

Visit to Cranlea care home

14 January 2016

Purpose of the visit

This visit was organised in response to an invitation from Anchor Housing to Healthwatch Newcastle to visit Cranlea care home. The purpose of the visit was to provide an opportunity for residents and relatives to talk to an independent organisation about their experience of living at Cranlea, or having a relative resident there. The visit provided us with an important information-gathering opportunity from an often seldom-heard group. Cranlea care home will also be able to use the visit report as evidence of patient engagement when the Care Quality Commission next visits.

Format for the visit

The Cranlea Activities Co-ordinator and Healthwatch Newcastle staff decided that the most appropriate format would be for Healthwatch Newcastle staff to attend one of Cranlea's regular residents and relatives meetings, thus ensuring a friendly, informal and safe environment. We offered to provide some light refreshments as a way of thanking the residents for their time and for the opportunity to meet with them. We provided posters advertising the visit in advance as a way of encouraging residents and relatives to attend the meeting.

We began our section of the residents' meeting by thanking residents and staff for inviting us. We went on to explain about what we do and the reason for the visit. This was followed by Healthwatch Newcastle staff spending time talking to individual residents and relatives. While in conversation we asked the following questions:

- What do you really like about living at Cranlea?
- What do you think Cranlea could do to make your stay even better?

Healthwatch Newcastle agreed to provide Cranlea with an anonymised summary report of what they heard during the visit (residents were informed of this outcome at the meeting). We hope this report will celebrate what Cranlea do well and how they could make things even better for their residents in the future.

Findings from the visit

Points noted from our conversations with residents and relatives

General

- I like everything, I'd only come here
- It couldn't be better
- I can't fault this place
- Lovely place with lovely people. I am very happy
- They go that bit extra
- I am well looked after
- Smashing!
- Provide a personalised service

Staff

- Very friendly staff
- All staff are lovely - nothing's a bother

- Staff are very helpful and genuinely concerned
- Staff were very helpful and welcoming when I first arrived
- The staff are very good, always attentive and they sort things out
- They're really nice
- The staff are excellent
- All the staff are very good - they must make wonderful appointments
- They show genuine kindness
- There appears to be very little staff turnover, when it does happen the new staff are also lovely
- All staff appear confident, at home and have mutual respect for one another
- They are very nice, kind and helpful
- Good staff. They are very helpful
- I have a very good relationship with the staff here

Atmosphere

- Love the feel
- I feel at home here
- There's a really nice atmosphere
- It's always like this
- Wonderful atmosphere, relaxed and friendly
- Very welcoming
- Good community cohesion

Operational

- I like that there are regular meetings with relatives
- All issues get sorted out quickly
- The laundry was an issue so I'm glad it's being addressed
- There's always enough staff around
- They do appear to listen to relatives and they have the flexibility to cope with things as they arise
- I can visit any time, they are very flexible
- I think it would be helpful for staff to have a checklist of the specific needs and requirements of each resident. I suggested this for my Mum and they've implemented it
- Occasionally laundry goes missing but the care home is looking into this to try and resolve it
- I have been here for a week after being transferred from another care home; really smooth transfer
- GP is right next door so easy to access GP if choose to register there

Activities

- Love the activities they provide; we have an art class, gardening sessions, keep fit sessions and there is a hairdresser available
- Good dancing and singing activities
- It would be good to have more physical activities catering for men; the ability to go for a walk around the local shops would be good. Perhaps the home could organise a walking group?
- At Christmas they gave individualised presents to each resident
- They have people come in from Tesco and M&S to do pamper days, small sales, etc. which is lovely for residents

Food

- The food is good
- He (resident) needs to drink a lot and I'm not sure that he is always encouraged to do so
- The food is very suitable for me
- The food is alright - if you don't like something they'll make you something else
- If you ask for something they will get it
- The food is of superb quality, varied and appropriate to the client group
- The cost is very reasonable if relatives wants to eat in
- Food is very good and they have been accommodating to vegetarians
- Certain foods have been organised when it was recognised that a resident particularly enjoyed them

Building

- I like the building and the area
- I have a nice room (x 2)

Healthwatch staff's personal observations

1. We were very impressed with how welcome everyone one at Cranlea made us feel. Staff took time to talk to us, to explain the format for the meeting and to answer our questions. Staff appeared to be proud of Cranlea: at the meeting they introduced Healthwatch Newcastle in a positive manner, thereby setting the tone for the visit. It is noteworthy that the meeting was well attended by both residents and their relatives, indicating that both groups feel a high degree of involvement and engagement in the running of the home.
2. A caring, friendly atmosphere was prevalent throughout the visit and all Cranlea staff appeared fully engaged and motivated to do a good job. A problem with laundry going missing was discussed at the residents' meeting and staff explained in detail the steps they were taking to deal with the issue.
3. We noted evidence of lots of activities taking place at Cranlea, including trips out, art activities and singalongs. Residents and relatives spoke to us about enjoying pamper days, personalised Christmas presents and gardening sessions; and at the resident's meeting staff invited residents and relatives to an upcoming retirement celebration. All these activities indicate a full and active social life for residents, supported by an enthusiastic and involved staff team.
4. Our conversations with both residents and relatives were overwhelmingly positive: only three comments out of more than 50 include suggested improvements, and none were negative.

Conclusion

We would like to thank Anchor Housing for the opportunity to visit Cranlea. It was a very positive and informative experience. The information we gathered has helped increased our understanding about what constitutes a good care home and a good care home experience. We hope the information included in this report will also be of use to Cranlea care home.

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