

# Enter & View Visit Report

## Hillcrest Manor

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# About Healthwatch Shropshire

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion for local people.

We work to ensure your voice counts when it comes to shaping and improving services. We address inequalities in health and social care, to help make sure everyone gets the services they need. We are a charity.

## What is Enter & View

Healthwatch Shropshire gathers information on people's experiences of health and social care services and there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Shropshire to see and hear for ourselves how services are being provided.

These visits are called 'Enter and View', and can be 'announced', 'unannounced' or 'semi-announced'. For 'semi-announced' visits the service provider is told we will visit but not the date or time of the visit.

The responsibility to carry out Enter and View visits was given to Healthwatch in the **Health and Social Care Act 2012**.



Enter and View visits are carried out by a team of specially trained and DBS checked volunteers called Authorised Representatives. They make observations, collect people's views and opinions anonymously and produce a report.

Enter & View visits are not inspections and always have a 'purpose'.

# Details of the visit

Two authorised representatives visited Hillcrest Manor, part of the Capital Care Group, on Monday 25 July 2022 at 10.30am. The visit was semi-announced meaning that the service knew that we would visit within a two week period.

The purpose of our visit was to speak to the Manager, staff and residents to see how the service was being delivered, make observations of the home environment and see how people's choice, independence, dignity and privacy were being promoted.

## 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 experience of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

# What we did

Our authorised representatives took Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) for COVID in the morning prior to our visit. We wore masks throughout our visit. Upon arrival we were greeted at reception where a poster advertising our visit was clearly displayed. We signed in and showed our LFT results. We spoke to the manager, had a tour of the home and spoke to residents and staff in one of the lounge areas.

# What people told us

## The Manager

The home currently has 38 residents, 60% of whom are female. 90% of residents at Hillcrest have dementia. In recent times there have been more out of area residents coming to the home and because of this there are less visitors due to the distances people would have to travel. Hillcrest is not on a bus route due to its rural location.

The home takes people for respite care from hospital but currently six out of seven residents who are there for respite have been there well over 8 weeks as they can't get care packages in the community.

Recruitment is difficult and in recent times 5 staff have left for better paid jobs outside of the care sector. The cost of fuel is now having an impact due to the home's rural location and not being on a bus route. The manager is looking into getting a minibus for staff transport to help with recruitment and retention. The home also offer flexible shifts to fit in with school hours or twilight shifts.



**“All staff receive the same training regardless of their job role. They all receive dementia training as well as fire safety, manual handling and basic life support.”**



Due to difficulties with staffing the home is using more agency staff than previously and has some empty beds currently. They are looking to recruit staff from abroad and have staff accommodation on site for those who need it.

There are no visiting restrictions left in place at Hillcrest Manor. Visitors no longer need to book and can visit their loved ones whenever they like. The manager has made this decision after seeing the impact that visiting restrictions had on residents and their loved ones during lockdowns.

A new chef is in place at the home and the menu is being revamped as the chef likes to make all food from fresh ingredients. The chef is well versed in different textures of food required and different nutritional needs. The chef has supernumerary hours for meal planning. Some food shortages have been experienced for example with fortified puddings for those with weight loss. The chef is trying to make an equivalent recipe. Residents are given the choice of two options for each meal and are shown pictures to help with making a choice. When meals are served they are shown the two options and can change their mind if they wish.

The manager told us about recent activities; they have three entertainers who visit regularly. They have regular chair exercise sessions, reminiscence, arts and crafts and

have been returning to outside activities such as a recent BBQ and picnic held in the home's central courtyard.

There is a diverse staff team with members from different ethnicities, sexualities and an even split between male and female staff. New residents are asked about their life stories, preferences and sexuality upon admission. The manager says these conversations are becoming more comfortable for people.

The home has input from opticians through Vision Care at Home – we saw a poster advertising their next visit. Pontesbury Medical Practice provides GP services for residents, however they can choose to keep their own GPs if preferred. Access to dentistry is difficult with the average wait time from referral to appointment with the community dentist being around 6 weeks which is sometimes too late for those staying at the home for respite.



## The residents

We spoke to five residents during our visit and two shared their views on the service with us.



“The food is really good, my daughter says I must have put on a stone since I have been here.”



We asked residents for their views on the care at Hillcrest Manor, the staff and the activities. We were told:

“Fantastic care here, made me so welcome”

“The staff are very good, all of them. There are enough staff.”

“Family are able to visit when they want.”

“There is a craft class twice a week and the other day I was taken in my wheelchair to the BBQ. The week before that there was a picnic, it's nice to get outside. We have singers that come in, the last one wasn't my cup of tea but others seemed to enjoy it.”

When asked if given choice about when to eat or have drinks, get up or go to bed a resident told us they “more or less” got to make all these choices.

Residents told us they knew who to speak to if they wanted to make a complaint.

## The staff

We spoke to several staff during our visit including the nursing lead. All staff greeted us in a friendly manner throughout our visit. Two staff gave us their views on the service. One told us that Hillcrest Manor was a good place to work and that the Manager was very supportive and approachable and would even respond to issues when it was her day off. The lead nurse told us about the admission process and the information they gathered about people’s life stories, likes and dislikes.

# What we saw

We saw craft and art activities taking place in two of the lounges where staff were engaging with groups of residents. We saw activity boards with pictures telling residents and staff what activities would be taking place each day.



We witnessed staff engaging with residents in a positive manner, discussing music preferences and laughing and joking with them. We saw staff having a sing along with a group of residents.

The home was clean and in good repair throughout. Large, low-level windows allowed residents views of the outdoor areas and let in a lot of natural light. There was clear signage with colour contrasts for different areas of the home including toilets, lounges and dining areas.



Bedrooms were personalised with items people had brought from home; we saw pictures, ornaments and other items. In the EMI unit bedroom doors had photographs and names on the outside and mirrors so that people could recognize themselves. There were memory boxes next to the doors for people to put sentimental items.

There were signs to hang on bedrooms or bathrooms which said that personal care was taking place and to knock and wait for an answer before opening the door. In the EMI unit there were combination locks on the outside of bathrooms to protect people's privacy.

There was an issue with the call bell system whilst we were at Hillcrest Manor. The manager explained that they were expecting an urgent visit from the company who supplies the system to fix the problem and that staff were able to see when the call bells in different rooms were being pressed and attend to those residents in the meantime even with the system problem.

## Key findings

- Hillcrest Manor benefits from its rural location and has a lot of outdoor space, including a secure central courtyard, which seems to be well used by residents with activities such as picnics and BBQs.
- Problems with recruitment and retention are having an impact on staffing numbers so the home is using more agency staff than it has in the past and is not able to fill all beds.
- We were told about activities and witnessed some taking place. There were large activities boards with pictures telling people what would be happening on each day of the week.
- Staff were engaging positively with residents; chatting, laughing and joking.
- Hillcrest Manor was bright, clean and tidy throughout and in a good state of repair with clear signage.



# Recommendations

Our Authorised Representatives had no recommendations for the service at this time.

## Provider response

The provider sent us the following response to our report:

'Following the Healthwatch Enter and visit meeting' the team and I were very pleased with the content of your report.

As discussed throughout the visit, we as of many other providers have faced difficulties with recruitment, but I am pleased to say that since your visit to Hillcrest manor, we have recruited another 3 full time carers, who will be working on days, this will enable us to continue supporting the local authority with placements.

I am also pleased to confirm that our new call aid system is due to be installed at the beginning of October.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all commissioners' staff, relatives and residents for their continued support, during these challenging times.'



# healthwatch

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