

Dignity in Care Enter & View visit to Stone House

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| Care Home Provider: | Peverel Court Care |
| Care Home Address: | 44 Bishopstone Rd, Stone, HP17 8QX |
| Date and Time of Visit: | 05.07.16 - 10.30am |
| Authorised Representatives: | Joy Johns, Jean Button |

Summary of findings



- Well maintained, calm and caring home with dedicated staff
- Variety of activities with flexibility for personal choice

The Visit

Stone House provides nursing care for up to 34 people (currently 32), many of them living with dementia and others with who are physically frail. We talked to 3 members of staff, 1 visiting hairdresser, 2 residents (one briefly and one at length) and observed 16 other residents, 1 visitor and at least 7 staff and 2 nurses.

How people are treated



We were found the atmosphere of Stone House both calm and caring. We saw residents being addressed by first name with eye contact. They were caringly spoken to, gently touched if needed, encouraged and supported. We were told by a resident that ‘staff are kind people’.

We observed an activities session conducted by the full time activities coordinator in which each of the 7 residents were asked if they wished to participate and then encouraged to take part according their physical and mental ability. It was well run and creative, involving a beach ball and ‘parachute covering’ where participants were using hands and/or feet and legs. There are at least two different activities sessions scheduled each day per written timetables. We were told an additional activities coordinator is being recruited.

In another area of the home, some residents were courteously approached to ask if they would like to speak to us and their decision respected. The staff observed appeared to know each resident and their preferences for drinks. We saw staff speak with respect and friendliness to each other.

Personal Choice



In addition to those in the activities session, many residents were in their rooms. We were told that for some this was preference, for others because they were ‘bed-bound’ or had a chest infection. Four were in a quiet lounge overlooking a lovely garden, away from the activities; two were having their hair done. We saw two people reading. One said reading a book was their preferred activity.

A staff member told us that people are able to get up and go to bed according to their preference ‘Early birders can have their breakfast early in their room’. We could see that there were snacks available in the lounge and each resident had water and a soft drink in small jugs on a table next to

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them. One resident had a glass of wine in his room and said that the home was ‘liberal with little extras’. We were told some residents have to have pureed meals or have allergies taken into account by the chef, and that meal preferences are confirmed by families for those unable to communicate easily. We are not sure how residents select meals on a daily basis. We saw a weekly, written menu with two choices for each meal displayed on notice boards which were very full of other information and not easy to pick out. We did hear someone comment that some meals are ‘like school dinners’.

Just like Being at Home



This home is a pleasant place, well decorated with ornaments and artwork in communal areas. The temperature was comfortable and well ventilated. Individual rooms are fully furnished or supplemented with residents’ own furniture and personal belongings. Some have names or pictures on doors, but some do not according to individual preference. Visitors are welcomed and we saw one who seemed known to the staff. We were told that, with prior notice, visitors can come and have meals with their relative. One resident has friends who come for a regular bridge game. A manager told us visitors are able to bring dogs to visit and that there is a live-in cat named Susy. Chickens are kept at the bottom of the garden and there are a number of bird feeders by the windows (which were waiting to be filled on the day we were there). A staff member said that it is ‘like home not an institution and that staff are excellent and passionate about their jobs’. If weather permits, residents can be taken into the garden although we did not see this. Some staff made comments that indicated they know the past background and preferences of residents.

Privacy



The doors of rooms were open. We were told that this is to ensure staff are able to observe safely as many residents are unable to activate the call buttons. There is a sheet to track and monitor visits to each room. At night residents who leave bed activate a ‘mat alarm’ to alert staff. We saw staff enter rooms and knock as they did so. In one case we did observe a care staff member go into a room with an open door when it appeared that some personal care was about to be given, but we did not see anything inappropriate as we walked past.

Quality of Life



The home is situated in beautiful grounds, is light and airy, spotlessly clean, with a well ordered and relaxed environment. We saw staff smilingly helping residents to move from one area to another using a variety of methods including assisting with walking and the use of a comfortable armchair on wheels. Many residents were being assisted to eat at lunchtime in a lounge. Others were eating together in the formal dining room. One resident was crying out as they were wheeled towards the lounge for lunch and the care assistant returned them to their room with minimal fuss. A hairdresser and chiropodist come regularly, as does an optician. A GP from a local surgery attends once a week or more if needed. There are monthly church services in the home. We were told that there are regular visits and concerts from Stone Girls School. During Bucks Open Studios in June,

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residents were invited and some taken to the Open Studio in Stone. We saw a notice on the board for a Resident's meeting in August. A summer party for residents, visitors and community supporters is planned.

Recommendations

We recommend that Stone House:

- As some of the residents are frail physically but mentally alert we suggest that more use could be made of befrienders from local schools, churches, or voluntary organisations to provide more intellectual stimulation.
- We noted many notice boards giving information consisted of small written notices where it was not easy to pick out relevant information. We suggest more use of visual aids be made, including picture menus, to check preferences for meal choices to assist people who cannot talk or read easily.

Service Provider Response

Many thanks for your email on 12th July and your recent visit. The overall rating of 'Four Stars' is certainly encouraging and we thank you for your constructive and kind feedback, it was a pleasure having you here at Stone House. Whilst we of course respect your findings for the time you were here, we must challenge some of the findings on the presumption that the rating should be a balanced reflection of your findings both over the few hours of your visit and in correspondence with users, relatives and staff of the Home, over a sustained period. Having reviewed the common characteristics of published 'five star' ratings we feel the staff and management team genuinely deserve to receive five stars overall. I have collated specific evidence and outcomes regarding personal choice, dignity, technology, resident feedback, staff motivation and ongoing development. These particular items appear prevalent in published five star reports and we are at a minimum on par around these subject areas.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank the residents, visitors and staff at Stone House 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.