



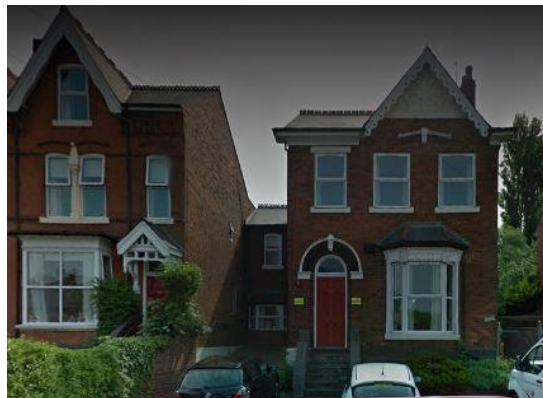
Enter and View visit report

Alphonsus House

25th January 2017

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Alphonsus House, 81 Vicarage Road, Oldbury. B68 8HT

Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Sandwell would like to thank the management of Alphonsus House, residents, staff and visitors for their contribution to our Enter and View visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date of our visit. 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.

Visiting Team

The team of authorised representatives carrying out this visit were Khush Chahal and Glenn Jones. They were accompanied by our staff support officer Ian McGarry.

Purpose of the visit

- A program to examine the delivery and quality of care provided at Residential and Nursing homes in Sandwell.
- To engage with residents in care homes and understand how dignity is being respected in a care home environment.
- Identify examples of good working practice.
- Observe residents and relatives engaging with the staff and their surroundings. Capture the experience of residents and relatives and any ideas they may have for change.

Methodology

The visit was announced to the home prior to our arrival.

Whilst our team were in possession of the latest Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection report, we were not basing our visit on the content of this report.

You can read the latest CQC report [HERE](#).

Alphonsus House provides leading person-centred support and facilities for 19 adults over the age of 18 with mental health requirements, autism and learning or physical disabilities.

Overview

We were introduced to the manager, Teresa Hughes, who remained available throughout the visit to introduce us to her staff and residents and answer any questions. On the day of our visit there were 13 residents within the three houses and bungalow that comprises the home. Throughout the home all of the rooms and facilities we observed were clean, well-furnished and accessible to support the resident's needs.

The staff ratio is 3:1 and there are 5 staff on duty during the day and 3 during the night. The staff turnover is good with one member of staff employed for 27 years.

None of the residents are self-funded.

On one of the many noticeboards we saw information regarding the complaints procedure, safeguarding notice, accessibility policy, residents meeting notice, a pictorial menu and the Healthwatch Sandwell poster.

Summary of findings

At the time of our visit, the evidence is that Alphonsus House provides a very good caring environment for its residents.

- The staff are very dedicated and enthusiastic.
- Residents are happy and well looked after
- The manager is very supportive to staff, residents and relatives

Recommendations

We do not have any specific recommendations to make but would complement Alphonsus House for the care that it provides for its residents.

Service Provider response

The visit was non-invasive and was a very positive experience for all involved. Working in collaboration can only be a positive for the service and the people we support.

We look forward to working with Healthwatch again in the future.

Many Thanks
Teresa

Results of Visit

Residents

Throughout our visit the residents looked happy and well looked after. We were able to speak to two of the residents. One has autism and told us he was treated well, felt could discuss his treatment with staff, was happy with the choice of food given, hot drinks were always available. He was able to go out occasionally for shopping, entertainment and to have his hair cut, could visit the doctors or the doctor would visit him at the home. The second resident we spoke to confirmed that the staff are friendly but was not happy with the food but likes parties. He liked to be able to visit his mum from time to time.

Staff

When we visited, we questioned why staff did not wear a uniform and was told that it was to maintain informality with the residents.

Staff we spoke to said that they felt there were sufficient staff numbers to care for the residents.

Staff training is carried out online, face to face and internally within company.

New staff are trained for First Aid, Fire Safety, Mental Capacity, Challenging Behaviour, PEG Feed and DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Standards) etc.

Visitor and Relatives

Prior to our visit, we sent questionnaires to the home together with return address envelopes and posters to capture the comments of relatives. Four of these were returned to us indicating that relatives felt that the home provided a very good level of care:

- *It is a lovely, friendly place*
- *Alphonsus house has been my {siblings} home for 23 years. It is a warm, friendly place and welcoming. I always feel welcoming.*
- *I have no concerns with the quality of care given*
- *Yes, the residents are treated with dignity and respect*
- *I am very pleased that he is now comfortable and safe at Alphonsus*
- *Complaints are very rare now. New management very good*

Environment

Alphonsus House is comprised of three Victorian-type terraced houses with a much newer bungalow situated at the rear. The home has been extensively modernised (at the time of our visit part of the home was being re-decorated). Each building has its own kitchen area and communal area.

The residents have their own rooms many of which are en-suite. Residents have televisions etc in their room or can meet in the day room to socialise or take part in activities. All the rooms we observed were clean, tidy and had a very homely feel.

In all properties, we observed photo boards of the residents involved in various activities.

A relative feels that the connecting pathway and gate (between the buildings) could be better designed.

Promotion of Privacy, Dignity and Respect

Relatives told us that the staff are very friendly and felt that the residents were well cared for and that they are happy with the services provided at the home.

It appeared that residents were given their own space where required, for example they could socialise with others or remain in their room if they wished.

We observed staff supporting residents in a dignified and respectful way.

Involvement in Key Decisions

In their feedback, relatives told us that they were contacted, informed and involved in decisions made about their relative at the home and that staff were willing to listen and carry out any ideas or changes that relatives suggested.

Assessments of Needs and Care Planning

In planning care the manager initially will assess the needs of the resident; and over time the support worker will monitor needs and discuss with the manager as necessary. We were told that families are involved in the care planning of the resident's needs.

A monthly care plan review is carried out involving with the resident (where possible), care worker, relatives and the manager.

With the agreement of the resident concerned, we were shown their personal care support plan. This contained detailed and comprehensive information (much was easy-read) including: resident health information, weight records, risk assessment, safeguarding. There was also a folder with relevant medical information to be taken to hospital should the resident require treatment.

Healthcare

A resident told us that residents medication is stored in their own rooms securely.

Staff are trained in the administration of medication and records are updated daily, witnessed and counter-signed.

Residents are weighed monthly. Should staff have any concerns dieticians are involved to plan an appropriate diet; e.g. some residents are on a 'soft food' diet and one uses a PEG (percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy) feed.

All weight and diet information is recorded in the care plan.

The fluid intake of residents is monitored and recorded throughout the day.

Concerns/Complaint Procedure

Any complaints are reported the manager who investigates appropriately.

A resident told us that problems could be discussed quite easily with the staff and were resolved satisfactorily. We were told that there had been 1 complaint in the last 2 ½ years from a relative. This was amicably resolved with the home.

Food

We saw menus posted on each of the notice boards that offered a choice of food. Some of the menus were pictorial to assist the residents when making a choice. We were told that should residents prefer an alternative meal, where possible that would be made available.

At the time of our visit we saw meals being freshly prepared.

Activities

The manager told us that some of the activities provided:

- Theatre visits
- Shopping
- Going to disco's
- Meals out
- Going to the cinema
- Massage
- Hydrotherapy pool
- Sensory room.

Alphonsus House has its own modern minibus.

What is Enter and View

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these 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 local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

To find out more about Healthwatch Sandwell, or to tell us your views on residential and nursing homes in Sandwell, please visit our website.



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