

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

The Fremantle Trust
Risborough Road, Stoke Mandeville, HP22 5XL
19.01.17 – 10.30am
Alison Holloway, Jean Button, Janice Milsom, Jenny Cassidy

Summary of findings



- In most areas, staff treated residents as equals although we observed no interaction initially in the dementia nursing unit
- Very relaxed, friendly atmosphere and a willingness to help
- A range of activities in the home but limited opportunities to go into the community

The Visit

Fremantle Court provides residential and nursing care for up to 90 people, some of whom live with dementia. We talked to 13 residents, 11 members of staff and 2 visitors and observed another 32 residents, 3 visitors and 12 staff in the six units.

How people are treated



A resident told us that the staff are helpful, kind and very patient. “Many staff are lovely” said a visitor although they also found it frustrating that some staff did not always have the answers to their questions. Another visitor said “staff are brilliant” and “the care is fantastic”. Although agency staff are used, visitors reported that there was a core of regular staff which give residents and families some continuity. In five out of six units, everyone seemed very relaxed and confident. Residents were addressed by name and many referred to residents’ relatives by name too. When clearing away a cup and plate, we heard staff checking residents were comfortable. Another staff member was heard to explain what would be happening next. Any member of staff completing paperwork in communal areas were also chatting with residents around them. Unfortunately, in the dementia nursing unit, we saw no interaction between staff and residents on our arrival into the main lounge. Seven residents were asleep, in a line of wheelchairs, facing a TV which was not on. To the side, there were two other residents asleep in an empty silent lounge. On our return to the main lounge, the deputy manager had switched the TV on, was waking residents and making them comfortable in their chairs.

Personal Choice



We heard a member of staff, who couldn’t see us, say “It’s up to you what you would like to do” and offer the resident various options. When an option was chosen, the staff member then asked “where would you like it?”. A few male residents told us they like to sit together in the morning and we observed them with two care staff watching the deer outside. Residents on the first floors can also go outside onto the large balconies without having to go downstairs to the garden. We were

shown an extensive menu with four options for lunch. Residents are asked the day before as well as on the day itself about what they would like to eat. They also told us they could get up and go to bed when they wanted. Breakfast could be eaten in bedrooms or in the dining room and we also saw cake, biscuits and fruit available for residents to take as a snack. In most areas we saw a range of drinks on offer but none in the dementia nursing unit. Visitors and able residents can also help themselves to drink from the café. Staff seemed to offer choice when it was available. However, we were unclear what choices were available to those in the dementia nursing unit.

Just like Being at Home



Fremantle Court is very homely and the communal areas well designed. It was very warm inside on the day of our visit (a particularly bitter day outside). Bedrooms are large and decorated with personal belongings and many of those living with dementia had homemade, personal boards next to their doors showing their photo. We saw one resident and 3 visitors making themselves a cup of coffee in the kitchen. A staff member asked the resident if they wanted any assistance but then left the resident to help themselves when the offer was declined. We were also told that residents can do their own washing if they want to. We were told that residents help with gardening in summer and wheelchair height raised beds were being built, as part of a new gardening project. Visitors could come in whenever they liked and staff were trying to ensure friends, within the home, could meet up. One resident, needing more care, had recently moved units, away from her friend and staff had organised for them to meet up in the hairdressers on the day of our visit. We saw them holding hands there later on. They also arrange for them to meet for cups of tea. Family can come to share meals and “a fuss is made” of a resident on their birthday, always with a home-made cake.

Privacy



Residents told us that staff always knocked on their bedroom doors and they felt safe and respected. Some bedroom doors were closed, some open and others pushed to. We saw no personal care given in front of us and staff were careful to close doors when residents used the ground floor toilet. We saw no personal information, e.g. care plans, left unattended.

Quality of Life



There were jigsaws out in several areas and board games and books on shelves. The weekly activity guide also showed a reasonable number of exercise classes, crafts and films taking place. In the evening, cards and dominoes are set up downstairs although there were no scheduled activities for the weekend. Most activities occurred on the ground floor with only Zumba, this week, advertised on both. A resident told us, that more activities used to be delivered on the first floor. They didn't now like being put into a wheelchair every time they wanted to go downstairs and so chose not to participate in the activities. They said that they would prefer to use their walker and be accompanied downstairs in the lift. No activities taking place in the dementia nursing unit.

Private dentists and opticians visit the home and the hairdresser is very popular with a real buzz in that room. The twelve residents at the Needles and Natter session were obviously also enjoying themselves. Hymns were being sung and many were keen on the idea of starting a choir when it was suggested. In summer, some of the residents were pushed in their wheelchairs to the nearby goats centre. However, although the home has access to a minibus this had not been booked in the previous 6 months and there were no dates planned in the future. Residents are therefore dependent on family and friends to take them out, for the day or for a change of scene, which may not be possible if a resident cannot get easily in and out of a car.

Recommendations

We recommend that Fremantle Court:

- ensures staff interact with residents living in the dementia nursing unit
- confirms drinks are easily accessible to those in the dementia nursing unit
- ensures there are appropriate activities for those living with dementia particularly in the dementia nursing unit to ensure residents are appropriately stimulated and engaged
- looks into borrowing reminiscence boxes from Bucks Libraries, getting more fiddle cuffs and fiddle boards and engaging those with dementia in more exercises and singing
- tries reducing the room temperature slightly (windows were open in some areas)
- schedules more activities on the first floor
- ensures residents are aware that they can move floors using a walker and don't always need to be moved by wheelchair.
- books the minibus on a regular basis to enable more residents to go out into the community and on trips with their friends.

Service Provider Response



We are very pleased to see that on the whole this is a very positive report and it reflects the excellent care that our residents receive at Fremantle Court. It was unfortunate on the day of the report that the dementia nursing wing was not shown at it's best as the nurse and 2 of the care staff were involved in managing a health crisis with a resident and we had agency nursing staff on duty. It is more usual for our staff to ensure that the residents are comfortable and sitting in chairs to relax, watching the tv, listening to the radio or singing and chatting with staff. Drinks are given regularly and fluid intake is monitored carefully but we have taken note of the recommendation and intend to buy some more coffee tables for the lounge so that drinks are more easily accessible.

We will also be getting some more activity items that are suitable for this group. Also we have taken up a place on the training in meaningful activity provision that Healthwatch have offered and 2 of our activity staff will be starting the BTech in Activity Provision with Fremantle in March.

We have also just taken on a 3rd activity organiser and we plan to reorganise activity provision which will mean that more is available on the first floor. However it is worth noting that all residents are offered and encouraged to attend activities where ever they are provided and on the day that Healthwatch visited there were 5 residents from the dementia care nursing wing in the activity downstairs. Indeed all residents are encouraged to attend whether they need help to get there in a wheelchair or can mobilise independently but we are mindful of residents safety. Our activity organisers also visit people in their bedrooms in between activities but we recognise that it would be beneficial to have a much larger activity team. Despite this we are able to offer activities every day morning and afternoon that includes films, documentaries and entertainment in our upstairs cinema room. When we now book an entertainer in they do their act both downstairs and upstairs so that the maximum number of people can attend.

As the home cares for some very frail people who are not very mobile, the temperature may seem too warm for visitors but there are individual thermostats on every radiator so people may choose to have the temperature they prefer in their own rooms. Windows are opened - but in places where the residents will not be subjected to a draught.

Considering the frailty of most of our residents, it is not always practical to take people out into the community so we encourage the community to come into the home and have good links with local churches and schools, brownie and guide groups. The PAT dog visits weekly and we have a variety of volunteers. In the summer we do go out locally and make use of the lovely gardens for activities. This year we are purchasing a Gazebo for activities and for residents to sit in and just enjoy the outside space.

Our residents are consulted regularly, both individually and through meetings, about all aspects of their daily lives and we strive to act on their wishes. If outings are requested we will do our best to accommodate this.

We would like to thank Healthwatch for there tactful and respectful approach with our residents and can say that it was not an intrusive process and very helpful.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank the residents, visitors and staff at Fremantle Court 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.
