

Alexandra Nursing Home

Poulton-le-Fylde

Enter and View Report

Tuesday 21st February 2023



Disclaimer: This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and residents who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

Contact Details

Contact details

Alexandra Nursing Home

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Registered Manager

Kerry Howell

Date and Time of our Visit

Tuesday 21st February 2023

10:00am-12pm

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Steven Walmsley (Engagement team Leader)

Sue Edwards (Senior engagement officer)

Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather people's views and experiences, especially those that are seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service. The aim of an Enter and View visit is to gather views and experiences of residents, relatives and staff of a service and observe the environment to assess the quality of the service.

This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced.

The team collate feedback gathered and observations made to compile a report. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement. Healthwatch Lancashire is an independent organisation, therefore we do not make judgements or express personal opinions but rely on feedback received and objective observations of the environment. The report is sent to the manager for their opportunity to respond before being published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk.

Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is available to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations.

General Information

Alexandra Nursing Home - Poulton-le-Fylde provides residential and nursing care for up to 117 people. The home is split into four distinct units which provide residential care and can cater for people living with dementia. At the time of the visit the home was host to 87 residents.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank management, staff, residents and relatives, for making us feel welcome and for taking the time to speak to us during the visit.

Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Tuesday 21st February 2023 and received feedback from five residents, two relatives and eight staff.

Healthwatch Lancashire obtain the views and experiences of residents, relatives and staff. Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help assess the quality of services. Healthwatch Lancashire obtain the views and experiences of residents, relatives and staff.

Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help assess the quality of services. Conversations with residents were structured around four themes (Environment, Care, Food and Activities). Conversations with staff included their experiences of staffing levels, support and training. Relatives were asked to speak about their general experiences including how they felt about the service and if they feel involved and informed.

The team also recorded their own observations on the environment and staff-member interactions. To retain confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, names, pronouns and any identifiable details have been removed from quotes.



5 residents
2 relatives
8 staff

Summary

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives made an announced visit on the 21st of February and spoke to four residents, eight staff members and two relatives on the day of the visit.

Alexandra Nursing home provides residential care for residents with dementia and complex needs. The management informed Healthwatch that the home can house up to 117 residents. At the time of the visit there were 87 residents.

The site is split into three units provide specific levels of care for their residents. The Manager of the home facilitated the visit and described the distinct areas of the home. Part of the home is situated in a listed building with some of the period features on display such as the decorative windows and wood panelling.

- The main house is used for nursing and residential stays
- The Bluebell unit is used for Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI) residents
- The Brooklands unit is used for Elderly Mental Dementia (EMD) residents
- The Brambles unit (EMI) is where the home takes care of residents who present with the most complex needs

Healthwatch Representatives were shown around the Main house, the Bluebell unit and the Brooklands unit. Due to the nature of resident's needs Healthwatch representatives did not visit the Brambles unit.

Each area of the home has a communal lounge and dining area which is set out to promote social interactions between residents. Food is prepared on site and residents are given their meal choices at mealtimes to ensure that they know what they are going to be served.

The home was secure with keycode access being used to move between areas to maintain resident safety. During the visit, Healthwatch representatives were guided by members of the staff team.

All areas of the home were observed to be clean and tidy with no clutter being present.

The home employs around 100 members of staff who work within the home. External providers, such as the chiropodist visit the home on a regular basis. The home also hires singers and entertainers to provide events and entertainment.

Due to the needs of residents, there was limited opportunity for discussion was limited.

Enter and View observations

Pre-Visit and Location

Prior to the visit to Alexandra Nursing home, a pre-visit questionnaire was sent to the Management team and was returned to give Healthwatch Representatives some background information about the home. Alexandra has an informative website that provides information about the services on offer and some of the activities that are provided. There is also a Facebook page which is used to share information about events and activities that are happening at the home, which is updated regularly.

The site is split into different units with their own level access entrances. The car park caters for disabled access with spaces allocated for blue badge users. There is access to public transport nearby with bus stops within 500 metres of the site. The local railway station is half a mile away.

The internal environment - First impressions

When Healthwatch representatives made their visit, we were greeted by a member of staff who ensured that identified ourselves and signed in. The team was provided with face masks for covid security. The entrance contained information boards listing members of the staff team and their roles within the home. The entrance hall was wide and allowed free access. There was period decoration around the entrance hall.



The observation of corridors, public toilets and bathrooms

Some areas of the home were undergoing renovation work at the time of the visit. However, all areas were observed to be clean and free of clutter. There was some signage in the upstairs areas but not on the lower level. All toilets and bathrooms were signposted and were observed to be in a clean state. There were several noticeboards around the home containing a wide range of information about planned activities and staff wellbeing. A lift was available for use in the residential unit, but staff accompanied people using this facility.

The lounges, dining and other public areas

Each section of the home had a lounge and dining room attached to it. They were available for people to use freely. The lounges and communal areas were spacious and were designed to encourage residents to sit with each other in groups to promote social interaction. The areas were free from clutter and allowed for residents to sit with their relatives when they visited. There is large area outside where residents from all three areas of the home could participate in planned activities such as a Jubilee party or to see a local musician with residents from across the home in a secure area. The communal areas also had rooms attached which could be used for activities such as hairdressing or nail care.



Observations of resident and staff interactions

At the time of the visit Healthwatch representatives observed interactions between staff, residents and relatives. Staff were observed to be attentive and conscious of the needs of their residents. The staff members knew the residents by name and were responsive to the requests made of them. The staff are alerted to a request through the call bell system, which we were informed is due to be upgraded. There were several calls observed throughout the visit and staff responded to them when they could. The activities coordinator was present at the time of the visit and was seen to be dispensing drinks and snacks to the residents in the lounge.

Relatives were visiting their relatives and were given a brief update by members of staff about how their relative was doing, along with any relevant news that had occurred between their visits. Staff were always present in case any enquiries needed to be made.



Resident feedback

During the visit Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to five residents. As the home consisted of residents with dementia the opportunity for communication was limited.

Environment

Four of the five residents that Healthwatch representatives spoke to were happy with the environment at the care home. One resident commented, "I like the place, people are good." One resident did mention that they liked where the home was situated as it was close to their family.

Activities

Four residents provided feedback on the activities that were available. There were some suggestions made about activities that they wished to do such as "knitting or games." One resident said "they plan things for us, but I sometimes choose not to join in."



"This is my home, I'm very happy here."

Comment from a resident



Care

All residents were complimentary about the care that they received from staff. They mentioned that staff were attentive and friendly. "If you need anything you can just ask." Residents mentioned that they were seen throughout the day by members of staff who would check in on their welfare.

Food

Healthwatch representatives only heard two responses from residents regarding food. The feedback was positive with one resident mentioning that the staff adapt the menu to cater for their tastes and needs. "if you don't like something, they will make you something else." One resident did comment that they sometimes wanted to have more choice when they were served food.



Relative feedback

During the visit Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to two relatives about their views on the care at the home.

How do you feel about the service provided?

Both relatives that Healthwatch representatives spoke with were complimentary about the care that their family member received at the home. "It is excellent I cannot fault it." Another comment was that they were "very satisfied" with the care that was provided. Relatives commented that their relatives were well looked after and that they were given a good level of care.

Do you feel you are kept informed about your relative?

One relative commented on how the home had kept them informed about their family member every time they visited them. They mentioned that they were able to phone up at any time to make enquiries and that they were signed up to receive updates on Whatsapp and the blog. "We are always kept informed about things we need to know about."

Do you understand the process to make a complaint if you needed to?

All relatives were aware of how to raise issues with members of staff with one complimenting the relationship between them and the home. "We know staff very well so if we need to ask something we can." They mentioned that they would ask to speak to any member of staff if they had a query.

Are you aware of any activities provided by the service?

Relatives mentioned that they were kept informed about activities that the home provided and that they were happy with the choices that are on offer. One relative did mention that their family member was not always able to join in with activities when they wanted due to their condition.

Would you recommend this service to others?

Both relatives were happy to recommend Alexandra care home to other people. "100% we are very happy to recommend it."

Staff feedback

Healthwatch Lancashire spoke with eight members of staff during the visit.

Do you feel you have enough staff when on duty?

Eight members of staff mentioned that the home was well staffed with enough staff to cover day and night shifts. Sickness was mentioned by one member of staff who stated that sickness was covered through “recalling other staff or through agency.” It was mentioned that dependency was analysed monthly and that it “allows us to meet the demand and staff are happy to help to meet that demand.” Members of staff mentioned that their shifts did change to reflect the needs of the residents, especially when there was a change in a resident's circumstances and their care needed to be adapted.

Do you feel supported to carry out person centred care?

All members of staff said that they felt that they received appropriate support to provide person centred care for the residents. “I feel supported by all the staff on the different levels and we all know how to carry out our jobs properly.” Staff mentioned that the team works well to meet the needs of their residents with support from the management being mentioned. “Management and staff all have positive relationships at all times which makes us want to deliver that person centred care.” Staff felt that they could approach the management team if they felt that something needed to be altered or amended for residents.

Staff mentioned that there is a wide range of activities available for residents to choose from such as “Nail painting, afternoon teas and craft activities.” Staff mentioned that residents were regularly consulted on what they wanted to do. They also described how some of the activities are based around celebrations and festivals such as the jubilee or Christmas. “We plan things that give our residents the chance to take part if they want to. It is something a bit different for them.” One member of staff informed Healthwatch representatives about how they keep relatives informed about the activities that are on offer to give them chance to provide feedback as needed. “We use facebook and our website to keep people informed about the activities that we do with our residents.”

Do you feel you have enough training to carry out your duties well?

All staff felt that they received enough training on a regular basis to help them with their work. It was mentioned that the records are kept up to date regularly to make sure that there were no gaps in training. Training is done internally throughout the group to ensure consistency. One member of staff did comment that they sometimes felt like they needed to use their time off to attend training. “Sometimes we do it on shift and sometimes we need to come to do it on our days off which means we don't always get a good break.” They mentioned that any time lost was always given back.

Are you happy working within the nursing home?

All members of the staff team that Healthwatch spoke with were happy with their jobs. Staff commented on how the team was able to work together “we call each other the Brooklands Family.” Compliments were paid to the management “I feel valued and am able to use my professional skills and qualifications to make a difference.” Two members of staff mentioned that they had worked for the company for a long period of time “I really enjoy supporting my residents and their families. We try to make a difference.” It was mentioned that this was a theme they found with all members of staff.

Would you be happy to recommend this care home to a close relative or friend?

All eight staff members were very complementary about the care on offer at Alexandra and all answered that they would be happy to recommend the care home. One member of staff commented that “The team are all very caring.” Which they qualified as a reason they had been working at the home for a long time.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated based on observations of the environment and feedback gathered from residents, relatives, and staff.

1. Look at ways to improve the signage on the ground floor of the building to help visitors find their way.
2. Add additional information to the entrance area to inform visitors about covid safety and signing in measures.
3. Investigate locations to place dementia clocks in communal areas.

Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe	Comments
Look at ways to improve the signage on the ground floor of the building to help visitors find their way.	This is something that we can assist with and will ensure that this is completed.	17 th March 2023	
Add additional information to the entrance area to inform visitors about covid safety and signing in measures.	Covid guidance and our safety measures are highlighted at the entrance of all units. We have repositioned this for better viewing.	13 th March	
Investigate locations to place dementia clocks in communal areas	I have spoken to the unit managers and Maintenance to ensure that clocks are appropriately ordered and placed.	24 th March	
Add a suggestion box to the communal areas for residents and their family members to suggest new activities.	This is a great idea, and I will get these ordered for all three units.	24 th March	

Any other comments?

Thank you for your visit. We are happy to receive such a positive report. Being mindful of the previous report we have worked together as the work family that we are to ensure high standards of care are met. I have taken your recommendations on board and began to implement your suggestions. Going forward, we will continue to ensure that we continue to offer the best support possible to our residents, families and staff.



healthwatch
Lancashire

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