us. We also held focus sessions at Warren Manor and worked with Age UK and the Carer's Trust who were able to assist us further by placing surveys and prepaid envelopes in their outreach centres. We felt this would be the most appropriate way of getting the views directly from the people receiving care, allowing them to complete the survey in their own time at home and making it as easy as possible to send it back to us.

Disclaimer

*Please note that this report relates to views collected over the specific dates 1st November - 7th December 2015. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experience of all members of the community just the **98** who completed our survey and returned it to us.*

Due to the nature of sending our survey to people's homes and having them returned to us we cannot guarantee that all questionnaires were completed without coercion and give a true representation of domiciliary care across Blackpool.

Healthwatch Blackpool - Domiciliary Care

Care Agencies that took part in our survey:

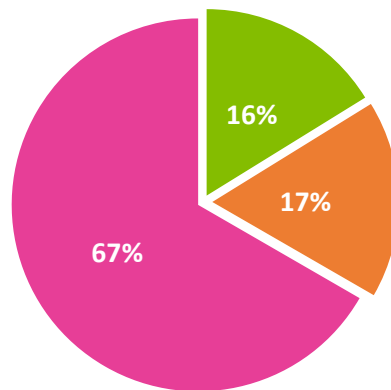


Domiciliary Care Survey

In order to establish the way in which care is arranged for people across Blackpool, we first asked who arranged the care, how was it paid for and in their opinion whether the times agreed were best for the person receiving the care.

How was your care arranged?

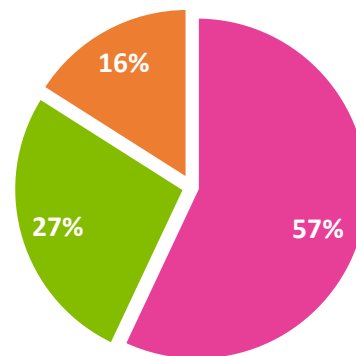
- By Adult Social Care
- By Family/friends
- Not sure/arranged myself



The majority of care is arranged by the local authority, whilst the input of family arrangement is relatively low. Even lower however was the number of people who arranged care for themselves, or were unaware of how it was arranged on their behalf.

In almost consistent numbers with the arrangement of care, the majority of care is also funded by the local authority. However, here there is a clearer picture of how many people pay for their own care. Just under a third of people pay for their own care entirely, with others contributing in part with the local authority.

Who pays for your care?



- Wholly or part paid for by social services
- Paid for it themselves
- Not sure

82% of our respondents had agreed a time with the care agency which suited them.



10% didn't get a choice but were told when their carers were coming.

7% either weren't sure or never knew when carers were attending.



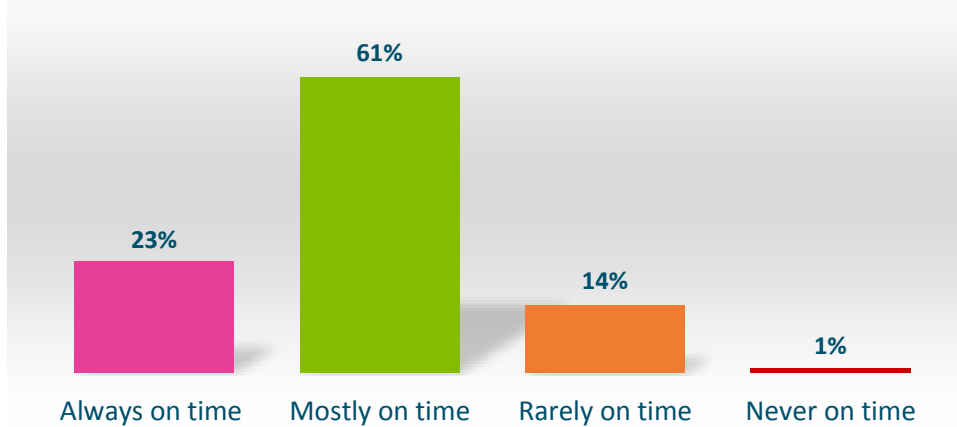
"Times were agreed but not always kept. On weekends it falls apart."

"We have agreed times but they are generally not adhered to very well"

Arrival Times

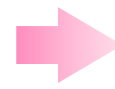
We asked if the carers arrive on time, if they knew who to contact if they didn't as well as how they were treated if they needed to call the agency and speak with them on the phone.

Do carers arrive on time?



The vast majority of carers do turn up on time, with just under a quarter **always** arriving when they are expected to. This does signify that there is room for improvement however, as over 10% noted that their carers are rarely on time.

Almost everybody (**90%** of respondents) knew what to do or who to contact if their carer was late or didn't turn up.



Speaking with agencies on the phone

We wanted to know how service users were treated when speaking with their agency on the phone, and if they felt as though they were treated with respect.

77% said:

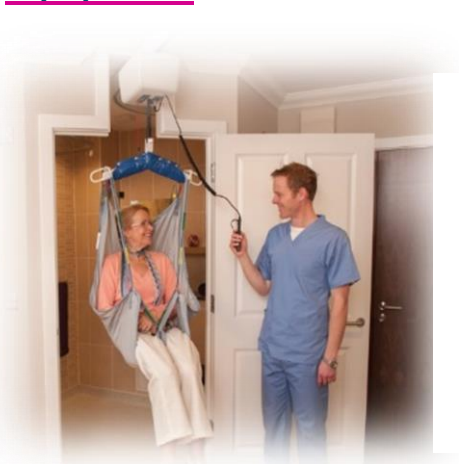
Always or mostly treat me with respect on the phone.



13% said:

I've never had to contact them.

Equipment



- 47% said that the carers bring everything that they need
- 39% said that they provide equipment at their own cost
- Many told us that “often no equipment is needed”

The Carers

Do the same carers visit you every time?

- ❖ 16% always receive visits from the same carers
- ❖ 74% mostly receive the same carers, with the odd change
- ❖ No one said they have different carers each time.

“Carers who know me always attend, if a carer leaves I always know who will take over etc.”

“Through the week yes, at weekends it varies”

“It's better if the same carer can come on a regular basis, as a bond between a carer and patient is a good thing and they learn a lot about each other.”

Do your carers explain what they are there to do?

84% of the people who completed our survey said that carers *always* or *nearly always* explained why they were there and what they were there to do.



Do they record (in a booklet or document) what they have done for you?

92% of the people who completed our survey said that carers always recorded “what they had done”, though it was not clear if this information was always readily available for the service user to see for themselves.



Appearance



76% of the people who completed our survey said that carers always wore their name badge.

“I believe they should wear their badges, they are in uniform which enables me to identify them.”

Do your carers stay for the full amount of time?



- 41% said: Always
- 40% said: Mostly
- 3% said: That they never stay their full amount of time.

“1.5hrs early one day [with a] 15-20 minute stay”

“Never 30 minutes, more 20 and they are always in a rush.”

“Morning and bedtime calls are usually 20-30 minutes maximum, however lunch and tea are too short - usually 10 minutes maximum. It would be beneficial if carers could chat to my mum for 5-10 minutes as this helps her and allows carers to assess her wellbeing etc.”

Whilst there appeared to be a varied range of responses around carers and times, we found that when we opened up questions for wider responses, many felt able to elaborate on their individual situation, giving us insight into the gaps they felt existed in their service provision:

“It concerns me, I live with my mother and am aware of everything. I would be extremely worried if I wasn't around.”

“Carers seem stressed by their workloads. I am happy to wait but can be unfair on them.”

“Unless they have attended before they do not know what has to be done.”

“They are a caring service that looks after me.”

“I have been with [my agency] for 14 months, bit apprehensive in the beginning then I got to know my main carers and looked forward to them coming. But things have changed and now [I am] not getting my regular main carers, since the company has expanded. After 14 months I now feel neglected.”

“There is a thing called continuity, which I do not feel my husband is getting. One time I spoke to a member of the CQC about another subject and even he said I should fight for continuity because it is beneficial to [my husband's] illness.”



“I just have a bath two mornings each week. Also dress and shave. They are all very kind. I attend Highfield Day Care Centre three days each week - excellent”

“My husband's carers don't tell me [his wife] why they are there, or speak to me. It would be nice to be updated as to my husband's welfare by them.”

“When my aunt was an emergency admission to hospital it became clear that she required domiciliary care. Social services in Blackpool (Holly) set up everything for us from Vitaline to KeySafe etc. I am now trying to negotiate some more hours so that they can do some general housework based on my aunt's age and needs.”



“We are very peeved that because we pay for care in full....direct to the council there is no refund when carers do not turn up. Extra hours can't be worked as we only have an allotted time slot/number of hours.”



“There are odd staff that are poor. My main concern is the timekeeping. It sometimes gets to half-an-hour to an hour late, which is worrying. This is not all the carers, just one or two who are no good at all.”

“Some of the new staff, I feel, need a little more training.”

Does the service meet your needs?

- 87% agreed that the service they were with met their needs
- 6% were unhappy with their service provider
- 7% were unsure

Summary of Findings

- Over 80% of respondents said that they were happy with their care agency
- 87% of respondents were happy with the level of care that they were receiving
- 1 in 10 respondents said that they feel they have no say/choice when carers attend
- Some family carers felt that the care staff did not engage them
- 1 in 10 respondents said that they were unsure what to do or who to contact if their carer was late or didn't attend
- Respondents told us that only 76% of carers wore their name/ID badges
- Less than half of carers consistently stay their allotted time
- Service users who pay the council reported not receiving refunds for care that goes undelivered

Recommendations

- Families should be involved at appropriate opportunities to ensure that they maintain confidence in the service, as they can be well placed to identify additional elements of care or areas which they may be able to provide support themselves.
- Work to ensure that the 10% of those receiving care who do not know who to contact if carers do not attend are made aware.
- Timekeeping:
 - Avoid incentives to not deliver the full amount of time allocated to an individual such as time constraints to attend other appointments.
 - Whilst emergencies and further support needs on the day are unlikely to be known ahead of time, where possible identify service users whose appointments are likely to overrun and account for these and their impact on other service users.
- Encourage service user feedback where possible to determine good practice and areas of improvement for individual's care.

Demographics

