

Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report

Enter and View Visit to	Thornton House Residential Home
Date	21st April 2016 arriving at 10 am
Authorised Representatives	Jenny Young & Elizabeth Bott.
Staff Present	Julie Booth, Senior Care Co-ordinator, currently Acting Manager.
Background	<p>Located in Childer Thornton, on the outskirts of Ellesmere Port, Thornton House Residential Home is registered to provide accommodation and personal care for up to 22 older people. The service also offers a day-care facility and bathing service to people within the local community. The home is single room accommodation over two floors. Not all rooms have en-suite facilities. At the time of our visit the home had 21 residents with one unoccupied room. The home also supports one day care resident. One elderly gentleman has been formally assessed as Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) and Julie told us that his wife and daughter were looking for suitable EMI accommodation for him. Thornton is not a nursing home but district nurses do call when needed. The home caters for a broad range of needs but no nursing care is provided.</p> <p>A recent CQC report (22nd February 2016) highlighted two issues for improvement these being safety and leadership.</p>
Overall Impression	<p>Representatives considered the home to be generally well run, with good teamwork in place, a strong commitment to residents (and staff) as individuals and a really welcoming atmosphere of friendliness, openness and transparency prevailing.</p> <p>It is hoped that staff do get some quality time in their working day to sit down and spend time with residents.</p> <p>Overall a pleasant visit and we felt very welcome with openness and transparency from all we engaged with.</p>
Any ideas or suggestions for improving service?	<p>Desirable Environmental Improvements: still needed: As soon as possible, there needs to be -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective lift; the main stairs are extremely steep! • Hard paving needed at the front of the property to improve access and general safety • Representatives feel that part of the outside of the house, in particular at the back, does need redecorating.

Environment

Decoration and maintenance at Thornton is part of an ongoing system. Representatives thought all the rooms, bathrooms and lounges were pleasingly, and individually arranged where appropriate. The substantial, mature garden is also a pleasure to visit (see earlier report of 20.10.14).

Exterior - The outside paintwork looked neglected; Representatives felt that this should be on a maintenance schedule. The car park for the home seemed adequate but that external environment would be enhanced with attention played to flower tubs.

Representatives understand that a no smoking rule applies everywhere in the home except the top of a

large garden.

The only major issue found at time of visit was that the promised lift was still not in place. This would make everyone's job a lot better including the residents' comfort.

Laundry was done on site in the cellar not a nice place to work, very claustrophobic.

It was pleasing to note that the overall atmosphere in the home has continued to be very warm, relaxed and friendly. As a previous representative noted (October 2014) the culture is demonstrably supportive - all residents observed seemed to feel very much at home. Despite its Victorian age, and the integrated corridors, there was a thoroughly positive feel to the interior: the internal environment looked well maintained and clean. We saw a number of pleasant good sized, light bedrooms, mostly en-suite, individually decorated, obviously adapted to suit individual residents and housing his/her favoured possessions, pictures etc.

As well as the comfortable 'entry' lounge adjacent to the front door, two well decorated lounges plus the light, informal conservatory - looking out on the garden - were being enjoyed by various residents; several that particular morning were watching the royal ceremonies taking place pictured on the large TV screen - it was the Queens 90th Birthday.

It did emerge that marking this landmark occasion was certainly in hand, the cheerful cook for example being partway through designing and making the Royal Cake.

Health and Wellbeing

Care - Representatives felt the care they observed was good with staff interacting well with residents. Representatives understand that Hospital assessments are carried out in advance of a new client coming to the home,

There is a personal 'talk through process' in place regarding End of Life Care. A few residents are on DOLS. Julie told us that she is waiting for the response to her DOLS applications.

Julie referred to the current condition of a number of residents including one who has suffered a stroke and explaining developmental progress that had been made since regarding independence. Hoists had been deployed to assist this resident mobilising.

Representatives were informed that residents generally stay with the GPs they had before coming to Thornton House. e.g. the Great Sutton Practice.

Medicines - These were securely kept - only senior staff have charge of keys.

Staffing - We were told that about 27 staff work at the home. Eight senior carers are available.

Representatives were told that during the daytime [as well as Julie] there are normally on duty, one Senior Carer, two Carers, a kitchen assistant and the cook who is a trained chef. On night time duty there are two staff.

Representatives spoke to the cook who works a six day week from 11.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m. on week days, 8.00 a.m. - 2.00 p.m. at the weekend; Representatives understand that a Carer covers the cooking etc. on the seventh day.

Food/Menus - The home appears to have a four week rolling menu rota - but good flexibility regarding choices - taking into account what residents want and need.

White crockery is used for the most part.

We asked about the Food Hygiene advertised score which currently showed as 4. It was explained that two or three technical items; in the not very large kitchen area had to be put right; one which Representatives understand is now corrected (lock/closing mechanism on the fridge door. Redecorating a section of the kitchen ceiling still had to be accomplished. The Food Hygiene score had previously slipped down to three but it was hoped that the score would get back to five shortly.

Additional staffing - A head cleaner and three additional cleaners are employed. We spoke to one or two of them - they seemed content, cheerful and very hard working and very mindful of their caring role

within the staff teams. Two Handymen/gardeners are also employed.

New Staff- Due to staff sickness, Representatives were told that a decision was taken to recruit three new care assistants - One now working 20 hrs and two who are working 16 hrs each. They each have their training schedules.

Training - Representatives were informed by Julie of the appropriate range of training courses and modules in place for each member of staff - who each have their individual development plans. They use Butterfields training courses system. In house training can be arranged when a minimum of five staff can attend.

Uniforms - It was noted that all staff here wear the same uniforms.

Activities and Community Links

Representatives were told that the activities co-ordinator normally works 25 hours per week but just now is on maternity leave and that other staff cover for this as far as possible. However, the range of activities suited to the residents as individuals and outings referred to seemed varied and encouraging. Local volunteers are involved from time to time.

Church services were held every week and outings planned.

Staff & Residents meetings- These are held separately, each two monthly or more frequently if required.

Feedback

We talked with several residents and staff, separately; there were notably no negative/adverse comments or complaints - completely the reverse. Everyone spoke warmly about the kind and caring attention given to residents and experienced by residents and staff who were much enjoying their work there.

Additional Comments

Representatives understand that Paul Gill, the owner, visits regularly and owns one other home. We were told that he does the administration work for the home.

Feedback from Provider of Service

At time of publication - no feedback received.