

Date of visit: 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2016

## **Enter and View Report: Alexander House**

**1/3 Palewell Park, East Sheen, London, SW14 8JQ**

A private residential care home located in a quiet residential area of East Sheen near Richmond Park. It comprises 2 adjoining Victorian houses, with a garden and accommodates up to 16 residents. The accommodation is arranged over 2 floors.

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## Introduction

Alexander House is an adult residential home owned by Mrs Sau Kan Mohidin and Mr Richard Mohidin, at 1/3 Palewell Park, East Sheen, London SW14 81JQ. Mrs Sau Kan Mohidin is the registered manager and responsible for the services provided. At the time of the visit the home was registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as 'Residential Accommodation'. The CQC describes the service being provided as caring for adults over 65 with specialisms in Dementia.

The home can be contacted on: (020) 8876 6927.

Healthwatch Richmond is a registered charity that acts as an independent voice for people in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. It helps to shape, challenge and improve local health and social care services. Healthwatch Richmond was set up by local government following the health and social care reforms of 2012. The Health & Social Care Act and its regulations granted Healthwatch powers to request information from health and social care providers and receive a response within 20 days, and to enter and view premises that provide health and or adult social care services.

The reports of our Enter & View visits can be found on [our website](#) or are available from the Healthwatch Richmond office, please contact us on: (020) 8099 5335.

## Rationale

In 2016 Healthwatch Richmond began a new programme of visits to residential homes. In selecting Alexander House we analysed a range of data available to us from the CQC, the Local Authority and community sources including if the home was due to have a CQC inspection or a Local Authority visit or whether these visits had occurred recently. This enabled Healthwatch Richmond to identify which homes to visit aside from those with which there are ongoing concerns.

The selection of Alexander House for visiting is described in the Rationale above. It was a home that Healthwatch Richmond had never undertaken an Enter & View Visit to before and it was not scheduled to have visits from the CQC or the London Borough of Richmond in the near future. Neither had it been visited by these organisations recently.

## The Visit

An announced visit was arranged with the care home manager Mrs Mohidin to commence on Friday 29 April 2016. The visit was conducted by a team of two volunteers and one member of Healthwatch Richmond staff between 11:00 and 13:30.

A description of the visit is given within the methodology (Page 4) and undertaken using Healthwatch Richmond's Residential Care Enter and View tool.

## Methodology

Enter and View representatives were authorised via Healthwatch Richmond's Appointment of Authorised Representatives for Enter & View Policy. This includes a written application,

satisfactory references, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, training in safeguarding adults and training in how to undertake Enter and View visits. The visit was planned in accordance with Healthwatch Richmond's Enter & View Policy and undertaken in the spirit of partnership and openness.

Healthwatch Richmond requested Mrs Mohidin to provide the following information:

- Total numbers of staff and residents
- Management Structure
- Registration Details
- Any guidelines that Alexander House had for visitors
- Complaints Policy & Procedures
- Any other information provided for residents and their families

Alexander House supplied Healthwatch Richmond with all the information requested.

Healthwatch Richmond visited the manager to discuss arrangements for the visit and agree a mutually suitable date. Posters and leaflets for the visit were supplied to the home to advertise the visit to residents, staff, families and friends.

All the background information available on Alexander House was drawn together by Healthwatch Richmond and made available to the team undertaking the visit. The team met prior to the visit to plan what areas of interest they would like to focus on during the visit. The aim was to gather the experiences of residents, their families and staff and to observe how Alexander House met the needs of its residents and, if appropriate, to make recommendations about anything that may be improved.

The areas for focus were:

- Residents' views on life at Alexander House
- The views of their families and friends
- Staff's views on working at Alexander House
- Support for residents in the home

## Limitations

The report relates only to the specific visit by Healthwatch Richmond on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2016 and the report is not representative of all the service users -only those who contributed within the restricted time available.

## Findings

### General

Alexander House is a care home for up to 16 older people situated in East Sheen near Richmond Park. It provides residential accommodation for older people in general and people

with dementia. There are currently 16 residents. There was a notice on the door advertising the Healthwatch Richmond visit.

We found a welcoming atmosphere at the home. Relatives arriving were welcomed by staff and the residents, relatives, staff and Manager were smiling and chatting. A visiting relative who came every day said: "Staff are always welcoming". A resident told us Alexander House had a "family, homely feeling" and another resident told us she enjoyed living there. In the sun lounge and in the hall a white board displayed all the activities taking place during the week and "Today's Menu", which is produced by one of the residents.

## Accommodation

The exterior of the house looked well cared for and access at the front of the property was level. There is a small entrance hall and the visitor's book was available for signing with information provided for visitors. Inside the house there was a small lounge on the ground floor that led to a sun lounge and there was a separate dining room. At the rear of the property is a large, pleasant, very well kept garden accessed from the sun lounge via a ramp.

Accommodation is provided on two floors, accessed by 2 staircases, one with a Stair Lift. The area around the staircases is small. It has 12 single and 2 shared rooms (11 en-suite). One of the Healthwatch Richmond team was invited by a relative to see her mother's room. This had been furnished with her own belongs and we were told was very much how her mother wanted it so that it "felt like home".

The Care Quality Commission in its last inspection in 2015 had noted that there was need for some refurbishment and we agreed with their findings. We were told by the Manager that a rolling programme is in place for redecorating and has already started. With the better weather they hope to do more. Dining chairs and some of the lounge chairs have also been replaced.

## Residents

The residents of Alexander House were mainly in their 80s and 90s and predominantly female. Some of the residents had dementia and some had physical disabilities. There were a number of residents who did not have dementia and were very active and mentally alert. All residents appeared to be encouraged to be as mobile as possible. All the residents looked very well cared for and appeared content.

## Staff

On the day of the visit the Manager, a senior care staff member and 4 carers were present plus kitchen, cleaning and maintenance staff. There appeared to be sufficient staff on duty and we observed that the staff engaged well with the residents. The Manager informed us that at night a Senior Carer and another care staff member are on duty and she is on call.

There were no staff vacancies and we were told that the staffing was stable. They do not use agency staff but provide their own cover. The Manager told us that many of the staff had been at Alexander House for quite a long time and this was confirmed to us by some of the staff.

A staff member said she "likes the staff and residents", that there was "good team working and relations" and that it was "friendly". Another said it was "Great here" and that they "keep the residents safe and relaxed and as able as possible". We were told staff ask

relatives and residents about likes and dislikes and how they wish to be addressed so it is more like home.

A copy of the Management Structure was provided for Healthwatch Richmond.

## Staff Training

Training is provided for staff on an ongoing basis and this was confirmed by the staff we spoke to. One of the carers told us that she had a National Vocational Qualification<sup>2</sup> (NVQ) and had had training in Dementia Awareness, Medication and Healthcare, Moving and Handling. She intended to progress on to NVQ<sup>3</sup>. Another carer said she has achieved NVQ Health and Social Care Levels 1 & 2 and a further carer said she was going to go on refresher courses. We were told some staff are specifically designated and trained in medicines management.

The Manager and two other staff members are starting an End of Life Care Programme, Namaste Care by Embracing Age. “Namaste Care” is a programme designed to improve the quality of life for people with advanced dementia.

## Residents, Relatives and Staff Interactions

The Manager described the ethos of the home as one of partnership with the residents, families and local care services. On the day of our visit a number of relatives had come specifically to meet with us and talk about Alexander House and a further three relatives, unable to come, had filled in Healthwatch Richmond “Have your say” forms and left them at Alexander House for us.

We observed that all the residents were treated with dignity and respect. Managers and care staff all displayed a caring attitude to the residents, they were positive, polite and friendly and the residents were respected. The atmosphere was very friendly and home like. We heard no negative comments from residents, relatives or staff.

We spoke to six residents individually, five residents as a group, four relatives and three members of staff including the Manager.

The relatives of one resident told us how pleased they were with their care. They had come to Alexander House for respite and returned to stay permanently as they were pleased with the care and they were “happy”. They told us: “we cannot fault the care”. They were able to visit often and when they pleased and said that the Manager always seems to be present. They were able to have some of their own furniture in their room and their own clothes “which they are very fond of”.

Another resident with mobility problems had been at Alexander House for 3 years. They needed a lot of help and support and their relatives told us that they were happy with the care. There was, they said “a feeling of safety and good management” and the “staff were always very welcoming”. They also said there was good contact with the GP when needed.

Residents and relatives were very positive in their comments about the staff and the home and these included: it was an “excellent home”; that the staff and Manager were “wonderful”; the Manager “chased up issues” and that “communication was two way, open and freely given”. Other residents told us the staff were “good”

Comments from the relatives who had left information for Healthwatch Richmond said:

- Alexander House provided excellent care
- They were extremely happy with the care given to their relative by all the staff
- The information they are given about their relative and their care is of a very high standard
- They were very pleased with the care and service provided.
- They were delighted with the care they receive at Alexander House as well as that from the GP and the hospitals (Queen Mary's and St George's)
- Their relative (a resident of 8 years) received very high quality care from the Manager and her staff
- Their relative had a high level of need now but Alexander House were still happy to look after them.

## Resident Involvement and Satisfaction

We were told there was a residents' meeting once every three months but if the residents wish to discuss anything earlier it can be arranged. The minutes of the meetings are taken by one of the residents and the relatives have access to the minutes which are kept in a folder on display. Besides the meetings, the residents together with a volunteer from Embracing Age help to produce a Newsletter and it is displayed on the notice board for all to read. We were told that families and friends enjoy reading them and give feedback.

## Activities

A wide range of activities are provided and residents are encouraged and supported to go out and also maintain previous links with the community. There are strong links to local services and community groups. A white board in the lounge displays the activities for the week including bingo, exercise sessions, visits from the local church, singing sessions on Sunday afternoon and the board also has the day's Menu on display. One resident makes greetings cards which are also on display and produces a newsletter.

The Manager informed us about the range of activities and outings that take place during the week with additional outings further afield in better weather, particularly to Richmond Park and Kew Gardens. A number of residents also spoke about these trips and how much they enjoyed them. The local church is involved and has a regular service at the home for all to join in. We were told residents were encouraged to go out and carry on with previous activities and they are supported to do so. The residents make the most of the local amenities, cafes and shops etc. nearby. They engage with a wide range of local groups and churches for their activities and outings.

One resident writes up the menus on their laptop and produces the home's Newsletter. They told us they like to play Scrabble with a friend and to do jigsaw puzzles, some of these puzzles were on display. Another resident plays the piano and was playing during our visit and the other residents were singing. There was then a good discussion going on about music between a group of residents.

## Mealtimes

There is a small dining room and tables with tablecloths were laid for 3 & 4 people. The menu on the day was soup followed by fish pie and there is usually a salad alternative. The food looked good and the residents said it was very tasty and warm enough.

We observed that the carers helped the residents to eat where necessary and made sure everyone was eating and drinking. One lady was supported by 2 carers to get up from her chair in the lounge and walk with a Zimmer frame to the dining room. Help was observed being offered where necessary throughout the meal, e.g. when cutlery was dropped.

## Continuity of Care

### Local services

The Manager told us they were well served by their local GP Practice at Sheen Lane Heath Centre, who visit weekly and by the community nursing team, the local pharmacy and chiropodists. The Princess Alice Hospice also supports when necessary. The local pharmacist packages all the medicines for them.

A relative informed us that the care was “excellent” and gave the example of her relative being cared for by the staff and the District Nurses when ill recently, rather than be admitted to hospital.

The Community Psychiatric Nurses visit up to 6 weeks after discharge where necessary and then residents are followed up by the Consultant Psychiatrist 6 monthly or yearly as needed. They were happy with the service.

### Hospital Visits, Admissions & Discharges

When residents need to attend hospital appointments, the home staff arrange transport. Family members also take some residents for appointments when possible. If a resident was to be admitted to hospital they supplied a letter with all their details and would visit them if the stay was extended. Discharge arrangements from hospitals were varied and could sometimes be difficult.

## Conclusions

### Good Practice

We observed that Alexander House is well run home with a caring manager and staff. We observed good practice throughout our visit to Alexander House and there was a warm, caring atmosphere between residents and staff and with their families. There are plenty of activities taking place to keep residents engaged. There are also regular visitors to the home.