



Details of Visit

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| Service Name and Address | Barleyfield house 110 Crowmere Road Monkmoor Shrewsbury SY2 5JJ |
| Service Provider | Coverage Care |
| Date and Time | 28 th October 2016, 10.30am-12.30pm |
| Visit Team (Enter & View Authorised Representatives from Healthwatch Shropshire) | Two Authorised Representatives |

Purpose of the Visit

To look at Dignity, Choice and Respect: The quality of life experienced by residents at Barleyfield House Respite Home.

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 experience of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Context of Visit

Following the Winterbourne Review, Shropshire's Health & Wellbeing Board asked Healthwatch Shropshire to carry out Enter & View visits to some learning disability facilities. We visited 12 residential facilities and produced an overarching report that can be seen on our website:

<http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/enter-view-reports-0>

Visits to learning disability facilities will continue to be part of our visit programme moving forward. This visit was at the request of Shropshire Council in order to understand more about the experiences of residents, their families and staff.

Enter & View visits are done by a team of specially trained volunteers called Authorised Representatives. These volunteers are not experts in learning disability and report only on what they see and hear during the visit.

Enter and View visits can be announced, semi-announced or unannounced. This was a semi-announced visit and the manager at the home was told that the visit would take place during October, but not the exact date or time.

What we were looking at

We looked at some key things that affect an individual's quality of life including whether residents experience choice, dignity and respect in this care setting.

Do individuals experience choice?

- Choices in social and leisure activities
- Choices in shaping their daily routine, including what they eat and drink
- Choices over personal space

Do individuals experience dignity and respect?

- Personal privacy
- An individual's needs are recognised and met

- Family and friends are involved in an individual's care
- Access to an advocate
- Facility to complain both informally and formally
- Access to healthcare services.

What we did

On arrival at Barleyfield House we were met by a member of staff who made us feel very welcome. We were politely asked to sign in the visitors' book and fire procedures were explained. We were shown a Welcome Pack which consisted of a large folder containing useful information for 'guests' (people staying for respite) and their families before they arrive and at the start of a stay at Barleyfield House. For example it listed what to bring with you and information about how the home operated, such as visiting times, general routine, activities and what to do if you want to make a complaint.

The Manager, the Operations Manager and two other members of staff were present on the day of our visit. They explained that there were no guests currently staying in the home, as they had all gone home earlier that morning. The next group of guests were due to arrive in the afternoon. Our visit occurred during changeover time when all the cleaning, washing, vacuuming and bed making were being done by all staff present to make the home ready and welcoming for the new group. We spent time talking to all four staff and also spoke to a parent who visited prior to his son's stay at the home. We were also given two Healthwatch 'Tell Us' comments cards that had been returned by parents of guests who had stayed at Barleyfield House.

Following this, we had a tour of the home.

What we found out

The home

Barleyfield House is a purpose-built respite home for adults with learning disabilities, situated in a residential area of Monkmoor, Shrewsbury. It offers respite care for five guests with a catchment area of the whole of Shropshire including Telford & Wrekin. Guests are picked up, usually from their local Day Care centres, from as far afield as Ludlow or Oswestry and returned to their Day Care Centres at the end of the visit. This saves relatives having to travel to Barleyfield House, which is particularly useful for elderly relatives.

The home is all on one level and is wheelchair accessible. The main hallway, reached from the entrance lobby, has the kitchen at one end and the corridor with bedrooms at the other end. The main communal space consists of three interconnecting rooms, off the main hallway, a sitting room leading to a dining room which leads onto another smaller sitting room which can be closed off for activities and which has open access to the garden. The spacious dining room with table and chairs is partly separated from the large, well equipped kitchen by a worktop. The sitting rooms and dining room all have large windows facing the garden. The laundry room is also off the main corridor.

Off the second corridor there are five spacious bedrooms for guests, all with a wash hand basin. There is also a separate bathroom, a shower room and a toilet for visitors.

General background

The Manager told us that currently there are about 50 guests, ages ranging from 18 years to 70+, visiting on a regular basis. The length of a stay varies from one night to up to three weeks, with an option of emergency respite if necessary. The total annual allocation varies from person to person from 14 nights up to 112 nights dependent on family circumstances. Changeovers of guests can occur up to three times per week.

Apart from some privately run enterprises that tend to come and go, the Manager told us that there is no other similar facility available in Shropshire. Barleyfield House has been in existence for 19 years and has long-established relationships with guests. Staff turnover is very low and results mostly from retirement. Staff

loyalty is so high that it is not uncommon for staff to work well past retirement age. Staff are very flexible and will adapt their hours to suit the needs of residents, particularly if they want to go on a day trip somewhere. There is a good skill mix amongst the staff so the needs of the guests can be met; for example, the younger members of staff can go out on bike rides with guests.

The Manager said that there are 13 members of staff altogether, with everybody having hands-on involvement in care, including personal care. Day shifts are eight hours and night shifts are ten hours. There is always a senior member of staff on site, assisted by one carer in the morning and three carers in the afternoon/evening when most activities take place. At night there is one waking staff member and one sleeping to assist if called for. There are no cooks or cleaners. Staff do all the tasks with help from guests, just as in a family.

We were told by the Manager that there is an 'open door' policy in place so anyone can speak about any concerns at any time. There are monthly meetings with senior staff and meetings every other month for all staff, one of whom said that they have the opportunity to raise concerns.

The Manager told us that Social Services can be called upon to help with guests when appropriate and there are close connections with the church situated next door. The carers are trained in Bereavement counselling.

The Manager told us that in the past there has been a waiting list but not currently; since the introduction of the Shared Lives scheme many more able guests have gone to live with a carer and so no longer need respite care. This has meant a shift of emphasis at Barleyfield House to caring for less able, more dependent guests. All staff are trained in various methods of communication including Makaton, using gestures, key words and pictures.

We were told by the Manager that, due to this change in the needs of some guests, all staff have undertaken Physiological Competencies training so they can do basic observations, such as blood pressure, temperature, urine tests and blood sugar monitoring. In addition they have completed more extensive First Aid including haemostatic training which allows them to improve their ability to identify issues needing a doctor's attention, for example a shunt bleed.

The Manager explained that care is taken to delay a visit if a guest has an active infection though sometimes this sort of information is gleaned from Day Care Centres rather than from relatives.

The Home environment

The overall atmosphere was of a clean, pleasant, homely environment, although the hall and corridor to bedrooms was a little dark with dim lighting. The home was warm, well furnished and decorated with pictures and photographs. There was a pleasant view through the lounge to a large back garden with hens, bird boxes and feeders.

We were shown a board in the hallway with pictures of all the staff and another board showing who would be on duty for each shift. There was also a collage of pictures of the day the Exotic Zoo visited.

The environment is kept as similar to a family home as possible with notice boards limited to the communal lounge.

Choice

Choice in social/leisure activities

The Manager explained that when a guest first arrives they plan and write their own preferred activities schedule and this is accommodated as far as possible by staff.

We saw books, jig saws, a karaoke machine, sensory equipment, an overhead projector and TV in one room which also has access to the garden. Staff told us that no current guest likes helping in the garden as they see it as work, which they choose not to do. It is difficult to encourage gardening due to the sporadic nature of visits so the plants that are planted might not be seen growing. Some guests bring old videos to watch, so a video player is available.

The Manager told us that Shropshire Council provides a limited budget to spend on activity outings and events. Guests bring their own money to spend during their visit but this can vary greatly depending on family circumstances. Group entertainment is therefore very cost conscious. Annual membership is used if possible, for example for National Trust visits and visits to Ironbridge, with Blists Hill and Enginuity being popular. Likewise visits to Cosford are good as entrance is free, and there has been a visit to the ice cream factory at Chester. Picnics and barbeques are also organised. Guests are encouraged to broaden their horizons, and some recent activities were a James Bond evening, a Dr Who visit to Cardiff

and Walking with Hawks. Entertainment is also arranged in Barleyfield House, with a visit from Exotic Zoo recently, a mini Olympics and a Family Day with face painting.

Guests are encouraged to make use of social media, Skype and phone calls to family and friends. The Manager told us that a Facebook page is accessible by invitation only to keep guests in touch with other guests between visits. Guests are encouraged to maintain any of their social media activities with discrete monitoring by staff and some bring iPads and their own music. There is a laptop available to teach guests if they want some tuition. On-going social interaction is also encouraged, with regular organised social events with an open invitation to all guests and families. For example, there is an upcoming Christmas Party with a room and entertainment booked.

Choice in daily routine

The Manager told us that guests are encouraged to maintain their normal everyday routines, with attendance at their local Day Centres if they want this continuity. They can get up and go to bed when they want, watch TV in their rooms or in either of the communal sitting rooms, and have a shower or bath when they want. Some guests need absolute adherence to a routine, down to the exact minute, and this is accommodated by the staff. The Manager showed us an individual care plan for a guest which was very detailed. It covered all aspects of their care needs, including medication and medical requirements, as well as personal preferences.

One guest visiting regularly at the moment has a regular job volunteering with the League of Friends at the hospital. The guest catches the bus to get to work during their visit.

The Manager and another member of staff said that some guests get used to not doing very much or not going out when they are at home. When they are at Barleyfield House all guests are encouraged to broaden their experience and be more independent.

Guests can also assist with laundry tasks if able, and staff will expect a minimum of self-care such as picking up clothes and putting them away and making their own beds.

Guests tend to refer to attending Day Centres as 'going to work', which most of them do during the week. The majority have a clear preference for spending weekends doing leisure activities, not 'work'. Tasks are therefore kept to a minimum at weekends and that is when trips are organised.

Choice of food

We saw a record showing guests' likes and dislikes regarding food, with many guests having 'fads' which must be accommodated. They are encouraged to help with cooking, laying tables and washing up if able, often cooking from scratch or baking cakes so they learn about food. Basic hygiene like washing hands is also addressed. Menus with pictures are planned the night before and it might mean five different meals are cooked at one sitting. For example one guest is specific about the colour of food they eat. There are no fixed menus. Guests are encouraged to experiment with different foods to widen their choices and will often eat food they would previously have rejected when they see others eating it. Staff have their meals with the guests.

Choice of room

All five rooms are similar in terms of facilities, each having a bed, chair, fitted wardrobe and wash hand basin, but are different in size, colour scheme and basic layout. Some rooms have a wall mounted TV, and elsewhere a TV can be provided if needed. Guests might have a favourite room and this is accommodated. One room has a bed that lowers to floor level for those who might fall out of bed. Another has an overhead hoist and adjustable bed and is designed to accommodate a wheelchair, with the wardrobe rails being easily accessible. For example one guest is paralysed from the chest downwards so needs a suitably accessible room.

There is the choice of a bathroom or a shower room. Both are fully accessible for wheelchairs though efforts have been made to make them look less clinical. There is another separate toilet.

Dignity and Respect

Personal privacy

All doors can be locked or left standing open depending on a guest's preference, though staff keep in contact and can gain access at any time. All guests are spoken to through the door to check that it is alright to come in before a closed door is opened.

Guests are encouraged to spend time in the communal rooms but can spend their time alone in their rooms if they prefer. All guests eat in the dining room.

An individual's needs are recognised and met

One member of the staff who has worked at Barleyfield House for 16 years told us that "All Day Centres know me". "There's a link - it helps to have a contact point". This forms part of the information network used when building up a complete picture of a guest's needs and is also reassuring for the guests. The staff member told us that this knowledge also serves to provide useful venues for toilet breaks when transporting guests to and from Barleyfield House which, due to the county-wide catchment area, might involve quite long trips.

Managing group dynamics

Barleyfield House is a non-restraint home. Staff are trained in de-escalating situations using distraction and keeping everything as relaxed as possible. Guests are given distance if they need it and relationships between guests are managed appropriately. For example, if two guests simply do not get on they are not invited again to stay at the same time. All guests have a behaviour plan in place which staff familiarise themselves with and which is regularly updated before each visit.

Family and friends are involved in an individual's care

However frequent the visits by guests, the Manager said that contact is maintained with families between visits. The staff are often kept in the loop about any changes to care or other needs as and when they happen, with relatives phoning up with information. Before every visit relatives are contacted by phone and

asked to complete a form giving details of any changes in any aspect of care including any behavioural changes, new allergies or changes to medication. When a guest visits for the first time the family are involved in drawing up a care plan. This can be done interactively, with forms being e-mailed to be completed by the family member and then incorporated into the file. All forms follow 'easy read' guidelines and are very user friendly, with clear boxes to complete and pictures so that text is broken up and spaced and is kept as brief as possible.

There is a six-monthly newsletter and feedback is given to families after every visit.

Access to an advocate

The Manager told us that all guests have access to an advocate if they request one.

Facility to complain both informally and formally

There is a complaints procedure in place which is made available to guests and families and is included in the Welcome pack. This is also in picture/photograph format for ease of use by guests and clearly explains which member of staff to go to for help.

The Manager told us that they had not had a complaint for several years. This was put down to the 'open door' policy which allowed speedy resolution of any minor problems before they became difficult to sort out.

They had sent out a Satisfaction Survey to all guests and families and had had a very favourable response in the majority of questions. Any responses which needed addressing were dealt with promptly. Most of these were minor issues which were easily solved.

Access to healthcare services

There are no nurses on the staff but a District Nurse is organised for any situations outside the scope of the carers and for regular input for diabetic guests who have a 'Diabetic Passport'. When necessary, contact can be made with a guest's own GP, particularly in the event of concerns about medications. Prescriptions are

delivered to a local supermarket pharmacy for convenience. Occasionally guests may visit the walk-in centre at Shrewsbury Hospital. Barleyfield House has been included in a pilot scheme which will shortly be launched when face to face consultation with Shrop Doc can be by iPad.

Direct quotes from a parent we spoke to:

“Couldn’t get any better than this”

“Gives you a bit of a break”

“Unsurpassed”, like a “5 star hotel”

“Any issues and they’re on the phone straight away”

“My child asks to come in - says you go on holiday and I’ll go to Barleyfield”

Comments from two parents who sent HWS 'Tell Us' cards to Barleyfield House to be given to us during our visit:

“My 23 year old son visits Barleyfield regularly. They have been supporting us for a few years now and I don't honestly know what I would do without them. I know my son really enjoys his visits and I would know if he was (never yet) unhappy about going. The staff are always very accommodating and very friendly. They genuinely care about their Service Users. They try to take them out visiting places throughout their stay. They communicate with me issues immediately and always try to accommodate any requests from us. As a mother (over-protective at that) I can't thank them enough, my son and I both look forward to his visits”.

“My son goes to Barleyfield House for respite, he is so happy when I tell him he is going. Everything about Barleyfield is great. But to be great, you have to have great staff. They look after my son with love and respect. They make sure he remains safe at all times 24-7 - whilst encouraging him to do as much as possible within his limited capabilities”.

A staff member told us that “families are brilliant. We have a rapport with them”.

Additional Findings

Barleyfield House was not easy to find. It had no sign from the main road. The Manager explained later that this was because they wanted to fit in to the local community and not to be seen as 'different' to avoid stigmatisation.

Summary of Findings

- Barleyfield House has a warm, homely atmosphere. It is well equipped and the staff and family members we heard from feel it meets the needs of short-term guests of all levels of need within the constraints of a respite home.
- The home is well staffed with caring, professionally trained people who are dedicated and long-serving. The staff turnover is very low.
- Guests and families have high regard for the staff and guests look forward to staying.
- Guests are encouraged as far as possible to maintain their normal daily routine by going to Day Centres and they can make choices about personal routine, activities and food preferences during their stay at the home. Independence is encouraged as far as possible.
- Families are well supported with information and verbal communication from staff before, during and after the visit and feedback is given high importance.
- Dignity and respect for guests are maintained whilst considering safety and security.
- We observed that the hall and corridor to bedrooms was a little dark with dim lighting at the time of our visit.

Recommendation

- To improve the hallway and corridor lighting

Service Provider Response

Healthwatch Shropshire received the following response to this report and recommendation from the Registered Manager of Barleyfield House:

Thank you so much for the lovely report. I will put a copy in the foyer for staff and families to read.

Recommendation: To improve the hallway and corridor lighting

The hall lights in the corridor are on a dimmer switch and it is usually well-lit when the residents are in the home. The guest who had just left to go home in a taxi has epilepsy and as the taxi was running late they were watching for it with staff, the staff member tells me they had it down to keep a low arousal atmosphere for us.

I guess because the visit team then arrived we forgot to raise the lights again. I will monitor this in future.

Thank you again

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Shropshire would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to this Enter & View.

Who are Healthwatch Shropshire?

Healthwatch Shropshire is the voice for people in Shropshire about the health and social care services delivered in their area. We are an independent body providing a way for people to share their experiences to help people get the best out of their health and social care services. As one of a network of Local Healthwatch across England we are supported by the national body Healthwatch England, and our data is fed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

What is Enter & View?

Healthwatch Shropshire gather information on peoples experiences of health and social care services and there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Shropshire to see and hear for ourselves how services are being delivered: these visits are called 'Enter & View', they are not inspections.

Teams of specially trained volunteers carry out visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to services users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

Get in Touch!

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