

REPORT OF ENTER AND VIEW VOLUNTEERS' RESEARCH VISITS TO CAMBRIAN GREEN DAY SERVICES (DEMENTIA DAY CENTRE), SPRING 2016

“It was awesome. I felt deeply the joy in the lounge where clients were singing together.” - Quote from an enter and view volunteer.

1. Introduction

1.1 Healthwatch South Gloucestershire (HWSG) authorised enter and view (E and V) volunteers are currently undertaking enter and view visits to care homes across South Gloucestershire. Enter and view is an ongoing programme of work being implemented by HWSG to understand the quality of residents' care experience within local care homes, particularly where residents have or could be expected to have dementia. Full details of the work-plan for Healthwatch South Gloucestershire and reports of past E and V visits are available on the website: www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk

1.2 The purpose of these E and V visits is to identify care that can be celebrated and shared with others and to identify any issues which concern the care home residents, their relatives, staff or the E and V volunteers. Since July 2014, a total of 19 care homes have been visited by authorised volunteers. Although a few of the care homes have been observed as providing a 'rich' environment for their residents, a number of themes about the quality of care have emerged from the enter and view visits. One common theme has been the lack of meaningful activities available for residents and in particular meaningful activities for male residents.

1.3 Each individual enter and view visit has enabled E and V volunteers to develop their knowledge and understanding about care of people in care homes. Enter and view volunteers use an evidence base to inform their approach, read current literature about the care of older people and people with dementia, undertake mandatory training such as Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults training, and seek additional learning

opportunities, such as Falls Prevention training, to ensure that they can act as critical friends and make appropriate, meaningful and purposeful recommendations to care homes in the E and V reports.

1.4 In this spirit of volunteer learning and development, the E and V volunteers were invited to spend some time at Cambrian Green Day Services to observe how people with dementia are able to be meaningfully occupied. The purpose of the visit was to find some examples of meaningful activities to share with other care homes.

1.5 10 authorised E and V volunteers visited Cambrian Green Day Services in small groups on three different afternoons in February and April 2016. The afternoon visits lasted at least 2 hours long.

1.6 The visits were not enter and view visits; the research visits proved to be so enlightening and valuable for the E and V volunteers that this brief report has been written to share the findings.

2. Context

2.1 Cambrian Green Day Services is a purpose built dementia day centre run by South Gloucestershire Council which provides specialist support for people with dementia. The centre was designed having considered the views of people living with dementia and their carers who use the facility. It provides a stimulating and supportive environment with facilities which are able to support varying levels of need for people in South Gloucestershire who live with dementia.

2.2 The website Dementia Roadmap states that Cambrian Green aims to:

- help adults who live with dementia to develop and achieve realistic outcomes, e.g. sustain lifelong skills, enjoy social situations and maintain a level of independence through meaningful occupation;
- facilitate social interaction: to give people who are socially isolated the opportunity to meet other people in their local community;
- provide short breaks for carers: to give carers the opportunity to pursue their own activities and have quality time for themselves;

- provide activities that stimulate and give the service users fun and enjoyment to improve their quality of life.

The aims are supported and delivered by a staff team who recognise the importance of person centred care and inclusion, ensuring that the life skills, life history, previous careers, jobs, hobbies and interests are incorporated into the activities available and enjoyed by all who attend.

3. Findings

The findings presented are taken from notes that the E and V volunteers made contemporaneously and are illustrated with volunteers' quotes.

3.1 The E and V volunteers were given a warm welcome by all members of staff and spent time with the service manager to find out about the service and its ethos before being given a tour of the day centre and having afternoon tea with the service users and staff.

3.2 There are usually 28 to 30 people attending the centre each day from Monday to Friday, although there can be up to 35 people, with a staff ratio of one member of staff to 3 people. Most people are referred for one or two days a week, although there are 3 people attending the full five days that the service is open. 39% of people using the service are men.

3.3 All members of staff, including planning supervisors, facilitators, and care staff, have NVQs or the Care Certificate and the service takes social work students, health and social care students from a local college and school pupils for work experience. Cambrian Green also offers support to family and carers and has social evenings. There is also one volunteer who supports carers.

3.4 The main foyer has a large notice board stating the day of the week, the date and the season, and the day's weather forecast in symbols and letters. There was also notification of peoples' birthdays on that day. Activities for the week were displayed on a notice board with large, easy to read, words and symbols for each day's activities.

3.5 The toilet doors are clearly labelled with the word 'Toilet' written in large letters and a picture of a lavatory. Members of staff and service users use the same toilets.

The toilets are well decorated with curtains at the windows and other homely touches. There were no high pitched call alarms, just a low intermittent buzz with a red warning light to alert members of staff if clients needed any assistance.

“The signage is some of the best I’ve seen: large, clear and colourful pictures.” -

Quote from an E and V volunteer.

“The excellent use of visual notices and colourful walls were well designed to aid clients.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

3.7 The centre has several large communal rooms spread over two floors. The rooms are brightly decorated and have a lot of homely touches, for example, a Welsh dresser full of pretty cups and saucers that are used for afternoon tea. There is also a games room, a relaxation and pamper room, a television room, activities rooms and a pleasant dining room and kitchen. One lounge is laid out like a homely sitting room and has comfortable chairs of different shapes, sizes and heights to accommodate any person's needs. Service users have their own kitchen to use; following a risk assessment they can (for example) bake cakes and make themselves a cup of tea or coffee. There is a little enclosed garden with flower tubs at the rear of the centre and there is also a community allotment where clients who enjoy gardening can grow bulbs, herbs and vegetables.

“The various rooms we visited where clients could participate in activities offered great variety and were inspirational.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

“There seemed to be a huge range of activities on offer, and service users were encouraged in activities they particularly enjoyed doing, which could of course be anything from polishing brass or joining in group singing to simply chatting about sports cars.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

3.8 The overwhelming impression was a feeling of purposeful, calm and happiness in the centre. The manager, Beth Tovey, is an enthusiastic and inspirational leader and the members of staff were all involved with meaningful activities with the service users, some on a one-to-one basis. Everyone looked as if they were enjoying what they were doing.

“The staff were all totally focused on the clients and treated them respectfully and with care and good humour.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

“I found the visit to Cambrian Green and the clear dedication of the staff quite inspiring and was very impressed with the positive and calm atmosphere.” -

Quote from E and V volunteer.

“Beth is an outstanding manager and an inspiring team leader, she knows her subject inside out.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

3.9 Great care is taken to explore service users’ life stories and each person then has an individually tailored care plan drawn up and a précis of this is available in a folder with their photograph. There are also comments noted on individual’s personal preferences. Service users are visited at home as part of the referral process for Cambrian Green Day Centre. This home visiting and assessment allows members of staff to get to know people and their families and carers.

3.10 The games room contained a snooker table, skittles, table tennis, darts, putting, and a floor standing Connect 4 game, all to encourage clients’ movement and help to maintain their mobility. There were pictures on the wall illustrating events from the past to help stimulate conversation and a ‘sports events corner’ showing all events with pictures and dates for the year ahead. Exercise classes were not observed as these are usually held in the mornings when service users tend to be more active.

3.11 E and V volunteers observed a range of activities which included scrabble, painting, jigsaws, a group quiz game, a reminiscence group and ‘singalong’ bingo. There was also one-to-one reminiscence going on using car maintenance manuals and areas set out with tools such as screwdrivers and drills for woodwork. There was a library of books about life in days gone by and an old style suitcase containing holiday items. If people wanted to undertake ‘daily living’ activities such as sweeping the floor, dusting or cooking, then they were supported and encouraged to do so. The centre produces a newsletter full of photographs of their activities and also buy in an ‘on this day’ newsletter which features historical events on a corresponding day of the week.

3.12 As the visits came to an end, the E and V volunteers were invited to take tea with the service users and at one visit to celebrate a birthday. The volunteers joined people

in the dining room at small tables to seat six; each table was laid with a tablecloth and pretty china and each person received their own individual pot of tea and a piece of birthday cake. There was a happy atmosphere with members of staff joining people at the tables to support them, engage them in conversation and encourage them in singing 'Happy Birthday'.

4. Conclusion

Authorised enter and view volunteers found a facility for people with dementia that is caring and supportive, has a calm and happy atmosphere, encourages social interaction and provides a range of varied meaningful activities. The E and V volunteers will be using this experience to inform their future E and V visits to care homes.

“Cambrian Green Day Centre is the ‘gold standard’...an outstanding manager and an inspiring team...it’s a pity care home providers don’t have their imagination and drive, their staff should visit the day centre to see what can be achieved.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

“Homes, whether in dementia care or not, would gain a great deal from a visit and talking to the manager.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

“I only hope that care/residential homes will visit and take away some of the ideas and commitment to ‘activity.’” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

“I was moved to tears by the happiness and joy that some service users showed as they were engaged in their activities.” - Quote from an E and V volunteer.

Disclaimer

- **This report relates only to three specific visits in February and April 2016.**
- **This report is not representative of all the service users or members of staff (only those who chose to contribute within the time available.)**

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