

Care Home Provider:
Care Home Address:
Date and Time of Visit:
Authorised Representatives:

Leonard Cheshire Disability
Packhorse Rd, Gerrards Cross, SL9 8JT
04.02.16 – 12.30 pm
Alison Holloway, Judith Young

Summary of findings



- Personalised care provided by consistent staff although agency staff find this more difficult in tight schedules.
- Residents are encouraged to participate in the running of the home and to be independent
- A huge variety of options in the home, and locally, although some residents are heavily dependent on volunteers which restricts their time outside the home.

The Visit

Chiltern House provides residential care for up to 22 adults who are living with a physical disability. They live in three ‘self-contained wings’ of the home with a communal conservatory in the middle. We talked to 2 members of staff and 8 residents and observed another 9 residents and 5 staff.

How people are treated



During our visit we did not see a huge amount of interaction between the staff and residents. However, one member of staff, coming on duty, did immediately stop to ask whether a resident had enjoyed their night out the previous evening. We were told that meetings between residents and staff occur formally once a month and informally weekly. Residents can bring up issues and they told us they appreciated the opportunity to air their views. However, when asked about whether they felt they were listened too, some said no, whatever they said, “it wouldn’t make any difference”. Others accepted there were budget, staff and health and safety restraints. One resident did say that they know if they complain directly to the manager that their complaint will be dealt with.

Staff do have some time to chat to residents but are pushed to get everything done in the time available. ‘Regular’ staff give person-centred care but sometimes agency staff rush. Residents told us that they have to explain how things are done for them every time. One resident said that sometimes agency staff are unable to understand their needs fully. Several residents told us it would be nice to have more staff around.

Personal Choice



In the morning, sometimes residents have to wait longer than they would like to get up because others have appointments to get to and take priority. “You can go to bed when you like”. Several residents we spoke to said they really liked the food but others said they would like more choice “there is not a lot of imagination when it comes to the menus”. Once beef burgers were requested and served “but they never appeared again”. One resident said they felt the menu was “too stodgy for people who sit in wheelchairs all day”. Another didn’t know what they would be having for lunch but said their swallowing restrictions were always taken into account and a choice still provided.

Dignity in Care Enter & View visit to Chiltern House

The garden is accessible to all and several residents, because of the proximity to the town, can go out by themselves to the shops, bank, cinema and train station or bus stop. They can therefore be very independent although others are dependent on volunteers and if they are not available then individuals cannot go out. "As much as is possible, you have choice here".

Just like Being at Home



In all three 'wings' of the home, residents told us they liked living in their groups of 7/8, eating together rather than in the large communal conservatory area. We were told by a resident that because of this, they recognise subtle changes in each other. We were given an example of a resident, who cannot verbalise, alert members of staff to a situation with another resident because they know each other well. Although there are no lounge areas (there is a front room where groups or visitors can meet), the residents seemed content to sit in their wheelchairs around the tables where they eat their meals. They watch TV in their bedrooms although we were told that films are shown on Saturday afternoons in the conservatory. They had the opportunity to share a Burns night supper there last month.

We were told that residents can get involved in the running of the home as much as they'd like to. One individual does their own washing and helps out the new staff as well as getting involved in interviewing potential staff. Another had helped an in-house trainer demonstrate what it was like to have no speech and what it felt like to be in a wheelchair with limited sight.

Privacy



We observed doors being closed to bedrooms to protect an individuals' privacy in various parts of the home. However, we were told by one resident that staff often forget to wait until they are invited to enter before doing so; instead they knock and tend to walk straight in.

Quality of Life



Organised activities at Chiltern House are scheduled for the afternoon. These might be quizzes, cooking, art classes, games or a book club where one resident reads to others. Some said they didn't like the activities but couldn't suggest any ones they might want organised. Individuals are encouraged to be independent and pursue interests inside and outside the home. We were told of gym instructors visiting, and creative writing groups being hosted. Another resident visits other Leonard Cheshire disability homes to see what happens elsewhere and shares ideas. We were told though that going out of the home for many depends on volunteers being available to accompany them, swimming or to the shops, as staff were often not free to go out. Some residents could pay for a driver to take them out in the minibus but others told us that the minibus was only used to take them to appointments. They said they would therefore not often go out of the home more than once a month.

We did not see any residents using a computer.

Recommendations

We recommend that Chiltern House:

- reminds staff that they should not walk into bedrooms uninvited especially where residents have capacity to verbally reply to the request
- looks to offer more variety in the menus
- continues to look for more volunteers to expand the opportunities for all the residents
- follows up on residents suggestions at subsequent meetings so that they feel they are being heard and reasonable changes are being made, and pins minutes to the noticeboards.
- looks to provide some evening entertainment on an ad hoc basis

Service Provider Response



The Visit

How people are treated ***

You state “we did not see a huge amount of interaction between the staff and residents”. At the time of your visit, 12.30pm, lunch is served. All residents would have been on the wings. Some Residents should not be disturbed during meal times due to problems with swallowing to which we have to follow the procedures of SALT and not encourage the Residents to talk whilst eating. Of course the staff are aware of this and follow the correct methods.

After lunch the Residents have personal care or have bed rest, I would very much like to show you around the home in the morning or late afternoon when the Activities are taking place and the home is lively and energetic.

When a member of staff is employed they are trained specifically on Dignity in Care and Person Centred Care. All Residents have a Personal Plan which the staff are aware of and is updated regularly and when changes occur. All Residents have a Keyworker.

Agency staff are only bought in if we are unable to fill the minimum requirements set by the CQC for staffing levels. Whilst this is kept to a minimum we do try and have the same Agency workers as much as possible to build familiarity and allow the home to continue to run smoothly.

Personal Choice ****

You state “there is not a lot of imagination when it comes to the menu”. Every single Resident has been asked in the last 2 months by the Catering Manager and Chef if they are happy with the menu,

what changes they would like to make to it and if there is anything they would like to have added or removed. Menus are placed onto the wings with the choices available and Residents are able to choose or change any items or meal they wish. The Catering staff are very accommodating and will always prepare anything that a Resident would like. Menus are also discussed in the monthly Residents meeting which are minuted and copies are placed on the wings (the last being 14th January and again on 25th February). We also have a volunteer who comes to the home and makes curry once a week for one of the wings. If a Resident is out at lunch time, a meal will be prepared for them to have at supper time.

Just like being at home ****

All the staff at Chiltern House are proud to support the Residents in secure and comfortable surroundings in a modern and purpose built facility. All rooms are individually decorated and furnished and have an ensuite bathroom with shower. A bathroom is also available should the Residents choose.

The Residents are not just co-habiting but are friends and genuinely care about each other.

There are three communal lounge / living areas, those being the conservatory, front room and activity room. These rooms need to be kept clear for wheelchairs to manoeuvre and have enough room for several Residents along with their friends and family to gather. It is the Residents personal choice if they would like to watch TV alone in their rooms or together in any of the living areas.

Privacy ***

Because of the way the Residents co-habit they like to leave their bedroom doors open to encourage communication with each other. Staff are aware that if a door is closed the Resident could be receiving personal care or does not want to be disturbed. Those Residents that do like to have staff or visitor knock on entry have notices on their doors.

Quality of Life ****

All Residents are encouraged to engage in activities whether it is just having a coffee and doing a crossword or being part of a larger organised trip such as a boat trip along the Thames or a visit to the Shard. Residents have weekly "chat in's" with the Activities department to discuss what they would like to do the following week or any appointments that are upcoming. The homes' two buses are available to be booked (subject to availability as medical appointments take preference).

Recommendations

As mentioned above Residents do leave their doors open and signs are placed on the doors of Residents rooms who would like staff / visitors to be invited into the room

We have a varied menu which changes each week. Residents regularly meet with the Kitchen staff to make changes and suggestions. Residents are always able to change their choices even up to 30 minutes before food is served.

We currently have 55 volunteers and three permanent live-in overseas volunteers. We continually actively recruit Volunteers.

Monthly meeting are held with the Service Manager and quarterly meetings held with Residents are staff. All meetings are minuted and copies placed onto the wings. Previous meeting minutes are run through at the following meeting.

Dignity in Care Enter & View visit to Chiltern House

We have a transport and activity department so residents can book the transportation to take them out on trips or shopping etc. The Activities department organised extensive variety of activities as well as the above mentioned volunteers who get involved in a number of undertakings.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank Chiltern House residents and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View visit as part of the Dignity in Care project.

Disclaimer

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

Methodology

This was an unscheduled Enter and View visit in that the care home were given up to 2 weeks' notice of our intention to visit but not the time and date. Authorised representatives noted what they observed and were told.
