

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

Heritage Care
High St, Winslow, MK18 3DR
24.02.16 – 11 am
Alison Holloway, Jean Button

Summary of findings



- Staff are very good “ we’re just a happy family”
- Activities are person-centred and very community based

The Visit

Swan House currently provides residential care for those over 65 some of who are living with dementia. We spoke to 4 residents and 3 members of staff and observed another 6 residents and 2 staff. We did not visit the dementia suite.

How people are treated



Every resident told us that the staff are very good; “we’re just a happy family”. During the morning, we heard staff regularly check that residents were alright. Although many staff were bank staff they had worked in the home for years we were told, so residents and staff seemed very comfortable with each other. “I really like working here” we were told by one staff member. Although there are only two carers on duty in the residential suite, a resident did say that they had time to pop into her room for a chat around their work. We were told of a person who now lives in the dementia suite who was taken on a VIP outing to Bletchley Park which is where they worked in the war. The visit was specifically tailored to their past history.

However, there seemed to be a lack of interaction at lunch time between anyone in the dining room. There was no conversation and residents ate their lunch in silence with only the TV in the lounge as background noise.

Personal Choice



A resident told us that they could get up when they liked within reason, and were also asked whether they were ready for bed in the evenings. They felt they could say no to this and go to bed later. Another resident had asked for meals to be brought to their room and this request was accommodated. Residents confirmed that there was always a choice of food. The menu of the week’s meals was on a noticeboard downstairs with the daily menu written on a whiteboard upstairs. This also showed the staff on duty on that floor on that shift. Meals are cooked off site and reheated at Swan House. Most residents told us that “the food is very good” but one did say they would prefer it to be cooked fresh on the premises.



Dignity in Care Enter & View visit to Swan House

Just like Being at Home



The furnishings in the residential lounge were tired and many cushions on chairs had been lifted making them not readily useable. The blinds had become loose in places and the pelmets were becoming unhooked. The manager said that the home was due a total refurbishment shortly. The garden was very pleasant with several benches and a resident told us that they go there in summer. The activities coordinator has started building a sensory garden. We were told that they are fundraising, with the help of the local school, to buy I-pads to encourage residents to use Skype etc.

One resident has taught others to play dominoes. "Initially it was just (x), now others are joining in." The activities coordinator spends time with individuals as well as groups within the home encouraging them to get involved in pastimes they might be interested in. Confidence has grown over the last few months and residents have become more independent with help from others. Staff started to accompany residents to church weekly and now members of the church come to collect residents themselves.

Privacy



A door was closed to protect someone's privacy as they were on oxygen and the door was clearly signed thus. Another resident felt that they could tell the permanent staff anything and be confident that it would be kept private. They said that they insisted on her bedroom door being kept open.

Quality of Life



The home is heavily involved with Winslow Big Society with residents going on local walks and integrating more with fellow members of the local community. One resident attends the gentle exercise class and 'Singing for Pleasure' visited the home last week. All this "socialisation makes them feel part of the community" as well as enabling activities to be more person centred. The activities coordinator and a volunteer have also just obtained their licence to drive a minibus so will be taking out residents on trips in April using this Heritage Care facility.

Special dates such as mother's day are marked and afternoon tea will be served on this occasion. On Halloween, a resident told us that the staff dressed up for the resident's party and they also enjoyed "a really good Christmas party". Some residents also went to the local school for a meal and to watch the Christmas play there.

Recommendations

We recommend that Swan House:

- refurbishes the lounge in the residential suite as this is tired
- looks in the medium term at cooking meals on site
- regularly books the minibus to take those who wish to go out on more trips

Service Provider Response

- The lounges are due to be redecorated and refurbished from the start of the next financial year as they are looking tired and shabby and this has been agreed in the forthcoming budget
- The use of Apetito meals was apparently a short term solution by the previous manager and an area I had previously identified as needing addressing. However this does not take priority so may be a couple of years before I can get a fulltime cook in post. However the meals from Apetito are brought in frozen and cooked on the premises.
- The activity organiser has only just passed his mini bus training and immediately booked the bus for the scheme to take residents out. This will be an on-going and frequent arrangement.
- On the section 'just like being at home' it states the activity organiser has just started building a sensory garden. In fact the sensory garden was built in 2009 and the activity organiser and residents have agreed during the last residents and relatives meeting to refurbish, repaint and tidy the area ready for the spring/summer.
- In the section 'just like being at home' I will discuss with the night staff the lifting of chair cushions. This is carried out by the night staff when they wash the chairs every evening but I will be reminding them to put the cushions back down once dried.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank Swan 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.
