

Care Home Provider:
Care Home Address:
Date and Time of Visit:
Authorised Representatives:

Hightown Housing Association
19 Worlds End Lane, Weston Turville, HP22 5SA
08.02.17 – 3.45 pm
Alison Holloway, Judith Young

Summary of findings



- We saw everyone treat each other as equals and staff and residents have good rapport.
- Staff seemed to encourage residents to be as independent as they could be.
- Activities were scheduled in the evenings as well as during the day

The Visit

Oakmead provides residential care for up to 5 people although there was a vacancy when we visited. We talked to 3 members of staff and all 4 residents.

How people are treated



When we arrived, the two residents, at home, were introduced, encouraged to check our ID badges and shake our hands. Everyone was very welcoming. There seemed to be a genuine warmth between the staff and residents and camaraderie and banter between the residents. The latter teased each other about girlfriends and whose turn it was to lay the table. Residents were happy to chat to us and show us round. We saw everyone treat each other as equals and there was a very relaxed “family” atmosphere. Residents told us they are happy at the home. Staff corrected a resident's incorrect assumption, gently and quietly, by explaining the reasons why that was not the case. However, we only saw spoken word used as a form of communication. We were not sure that staff understood sometimes what one resident wanted to communicate.

Personal Choice



Residents told us they could get up and go to bed when they liked. One resident told us how he got his own cereal and cup of tea for breakfast. They said they took it in turns to choose the evening meal. “I like sweet and sour chicken” said one whereas another’s preference was fish and chips. They roll a dice to help staff with the menu planning; every number being linked to a type of evening meal. “Sundays are always roast.” Birthday cake was being served as desert on the day of our visit and we saw residents help themselves to fresh fruit about 5pm.

The TV wasn’t on when we arrived but, on return from a day out, we saw one resident put it on. Residents are taken to church if they want to go. One resident told us they haven't been for a while through choice.



Just like Being at Home



One resident offered us a cup of tea on our arrival and made us one on his own later on. Another resident said he sometimes made tea for the staff. They were encouraged to help prepare vegetables for the evening meal although we did not see this. Two residents told us how they set the table for meals and we were told that they are also encouraged to bring their washing from their bedrooms and help load the washing machine. Staff seemed to encourage residents to be as independent as they could be. One opens the front door to visitors and on Tuesdays steam cleans clothes in a local charity shop. There are raised trough beds in the garden where everyone helps grow vegetables. Another resident told us how they go to the supermarket to help with the shopping. We saw everyone sitting down to eat their evening meal together. Visitors can come when they like and one resident had been out with a relative to celebrate their birthday the day before. We saw one resident go with a staff member to put their purse away as they like to carry cash with them. Another told us how they liked to spend their money.

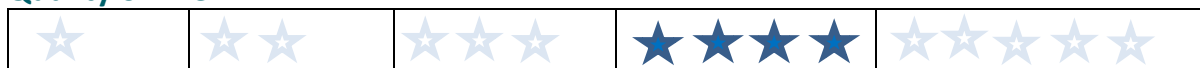
The home is warm, clean, homely and well decorated with many personal touches. Every bedroom we saw was very personalised. For example, one room was painted the colour of the resident’s favourite football club whilst another has a Dr Who theme.

Privacy



We were only allowed to enter into residents' rooms after staff asked the resident concerned whether they were happy for us to do so. Staff knocked and ensured that residents were present to show us their rooms. We observed a staff member asked a resident quietly to go with them to their room to discuss a matter privately instead of in the lounge.

Quality of Life



There was a written schedule of weekly activities on a noticeboard. Each resident does slightly different things but all had sessions at the day centre, went to the Gateway on Monday evenings and went bowling and to McDonalds on a Thursday evening. The residents were very enthusiastic about the latter. Everyone also had one-to-one time with a key worker during the week. Although they have limited funds, the staff try to be as creative as possible. Sometimes they might go out to a café for tea and cake but another time take a flask and packed lunch to visit Wendover Woods. When we arrived one resident had gone for a walk locally with their keyworker. This resident particularly likes train and coach journeys so staff were looking into a trip to York for their birthday. One resident has a bus pass and the home also has its own people carrier. The manager is open to new ideas and said they were looking to go to an open air pop up cinema in summer. Residents told us that they have been to the seaside in Bognor Regis and Minehead previous summers.

Recommendations

We recommend that Oakmead:

- possibly uses picture cards to enhance communication with those residents less verbally able than others
- ensures there are activities, in addition to watching TV, for all residents to do together in the evening or rainy days when they can't go out
- increases the range of meals served; perhaps try themed evening meals such as Mexican where several communal dishes could be served for residents to try
- invests in the greenhouse mentioned; look at adding more interest in the large garden e.g. a bird table, BBQ, coloured pots to extend the range of use

Service Provider Response

What a lovely report and a pleasure to read, thank you! The Service Users thoroughly enjoyed your visit and were very enthusiastic to inform the rest of the staff team about it. We are all (Service Users and Staff Team) extremely proud of Oakmead and always strive to improve and move forward in the Scheme. Just a few comments I would like to add if that is okay:-

Personal choice:-

The TV was not on when we arrived, but on return from a day out, we saw one resident put it on -
- Your arrival was 3.45, the residents had only returned from Arts & Crafts at 3.30, so they would not have gone into the lounge at that point to watch any TV or to have the music playing from the TV, as at that time in the afternoon, one resident would want to have his Wii Play time which he requests daily as soon as he returns, and the other two residents have a TV programme that they endeavour to watch daily with a cup of tea together in one of their bedrooms, prior to spending time in the kitchen preparing dinner, they also had not got to this point by the time of your arrival, and didn't carry out that activity as they were with you.

Quality of Life:-

One resident has a bus pass – All residents have a bus pass.

Recommendations:-

Picture cards – Staff are able to spend many hours/shifts with the Service Users at Oakmead, build a relationship with them and are able to see that they can clearly communicate what they need, want or desire. It is very difficult when meeting someone for the first time and only for a few hours to understand their communication, how they speak, and know their ways of communicating as this is learnt through time spent with the individuals at Oakmead. One resident for instance uses Makaton, which staff understand. All of the individual communication methods are in the individual Service User files which staff who support the Service Users have to read and have thorough knowledge of.

Ensures there are other activities in the evening on offer other than watching TV – Every Service User at Oakmead has activities every day, sometimes not returning home until tea time. Through building relationships with the Service Users, some of whom are moving forward in age, see their evening time as their own time, and do not want the evenings that are free (Monday and Thursday evening are already booked with activities) to be filled with other activities. One Service User clearly retires to his bedroom for his 'alone' time and lets you know he wants to be alone watching his DVDs, doing puzzles or reading magazines. Two Service Users have the evenings as their bath time, as they like to have time to relax and soak and use all of their chosen toiletries. All of the Service Users choose to retire to bed around 9pm as they tend to get up before 7am. They can choose when they want to go to bed and wake up whenever they wish. The Service Users are aware of/and offered, cards and a choice of board games, for group relaxing time should they wish to use them with staff or each other. All of the above choices of how they like to be supported in the evenings are in the Service Users files.

Increases the range of meals served – I am not sure if you saw the full list of foods that are on offer when completing the Menu Planner. Also, all of the Service Users have SALT guidelines around what they can and are unable to eat for various health reasons. Any meals offered are gauged around a list of likes and dislikes that has been built up over the years and added to when Service Users try something new and like it. i.e Mexican which was mentioned, can be spicy, the current Service Users have clear preferences for mildly spicy food and not all of them can eat rice. Just wanted to point out that all choices are wide and varied, we also support some Service Users with Autism, who if offered to many varied choices to often will not feel comfortable with their meals, as they are not getting the choices that they know, are expecting to be offered, this can also lead to them feeling frustrated and upset just because 'we' feel they should have a 'themed' evening. We also have one Service User who is Gluten Intolerant, so this is also factored in to choices.

Invest in Garden Item – A greenhouse was mentioned, this is has been allocated into the new year budget which starts in April. There are already two bird boxes in the tree, as this it what the Service chose to have, they did not want a bird table at that time as they are afraid of the local neighbourhood cats getting to the birds. There is an extremely large BBQ already in the shed. Coloured pots which are beautifully filled in the spring/summer months by the Service Users are all around the front edge of the house. The Service Users chose not to have them in the back garden as they sometimes throw balls around and they have been broken in the past and they have been upset by this. They chose to only have them in the front so all of the neighbours could enjoy there efforts.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank the residents and staff at Oakmead 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.
