

<b>Details of visit</b>	<b>Alexander Court Care Home</b>
<b>Service Provider:</b>	<b>HC-One</b>
<b>Service address:</b>	<b>2 Lydgate Court, Lydgate Lane, Crookes, Sheffield S10 5FJ</b>
<b>Date and Time:</b>	<b>Thursday 23 February 2017, 10.00 am – 12 noon</b>
<b>Authorised Representatives:</b>	<b>Patricia Edney, Linda Gregory</b>
<b>Contact details:</b>	<b>Healthwatch Sheffield, The Circle, 33 Rockingham Lane, Sheffield, S1 4FW</b>

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Sheffield would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

## 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.



## 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.

## Purpose of the visit

The visit is part of an ongoing planned series of visits to residential homes looking at the care provided. As part of our work we are asking a set of questions to find out whether the care provided meets people's needs, what people and their families think about the services that are provided and in particular to find out how the home provides opportunities for people to improve their quality of life and well-being and connects with the wider environment.



## Strategic drivers

- Part of Healthwatch Sheffield's statutory duties to highlight good practice and encourage those providers requiring improvement to do so.



## Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View visit.

The visit had been arranged with the management team. The visit was advertised in advance by a poster.

The management team (new manager and district manager) made themselves available for interview.

We were advised about 2 residents who were too poorly to talk with us, but we were then able to talk to residents and staff and observe the environs and working of the home.

The two observers were free to go anywhere and we talked to 13 residents, 3 relatives, 3 carers, 2 domestic staff and 2 nurses.

Prior to leaving we met the manager and gave him verbal feed-back on our findings.

## Summary of findings

Alexander Court is a 56-bedded home with provision for both nursing and residential care. On the day of our visit they had 8 empty beds but were expecting some new residents.

The manager, Tony Jackson, has only been in post for 2 weeks and understandably has not yet set up everything he plans to do going forward. He has managed to make the staff feel optimistic about the future and had a good grasp of the issues that need to be tackled. We were pleased to hear that there are plans to gather more ongoing feedback from residents and increase participation.

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## Results of visit

### Care provision

For the nursing care we were told that there are always either 2 nurses or a nurse and a nursing assistant on duty. There are also 3-4 carers on duty in the day, supported by domestic and maintenance staff. The Manager is in the process of recruiting more nurses to ensure continuity and have a bank of staff known to residents.

### Access to services e.g. Dental, GPs

Primary medical care is at present provided by 2 GP surgeries (each taking a floor). But due to the imminent retirement of one GP there is some uncertainty about his replacement.

### Building and accommodation

Alexander Court is a modern purpose built building in good condition; it is clean and fresh. There is a garden that is well planned for the residents.

The décor is in good condition but very subdued and all the corridors are the same. The residents can change things in their room and sometimes have the chance of changing rooms. In the residents' rooms, there is evidence of family photos, individual pictures and ornaments. All the rooms have an en-suite bathroom suitably designed and equipped.

While the décor is subtle, the corridors and doors are confusing and making them different colours would help residents get around.

In the corridors the dado rail serves as a handrail but is not a proper one and it is also painted the same colour as the wall.

The doors to the bedrooms have a panel on them allowing the name and photo of the resident to be displayed. Unfortunately these were not all filled in and when they are the residents can't always read or notice them.

The dining areas were very attractive and the staff obviously go to considerable trouble to dress the tables and care for the residents at meal times, they have a dignity in dining code that is displayed in the dining room. For residents who are able to there is access to making hot drinks and juice.

### Residents

The residents of Alexander Court all seemed well cared for, inevitably several grumbled and wanted to go home, but all those who were able to talk to us were comfortable. Some commented that the food was good, they have choices on the day and menus are discussed at residents' meetings. Residents have access to hairdressing facilities and receive visits from the chiropodist and dentist.

The staff were observed being caring and encouraging.

Alexander Court is not an EMI (Elderly Mentally Infirm) home, but many of its residents are very elderly and/or poorly and several of them are forgetful and confused. The majority seemed content to sit in a room with the television on, which they were not watching. A few more alert residents told us they enjoy reading but that the library in the home was limited, one lady said she had read all the books there.

There is a schedule of daily activities advertised on the board, a few residents said they had enjoyed the organ the night before but one lady said the same tunes were played each week. The tea and coffee mornings with the local church were also popular.

Boredom was the most common comment made by those more able to talk with us, but they acknowledged that the staff had tried to find them interests.

### **Staff**

Relatives did express that previously they did have concerns about the care their relative received; they felt that staff did not have time for residents and were not responsive to their needs. However, they had noticed a change since the arrival of the new manager and were hopeful that the issues were being addressed.

The domestic staff expressed that they enjoyed their job and some have worked there for several years.

The new manager has started to change things and the staff gave us positive feedback on the developments. He is including a resident in the staff meetings. He is also going to hold regular meetings for relatives and friends and is encouraging them to communicate via e-mail. Wi-Fi is being fitted to the building. He is continuing the staff training programme.

We would like to thank Alexander Court for their hospitality and openness. We appreciate that the manager has only been in post 2 weeks and things are still in a state of flux.

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## **Recommendations**

- Consider fitting a proper hand rail in the corridors
- Consider using different colours in the corridors to help residents find their way around.
- Improve the signage on the bedroom doors
- Change the books in the library more regularly (possibly a charity shop might help do this cheaply than a book shop).
- Review the activities to add more variety, and discuss them with the residents
- Ensure that the resident involved in staff meetings is supported to play a full part and to gather the views of other residents.

## Service Provider Response

