

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

The Fremantle Trust
Berryfield Rd, Princes Risborough, HP27 0HE
27.07.18 – 11 am
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Summary of findings



- Little interaction observed between staff and residents outside the lunchtime period and then conversation seemed to be one sided and not always positive
- Most activities seemed sedentary, based around music and film, and only one a week was exercise based

The Visit

Icknield Court currently provides residential care for up to 90 people. We visited each of the six wings called 'houses'. In 4 of these, people live with dementia. We talked to 8 residents, 4 visitors and 3 staff members. We observed another 16 residents and 9 staff.

How people are treated



In all 6 'houses' we witnessed little interaction between staff and residents before lunch. Some staff were seen washing up or updating notes, but many were seen in pairs talking on their own in a dining room or at a staff station in the hallway. At lunchtime we watched staff assist residents into the dining room. Some appeared quite brusque in their attitude. "Come on, I'm not mucking about" was said to one resident who was reluctant to move. They also gently pushed another resident against their shoulder to stop them getting up out of the chair. The staff were getting the resident elevated in a safe way but had not explained what they wanted of the resident at each stage. These staff did not use resident's names but phrases such as 'lovie' or 'darling'. However, in another 'house', only a few minutes later, we heard three members of staff address all residents by their name. In the latter we also heard a member of staff, assisting someone to eat, ask, "do you not like it? do you want something else?" when the resident started to take food out of their mouth. Another member of staff perched on a side table in the lounge in between two residents and ate her meal from a bowl. She did try to interact with both residents though; "How is it (x)? Is it alright?" One continued to eat whilst the other fell asleep again and their food was left to go cold.

However, visitors said; "They look after mum well; good contact. They keep me in touch with what's going on which gives me peace of mind." "Staff look after (x) beautifully." Residents also said, "I like everyone here", "everyone is so kind" and "the girls are really good." One also told us of the encouragement their key worker gave them after a nasty fall and how they will ring them even when off duty. But we were also told that night staff can be noisy, "some good, some not" and "the men at night do not handle you as well as the women do." Sometimes the buzzer is answered quickly but occasionally it takes a long time to get attention.

One person upstairs said there were residents' meetings but visitors downstairs did not know about these or any relatives' meetings. When an argument occurred in one lounge, the staff to one side did not intervene or distract either resident to diffuse what appeared to be a regular occurrence.

Personal Choice



Residents told us they can get up when they like and those who don't need help, suit themselves. One resident said they often stayed up until midnight watching a film in the communal lounge. In one lounge, we saw jugs of juice out as well as crisps, biscuits and fruit for residents to access easily on a coffee table. However, this was not the case in every lounge. In another, there was only a pile of plastic cups and a completely empty drinks dispenser.

There were typed daily menus on the table although no pictorial one for those who find it more difficult to read. Residents were asked each day what they would like to eat. Although we were told there was a choice, on the day of our visit that was limited to steamed or baked fish with mash or chips and peas. It looked overcooked and one resident said, "I don't like some of the food; it's not cooked well." When asked if there was an alternative to the rice pudding being served, a resident said, "well, you can have diabetic rice pudding." At lunch time, we saw residents given assistance to eat. Whilst some staff did this in a gentle and patient way, some others were less thoughtful. We observed a member of staff, having helped serve food in the dining room, come into the lounge and sit on a stool to the side of a resident. We had already seen the resident eat half of the meal themselves and fall asleep. However, the staff member did not ask them whether they would like some more, but just proceeded to wake them up and start to feed them anyway. This staff member was seen to watch TV as they spooned food into the resident's mouth rather than interacting with the resident.

Just like Being at Home



The home was generally well decorated, bright and spacious, although there were tea (?) stains one wall in one lounge and urine smells in other areas. One visitor did say "the place could do with a lick of paint." Bedrooms we saw were personalised with belongings and photos. They were easy to identify with names and individual photos / pictures on the doors to help those living with dementia. Handrails in the corridors did have three raised studs at the end of each of them to aid those with sight loss. Some of the corridors were also well decorated with tactile areas such as a noticeboard of 1950s sewing fashions, materials and buttons. Others had areas where there were old typewriters and sewing machines or old-style packaging for brands such as Birds custard. Another had photos with questions underneath which could stimulate conversations between residents and staff, but we didn't see this in action. However, one house did seem a little bare. The garden spaces outside were easily accessible with several chairs and tables although only one parasol up in both gardens we saw. With temperatures nearing 30 degrees, the doors to these were open and a couple of residents were outside. However, some of the grass hadn't been cut for a while and a rabbit pen was in pieces, but not removed. There was also a parasol erected but left upside down on a patio which was a potential trip hazard. Temperatures upstairs in some of the communal areas were cooled by air conditioning, but elsewhere rooms were very hot and not all windows and doors had been opened to maximize the breeze. The deputy manager said there were fans in the bedrooms of the most vulnerable. However, we only saw fans in the office and not in the lounges or other communal areas.

Visitors told us they can come to the home at any time. Two residents had their dogs living with them and there was also a fish tank and birds in a cage. One visitor told us how they had created a book about their relative's life and evening staff would come in to talk to them about it which they enjoyed. Residents seemed to be mainly asleep in front of the TV in the lounges. However, about 15

were watching the coronation and other old clips on the cinema screen in the blue room when we arrived. Most residents couldn't tell us about what else they did but "mustn't grumble." One resident said that staff didn't like them getting involved e.g. making a cup of coffee. We did not see anyone encouraged to help lay the table for example and have a conversation whilst doing that. However, one staff member, on seeing a person climbing trees on one TV did try to initiate a conversation about who remembered climbing trees in their youth. Grab rails in downstairs toilet were white just like everything else in the room. This may not be helpful for some residents living with dementia.

Privacy



We asked several residents about privacy and got similar replies. Most bedroom doors were open. However, we were told that some staff don't remember to knock on doors. Others knock but don't always wait for an answer before entering a bedroom.

Quality of Life



The weekly activity schedule was typed and accompanied by pictures and was found on the back of the menu on the dining tables and on noticeboards. It showed two activities a day consisting of films, music, quizzes, arts and crafts, bingo and one armchair exercise class. The manager did subsequently advise that more than one exercise class a week. One resident told us they don't go to these as they mostly take place in the blue room upstairs and none are downstairs. However, several residents did tell us they were always asked if they'd liked to go just before an activity was scheduled. That morning's activity was a film but there were several different black and white films being shown in several lounges. A couple of people told us that there wasn't enough to push them to get up and walk or encouragement to move around. One visitor said they paid for their relative to receive physio. However, downstairs we did see several frail individuals getting up and moving around using walking frames. We were told that change does happen if residents speak up although one did say they had heard nothing after a complaint they made a few weeks ago.

The home has access to a shared minibus although some residents told us they don't go out unless family take them. One resident was off to lunch with their son, but another said there were no outings. One resident pays to go to the local day centre twice a week. The deputy manager did tell us that some residents had been to see the Mamma Mia show at the theatre a few weeks ago and others had recently been to visit a local garden too.

Recommendations

We recommend that Icknield Court

- ensures all staff have undertaken dignity in care and safeguarding training recently and understand that the small things, positive or negative, can have a big impact on a resident
- encourages all staff to interact more with residents
- encourages all staff to talk in a patient and non-condescending way focusing on person-centred care
- looks to improve the quality and the range of the cooked food served

- ensures all dementia 'houses' are consistently well decorated with stimulating pictures, noticeboards etc.
- ensures stains and smells are quickly cleaned up and there are no trip hazards such as upturned parasols left around
- buys more fans for communal areas
- introduces pictorial menus to help those to struggle to read
- reminds staff that they must knock on doors and wait for a reply before entering
- introduces more exercise classes to maintain muscle and keep residents both more physically mobile and mentally stimulated
- tries to get more able residents involved in everyday activities, in their home, such as laying tables, watering the raised beds etc
- looks to do more activities downstairs as well as upstairs
- replaces white grab rails with those in contrasting colours to aid those living with dementia

Service Provider Response

The Fremantle trust does have a clear Dignity and Respect procedure that underpins our values in how we engage and interact with those that we support. These procedures and values formulate our staff induction and care certification into the services and subsequent competency checks throughout a staff members working tenure.

The recent CQC report noted the following - "We observed good interactions from staff towards people they were supporting. "Care and support was given with attention to people's dignity and was provided in a respectful manner". Similar observations were made by yourselves in your report which appears to be at odds with the reported observed interactions within a short period of the visit.

Staff, having supported all residents to get up, have their breakfast and prepare for their day, will at times take their morning breaks but remain within the house environment. It is common for there to be lull in activities just before lunch time. So during their breaks they will sit and talk to their colleagues. Breaks for staff are very important and I welcome staff remaining available to assist residents should they need this.

Our last resident survey identified that 95% of residents felt that their daily routine was stimulating and fun. 92% of residents stated that there were suitable facilities for relaxation, reminiscence and friendship. So I do feel that my care team work very hard in upholding the standard principles and have engaging relationships with those that they are supporting and caring for.

We are due to celebrate our 10th anniversary so due for some environment refurbishment. We are also fully engaged in our dementia strategy programme, with the building now having black toilet seats, yellow and black toilet signs and interactive wall art, all to support the residents living with dementia. I have arranged yellow name badges for my staff to ensure their names are clearly visible to the residents to encourage interaction and relationship building.

The cleanliness and control of infections in all care settings is a challenge. My housekeeping team work really hard in ensuring Icknield Court is a clean and hygienic environment and they remain fully attentive, as all staff are, to spills and odours.

We have tried many versions of the accessible menus but have been informed that these can be patronising by residents and families so received a mixed response, but I am happy to discuss re-visiting this with the residents and my Chef.

We have all experienced an unpresented heat spell this summer. The company invested a great deal of money in the purchase of additional equipment to keep people cool. There are always air cooling devises available to ensure residents remain comfortable within their environment.

Our night staff work hard to ensure they and any residents awake at night remember to keep noise to an acceptable level. Many of the essential cleaning and maintenance of residents equipment has to take place during the night whilst not in use during the day. It is acknowledged that noise certainly does travel at night and we continue to make every effort to ensure we reduce disturbances during the night.

In the last survey, 93% of residents told us that the garden is attractive, well maintained and accessible for those who wish to use it. We do undertake many individualised activities with residents, such as watering the garden, walking to a local art show and assisting to make cakes etc., but I appreciate you did not witness this during your visit.

We support our residents in being offered activities but also supporting their right to accept or decline such invitations to take part. There are a number of dedicated hours allocated to the home to provide support with activities and occupation. These are provided on a group basis as well as an individual basis to people in their own rooms and activities away from the home.

We are lucky enough to have volunteer drivers who regularly support residents to activities outside of the home. We have recently visited Waterside Theatre and also drive off to local open gardens, pubs, restaurants etc. Where large numbers of residents have wanted to join in an activity such as visiting the sea side, we have hired a large coach to facilitate this.

Thank you for your report and encouragement in improving Icknield Court.

Acknowledgements

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