


Enter and View Visit to
The Branches Residential Care Home - Jarrow
26th January 2017



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Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion for health and social care patients and service users in England.

Healthwatch South Tyneside has statutory powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to carry out visits to gather the views and experiences of service users, patients, families, carers and staff for the purpose of service improvement.

Service:	The Branches Care Home
Named Manager:	Eileen Cromar
Date of Visit:	26th January 2017
Announced/Unannounced:	Announced
Visit Team:	Yusef Abdullah and Linda Gibson
Most Recent CQC Inspection:	10th December 2015

Purpose of Visit

Residents living in care and nursing homes may find they are not only coming to terms with leaving their own home but also find they are unable to do the things they used to do. They may find themselves very quickly becoming inactive and bored which can impact on their health and mental wellbeing.

Healthwatch South Tyneside considered that conducting Enter and View visits across all the care and nursing homes in South Tyneside would present valuable evidence of what is being delivered around 'Meaningful Activities' and what is in place for residents to keep them mentally and physically stimulated to enhance their quality of life.

Healthwatch South Tyneside Authorised Representatives Team, through Enter & View visits to all care and nursing homes in South Tyneside will:

- Collate evidence of a varied approach to meaningful activity; and how services address increasing levels of social isolation for older people in South Tyneside,
- Look at opportunities for social inclusion within care and nursing homes, whilst gaining an understanding of how meaningful activity is supported within South Tyneside care homes and peoples experience of this; and
- Produce questions that are standardised with a shared understanding of this piece of work so that each care home has the same experience and opportunity.



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 and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Overall Summary

During our visit the residents we spoke to appeared happy living at The Branches Care Home and spoke highly of the care and support from staff. The relative we spoke to mirrored some of the comments residents had made about the quality of care and activities and how happy she was with what was being delivered for her mother in-law.

With no Activities Co-ordinator, the staff take on the responsibility of delivering activities to residents. During our visit we noted some of the information relating to the activities available looked dated and required updating as did the photos on residents bedroom doors. There is no memory room at The Branches and the walls appeared to lack photos, pictures or memorabilia that could stimulate residents with Dementia or memory loss.

The activities available appeared to be limited to bingo and board games, staff told us they could only remember one trip to the coast in South Shields during 2016.

Process

Enter and View officers gathered information and intelligence using a variety of means:

- Observations of the general condition and environment within the home and interactions between staff and service users, including staff carrying out daily tasks.
- Discussions with management and staff and an awareness of any sensitive areas in relation to specific service users.
- Discussions with service users and families using open questioning techniques and non-leading prompts.



Observations

Resident's responses to questions:

Do you take part in the activities provided at the home?

We spoke to five residents during our visit. One told us she did not get involved as she was not in the best of health. Another told us they preferred to watch TV and seeing her friends when they call round. Two residents told us they enjoyed taking part in bingo, board games and playing cards. One resident told us they don't go out very much but if there is an event going on at the home they will join in.

Have you ever been asked what activities you would like to do? Were these offered to you? If not why not?

Of the residents we spoke to four told us they had not been asked what activities they would like to do, whilst one said she is sometimes asked what she would like to do. One resident told us she would like to go to church 'it isn't far from here' but has never been asked. We were told by one resident 'the activities are very full filling, majority of the activities on offer residents can get involved in'.

One resident told us 'the staff and cleaner work very hard, very helpful and caring, will not have a bad word said about them'

What kind of activities / interests do you have?

A resident told us she is a Catholic and very proud of her faith but would like to go to church and would like the priest to visit the home. She also told us she says her prayers before bed each night.

She told us she is very happy at the home as everyone gets on with each other, she has been living at Branches for three months.

One resident told us she is currently suffering from depression but likes to go out walking.

Another resident told us she enjoys going out with family and friends, 'In the summer the staff took some of us to the beach'.

Families and carer responses to questions:

Do you have the opportunity to get involved in activities around the home?

Only one relative was visiting The Branches during our visit. She told us her she gets involved with the bingo and sing-along.

Are you happy with the activities on offer?

We were told she felt her mother in-law gets lots of activities offered to her.



Have you been asked about your relative or friends interests in respect of activities?

We were told she visits her mother in-law four times a week and has been asked what activities her mother in-law likes to do and is very happy with the care and activities available for her mother in-law.

Manager and staff responses to questions:

Does the home display an activities programme?

A programme is displayed in the hall for residents and relatives to see what is happening.

Is there an activities co-ordinator at the home?

The Branches do not have an Activities Co-ordinator. We were told activities were shared out with all staff to deliver; one member of staff has completed a three day training course on social inclusion and meaningful activities. Activities are available every day but we were told 'with little take up from the residents'

Are residents asked what they would like to do?

We were told residents are asked what they would like to do at the 'games sessions' held every day at 3pm after tea.

Staff we spoke to informed us that planned events i.e. a Christmas Party or a Pantomime have been arranged in the past, but difficult to get residents involved. We were told 'residents don't like disruption' and 'compromises are made to encourage residents to get involved'.

Do residents have individual activity plans?

We were informed a 'Social Interest Assessment Record' for each resident is kept in their Care Plans.

The Branches hold a residents meeting every four weeks to get some new ideas on what to deliver; we were told they get some response from the residents at these meetings.

General Observations:

Is there a garden? Are residents encouraged to use it?

There is a garden we were told residents are encouraged to sit in when the weather is good. Residents were not able to help with the maintenance of the garden due to their health and lacking in ability to do so.



Is there a memory room? Do they have social events? i.e. Christmas Carols or Tea Dances?

The Branches do not have a memory room but do have a quiet room where residents can sit or take relatives or professional people into.

Are outside entertainers invited to the home?

At Christmas, entertainers will be invited to the home to entertain the residents.

Are all staff involved or is it down to the 'activities co-ordinator'?

Activities are shared amongst the staff to deliver.

Is there a varied programme of activities? I.e. dancing, gardening or exercising.

We were told they hold Christmas parties, celebrate resident's birthdays and have gentle exercise for residents to take part in. A hairdresser comes on a weekly basis to the home.

Service Provider Response

Signed:



Enter and View Lead

Final Report taken to Healthwatch South Tyneside Board on:

Board Comments:

There does not appear to be much evidence of 'varied approaches to meaningful activity' in the report. It would also appear that they perhaps inadvertently are increasing at least one resident's social isolation by not arranging weekly journeys to her church. A contact from staff to the church would produce exactly the support and social interaction requested. So though the residents approached seem happy there is a level of staff either not listening or not responding to needs. Healthwatch South Tyneside Board question whether there is a general acceptance of encouraging independence within each individual's ability or a sense of staff managing everyone and everything.

