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# The Highcroft

September 2016

Healthwatch Blackpool

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*Resident's Voice - a Healthwatch Blackpool Review*

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Details of visit

Details of visit:	
Service Address	599 Lytham Road, FY4 1RG
Service Provider	Highcroft Care home LTD
Date and Time	05/09/16 at 10:30am
Healthwatch Representatives	Steven Robinson, Adam Evanson
Contact details	enquiries@healthwatchblackpool.co.uk

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank the service provider, service users, and staff for their contribution and for facilitating us to carry out our consultation.

## 1.3 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

The views expressed in this report are primarily from those who reside in the home. It is acknowledged that some of the participants in our studies may suffer from conditions such as dementia or other memory impairments which do not enable them to give fully balanced and reflective views. However we feel that it is essential that every voice is heard and recognise our duty to all who receive care in Blackpool. In order to allow for this to happen we request feedback from the care home for clarification of the issues that are raised.

## 2 What is a Healthwatch Review?

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Healthwatch Blackpool is the independent consumer champion for health and social care. Its purpose is to listen to the experiences of people using services and feed them back to those who run them to make positive change.

Part of the local Healthwatch Blackpool program is to carry out reviews of health and social care services to find out how services are being run from the service user perspective and make recommendations for improvement where possible.

Local Healthwatch are granted the ability to *Enter and View* premises to observe service delivery and talk to service users. Visits can take place if there are reported issues with a service, but equally, they can occur when services receive praise so that examples of good practice can be shared.

### 2.1 Purpose of Visit

To gather information about the experience of living in a care home in Blackpool directly from those who reside in them, including quality of life factors such as privacy and dignity, quality of care, and choice of activities and food.

### 2.2 Why did we do this?

In June 2016 Healthwatch Blackpool produced a [report](#) which asked Blackpool residents which health and social care services were of concern to them. Care Homes were reported as the 5<sup>th</sup> most concerning service in Blackpool.

As a result of this Healthwatch Blackpool set out a statutory annual work plan which included reviews of all Blackpool care or nursing homes deemed to be “requiring improvement” in any of the five inspection areas in their latest Care Quality Commission (CQC) reports.

To emphasise the need for quality care, the Blackpool [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) (JSNA) notes that *“Dementia is the single most frequent cause of admission to care homes, and of the need for community care services for older people. The demographics of an ageing population indicate the number of people with dementia in Blackpool is predicted to rise to around 3,841 by 2020”*.

### 2.3 What were our aims?

Our aim was to allow the residents to have a say in the care that they were receiving. To do this, we required the cooperation of residents, family/carers, and the management and staff of the home. By collating this information, we could evaluate the quality of care within each care home we visited.

## 2.4 Methodology

We did not wish to perform an enforced *Enter and View* visit to this home. We felt that to be invited to attend the home would give us a more balanced view and encourage openness and co-operation with the care home management. To do this we wrote to the care home we intended to visit with a comprehensive outline of our intentions and purposes of a review. We also supplied the home with a poster confirming the date and time of our visit and its aims. We asked that the home place the poster in a prominent position for residents, families/carers and staff.

All Healthwatch representatives wore identification badges during the review. Before speaking to any residents, it was explained who we were and the purpose of our visit. Those residents that were happy to speak to us were asked a series of open-ended questions about what they liked most and what they felt could be improved. We confirmed that the information they gave us would be anonymous and that they were free to end the conversation at any point. Healthwatch representatives also made informal observations throughout the visit and made notes of what was seen around the home.

Healthwatch reviews are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Blackpool's safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything they have a query about, they will inform the lead reviewer who will either discuss with the service manager or make a judgement on whether this requires reporting to the Blackpool adult social care team.

Also, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to find out more about whistleblowing guidance.

The Highcroft's most recent CQC report ([March 2016](#)) gives an overall rating of "Good", although the home is deemed to be requiring improvement in its safety.

Healthwatch Blackpool aimed to assist the home in recognising any potential improvements in all areas of its service delivery from the perspective of residents.



Safe	Requires improvement ●
Effective	Good ●
Caring	Good ●
Responsive	Good ●
Well-led	Good ●

Overall Good

Read overall summary

## 2.5 Summary of provider

The Highcroft Care Home is situated in south shore Blackpool. It is a residential care home which provides accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care, caring for adults over 65 years of age. It has a maximum capacity of 31 residents, and on the day of visiting it was home to 26 people. The Highcroft has an activities co-ordinator who arranges bingo, arts and crafts, baking and other activities within the home. There is also a hair dresser who visits regularly.

On arrival Healthwatch Blackpool representatives were shown around the home by Melanie Murphy, the provider. Some rooms were set out like living rooms to help make those with dementia and memory issues feel more relaxed. Others appeared to require more personalisation, although it is unclear how well preferences can be sought from individual residents.

Melanie Murphy also facilitated introducing Healthwatch Blackpool representatives to some residents and family members. Melanie explained that she felt The Highcroft Care Home offered person centred care and positive interaction with the residents as much as possible. Resident meetings are held every two months where feedback and suggestions can be given. According to the registered manager around 70% of residents in The Highcroft have some form of advanced dementia or memory impairment issue. On the day of visiting there had been a recent death which had an impact on some of the residents choosing to speak with representatives.

On this visit Healthwatch Blackpool spoke with 5 residents and 2 family members.

## 2.6 Results of visit

### General

Overall residents and their families were very happy with the care at The Highcroft. Residents felt the staff were polite and kind, and many praised the quietness and the pleasant decoration of the home. They also felt that their care was “*genuine*” and the staff were always “*watching out*” for them. One resident raised an issue regarding the temperature in their room which they felt had not been addressed, and some residents felt that complaints and concerns were not easy to address.

At the visit Healthwatch Blackpool representatives were introduced to residents who had been brought to the dining area around 30-45 mins before lunch was to be served. However many did not know why Healthwatch Blackpool were attending the home or what they had been brought to the dining room for.

4 of the 5 residents told us that they felt safe at the Highcroft.

### Food and drink

The majority of residents reported that the food was very good and they have plenty to eat and drink. Residents praised highly the food and they enjoyed all the meals they receive, with specific reference to their cooked breakfasts. However one resident also noted that sometimes meals were switched to an alternative with very short notice, and that the cutlery is sometimes not clean.

### Activities

While most comments were positive, memory impairments may not have enabled residents to accurately recall all activities in the home, but feelings were positive towards them. Residents reported that they mainly watch TV or read the paper. Some recalled that the hairdresser visits. When asked if there was anything more residents would like to do, one residents said they would like to play the piano and another said that there is no music and would like a radio.

### Staff

All the residents told us that all of the staff were caring and friendly. The visitors and residents spoken with told us they were extremely happy with the way they have been treated by the staff at Highcroft. One resident called them “*genuine*” and another said the staff were very “*kind and understanding*”.

### Concerns & Complaints

There were mixed views. Many residents felt unable to approach staff or feel they would not be listened to. One resident felt passionately that staff would listen to them and act on any issues or complaints they raised and were confident that it would be resolved, saying the home was “*the best out of all of them*”. However three residents reported they were not confident anything would be done, saying “*I keep going to some of them*”, “*They're not easy to speak to*”, and “*I wouldn't do anything [if I had an issue]*”.

*“They would listen.  
Communication is good.”*

*“They're not easy to  
speak to.”*

## 2.7 Service Provider response

Please see response from provider below.

## Action Statement

<b>No:</b>	<b>Points for consideration:</b>	<b>Response or action from provider:</b>	<b>Improvements to be achieved by:</b>
1	2.6 Complaints not easy to address	The activities coordinator holds monthly resident meetings where any complaints or concerns or suggestions can be addressed. Also the Provider and Manager speak to residents one to one several times a week and any issues raised are usually rectified immediately.	
2	2.6 Room temperature	Room temperatures are regularly monitored to ensure the temperature is at a level satisfactory to each resident.	
3	2.6 Residents did not know who health watch were or why they had been brought to the dining area 30-45 mins before lunch is served	<p>The Provider introduced the residents to the health watch representatives and they then explained who they were and why they were here. We had put a notice up to say they were coming however many of our residents do suffer from short term memory loss.</p> <p>Some of our residents need assistance with feeding and our assisted into the dining room to have their lunch before the other residents</p> <p>All Residents that need assistance are assisted to use the toilet and wash their hands before lunch and are then assisted to the dining room.</p>	
4	Food and Drink meals being switched to alternative with very short notice.	We have 4 weekly menus plus an alternative is offered if a resident does not like or fancy what is on the menu, an alternative is offered daily as our residents often change their minds about what they would like to eat.	

5	Food and drink cutlery not clean	We have an industrial dishwasher and all cutlery and pots are put through the machine however we have since got a staff member to check that tables are set properly and that everything is clean	
6	Activities Radio and music	We have a radio in the dining area that is on almost all day unless residents say otherwise. We also have a piano which residents are free to play whenever they wish.	
7	Concerns and complaints	As above no 2 and to add the activities coordinator spends a lot of one to one time chatting and resolving any issues.	

**Additional questions:**

- 1. Is the report factually accurate? If not, please state what needs to be changed and why.**
- 2. Have you learnt anything new about the experiences of your residents, staff and visitors as a result of the feedback from the report**
- 3. Additional feedback/comments**