

healthwatch

Cheshire West



Enter and View Report

Newton Hall

Frodsham

10 April 2025

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Report Details

Address	Newton Hall Residential Home Kingsley Road Frodsham WA6 6YD
Service Provider	Spring Care
Date of Visit	10 th April 2025
Type of Visit	Enter and View with prior notice
Representatives	Esraa Jaser Tricia Cooper
Date of previous visits by Healthwatch Cheshire West	13 th August 2019

This report relates to findings gathered during a visit to the premises on specific dates as set out above. The report is not suggested to be a fully representative portrayal of the experiences of all the residents, friends and family members or staff, but does provide an account of what was observed by Healthwatch Cheshire Authorised Representatives (ARs) at the time of the visits.

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Cheshire is the local independent consumer champion for health and care services, forming part of the national network of local Healthwatch across England.

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, local Healthwatch have the power to carry out Enter and View visits as part of their scrutiny function. This legislation places a duty on health and social care providers to allow Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch to carry out an Enter and View visit on premises where health and social care is publicly funded and delivered. This includes:

- Health or care services which are contracted by local authorities or the NHS, such as adult social care homes and day-care centres.
- NHS Trusts
- NHS Foundation Trusts
- Local authorities
- Primary medical services, such as GPs
- Primary dental services, such as dentists
- Primary Ophthalmic services, such as opticians
- Pharmaceutical services, such as community pharmacists.

The list of service providers who have a duty to allow entry is set out in section 225 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and supplemented by Regulation 14 of the 2013 Local Authorities regulations.

At Healthwatch Cheshire, the Enter and View programme is conducted by a small team of staff and volunteers, who are trained as Authorised Representatives to carry out visits to health and care premises.

Following an Enter and View visit, a formal report is published where findings of good practice and recommendations to improve the service are made. These reports are circulated to the service provider, commissioner, the CQC and relevant partner organisations. They are also made publicly available on the Healthwatch Cheshire websites:

- www.healthwatchcheshireeast.org.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view
- www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view.

Purpose of the Visit

- To engage with residents, friends and relatives of the named services and understand their experiences
- To capture these experiences and any ideas they may have for change
- To observe residents, friends and relatives interacting with the staff and their surroundings
- To make recommendations based on Healthwatch Authorised Representatives' observations and feedback from residents, friends and relatives

Methodology

This Enter & View visit was carried out with 'Prior Notice'.

A visit with 'Prior Notice' is when the setting is aware that we will be conducting an Enter & View visit. On this occasion an exact time and date were not given.

Prior to the Enter and View visit the service was asked to display both the letter announcing our visit and a Healthwatch Cheshire poster in a public area. The service was also asked to share surveys amongst residents, friends and relatives. Members of the Healthwatch team visited the service prior to the Enter and View visit to deliver paper copies of the surveys.

To enable us to check that there are no infection outbreaks at the premises that would prevent the visit taking place for infection control reasons, this Care Home was made aware that we would be coming on the morning of the visit.

Preparation

In preparation for an Enter and View visit the Authorised Representatives who will be carrying out the visit conduct research that involves reviewing:

- The latest CQC report from a routine inspection of the service
- Any previous Healthwatch Cheshire Enter and View reports

- The Care Home's information held on the Carehome.co.uk website
- Entries on social media platforms
- Comments held on Healthwatch Cheshire's feedback centre
- Information received by Healthwatch Cheshire as a result of undertaking surveys.

On the day of the visit the Authorised Representatives hold a briefing to discuss findings from their individual preparation, and decide as a team how they will carry out the visit, and any specific areas of focus based on this prior knowledge.

Newton Hall

Owned by Spring Care UK, the care home is located on the main road between Kingsley and Frodsham, on the edge of open countryside. There are no shops in the immediate vicinity, but they would be easily accessible by car. It provides respite and short stays, long-term placements, emergency placements, day care support, residential, dementia and nursing care.

Findings

Arriving at the care home

Environment

There were only two signs for the home, one can be easily seen from the Kingsley Road close to the home site, and the other one is a clear sign on one side of the driveway entrance. There is adequate car parking.

It is an imposing building but needs maintenance and painting (the main entrance), and grounds appear very well maintained. There is a secure garden for residents' use.

The home is secured with keypad entry and has a doorbell. Upon arrival the main door was closed. We received a warm welcome from the staff and then the manager came to meet us and invited us to sign the visitor book via an iPad.



There was a lot of information on display, mainly about the activities of the week and the whole month, and safety. However, we noticed the Healthwatch poster and leaflets were not on display, and the manager at the end of the visit promised to display Healthwatch promotional materials.

The entrance hall was bright, clean, and well presented. The home is decorated well, with lots of photographs. The furniture looks comfortable and appears to meet the needs of the residents.



Healthwatch Representatives explained who we were and then spoke with the manager, who took one of us up to a quiet lounge for a chat, whilst the other one was given a guided tour of the home.

Treatment and care

Quality of care

The manager has been in the post for seven years. They told Healthwatch that during the visit we would see lots of positive interactions between staff and residents.

Newton Hall uses Helsby and Elton Practice, and one of their nurse practitioners was carrying out a ward round on the morning of our visit. The manager told Healthwatch they have a very good relationship with the practice. All the residents have to come under one practice and there is no choice to stay with their previous GP.

The manager explained that their residents have different needs and circumstances but that if they become unwell and need additional care any member of staff can carry out observations (blood pressure, temperature and so on), and can provide paracetamol to residents. If there are any concerns, staff will either call the GP or an ambulance, depending on the circumstances.

Moreover, the manager told us about their recent experience of hospital admissions and discharge, *"We are given a 'handover' by the Countess of Chester over the telephone, including the resident's recent medications. In the past we have sometimes found that what the hospital states on the discharge documents can be different from reality. Overall, the hospital's Discharge Team is very good with handovers now; they have improved over the last 12 months."*

When asked if anything could reduce hospital admission and improve discharge, the manager said, *"Ensuring the discharge documentation is accurate"*.

The home uses Frodsham Dental Practice because *"the dentist is based on the ground floor so it's easier for the residents to access. Staff or family member will organise an appointment and transport them."* (Manager).

Newton Hall has a fully equipped hairdresser room, but it is very small, and they keep it as storage for the salon's equipment.

The hairdresser comes in fortnightly, and they use the salon to wash hair and the bar room to dry hair and have their nails done.



A chiropodist visits every six weeks and in an emergency. The home uses Iris Opticians in Salford, and they have a relationship with the local Frodsham Pharmacy, just down the road from the home.

Other health services which visit include occupational therapists, physiotherapists; and staff will refer residents to SALT (speech and language team) and mental health team if needed.

During the tour of the home Healthwatch observed most of the residents who were watching a film in the main lounge and chatting to each other. One resident told us that there is lots going on at the home and she really

enjoys being at Newton Hall, others expressed their feelings about being in the home, having “Company”, “Making friends”, “Make a new friend, and not lonely”.

All the residents we saw appeared well looked after and were dressed in clean day clothes. *“Mum feels safe and well looked after”* one family member told Healthwatch.



The home operates a call bell system, with display panels mounted on the walls at the reception area. The code for each room will show up on the small screen, so all staff can see it.

Privacy, dignity and respect

The manager explained that staff will gain consent from residents before any personal care is carried out and they always give residents choices and ensure that all care is always person centred. Staff will knock before entering a resident’s bedroom.

The manager added *“All staff have training in dignity, privacy and respect. It’s promoted through supervision and discussed at staff meetings. The staff know to respect residents’ choices”*.

However, the manager also told us that only the staff on shift at the time of the staff meetings (held in the evenings) attend.

The care home uses large print information and easy read documents, along with standard information. We were told they can provide Braille and translate information if required.

Understanding residents' care plans

Newton Hall has moved on from paper care plans to digital ones. The manager explained they are reviewed and updated monthly, and all staff know how to add residents' information through the handheld devices.

"Residents can be involved in their care plans. One of our residents has coeliac disease and is diabetic. We ask her about her likes and dislikes and make suggestions as to what food she would like to eat. Some relatives are involved in the care plans, but others are not interested. We keep in touch with relatives by email, and the activities coordinator sends out photos weekly to family." (Manager)

Relationships

Interaction with staff

During our visit to the home, Healthwatch witnessed numerous staff interacting with residents. We heard from the manager that the relationship between staff and residents is very good, and staff will go out of their way to do things for the residents. The relationship between staff and friends and family is also very good, and one gentleman, who visits every day, thanked staff for their support.

All staff should wear name badges; the manager claimed that *"a few staff have lost them. I've ordered replacements."* At the time of our visit, the manager was not wearing her name badge.

We enquired about the use of agency staff at Newton Hall and how this was managed to ensure good continuity of care. The manager explained that for six or seven months they did not need to use them, but more recently a few members of staff had gone on maternity leave. This meant they had to employ agency staff to cover these absences. The home does try to use Spring Care's bank staff first, if possible.

"One male agency worker would encourage a male resident to dance." (Manager).

The manager shared that the home has an agency file where all agency staff members' profiles are stored clearly showing the dates and details of their completed training modules as well as information on their DBS status and right to work. Newton Hall's head office ensures that all agencies are thoroughly vetted, and that their staff are of high enough calibre and are adequately skilled to provide the level of care. Agency staff are provided with a handover in the morning each time they visit, regardless of the number of times they have previously worked at the home, to solidify care continuity and their knowledge of the residents in their care on any given day.

Connection with friends and family

While Healthwatch were at the home we asked about how visiting takes place at Newton Hall. The manager explained they have open visiting, but they do ask for mealtimes to be protected. They also shared that after receiving advice from social services, family visitors have been supervised on occasion, if residents become agitated or upset.

The manager told us they had had an issue with a friend of a resident who said they were next of kin, which was not the case, and the home raised it with social services as a safeguarding issue.

Visitors are welcome at any time and residents can choose to receive their visitors in their rooms or any communal areas of the home. However, Healthwatch received a comment from a family member saying *"Don't see her room when we visit"*.

The manager explained that Covid no longer impacts visiting at the home, but if they had an outbreak, *"We had a pod installed at the front of the building during Covid and this could be used. We would call family of loved ones to inform them of any outbreaks and put a note on our front door to warn visitors. We would provide PPE if relatives still wished to visit. To ensure contact can still be made, relatives of loved ones can call, email, and do Facetime."*

Healthwatch asked how friends and relatives could raise a complaint, concern or provide feedback. We were told they were able to call, email or go and see the manager or any of the staff.

We were told that Newton Hall holds friends and family meetings every six months but that no-one attends. They held a cheese and wine evening, but this was unsuccessful, even though they advertised this on their noticeboard and sent emails informing family members.

Wider Local Community

In a post visit email, the manager shared "Newton Hall fosters much interaction and involvement with the local community. These include visits from Pets as Therapy dogs, Kingsley Church, visits from local nursery children and Jo-Jingles activities, a nearby belly dancing troupe, the One Voice Choir, a Ukelele band, and the Frodsham RAF Cadets (who visited during a resident and ex-serviceman's 100th birthday).

"Due to our upstanding reputation many local businesses make yearly (or more frequent) donations to the Home, encompassing the local taxi firm, Frodsham Town Council (who provide yearly vouchers to be spent in the local shops as well as fish & chips).

The Home hosts a yearly summer fayre which is open to the whole community and is advertised as such locally. The home also receives telephone calls a few times a year from unrelated members of the public offering to donate items such as clothing or activities provisions, further exemplifying our irreproachable reputation.

Newton Hall has access to a company minibus at least once a month which is used to take residents to a wide variety of local establishments and attractions, such as the Anderton Boat Lift, Shire Horse Centre, Lady Hayes Craft Centre over the road, Walton Gardens, New Brighton, the Riverside Inn at nearby Acton Bridge, The Manchester Museum of Science and Industry, The Cafe at Manchester Airport, Stockley Farm, Petting Zoo, The Boat Museum, Cuckoo land (Clock Museum) in Knutsford and Castle Park Arts Centre to name but a few. The manager added "The Bears Paw

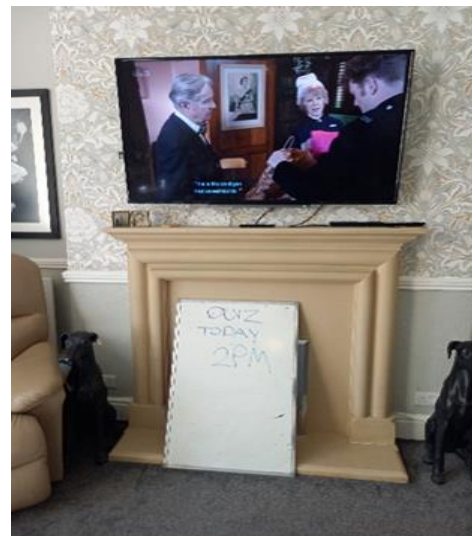
and The Queens Head, both local pubs, donate yearly prizes for our Summer Fayre and have done so for several years”.

Everyday Life at the Care Home

Activities

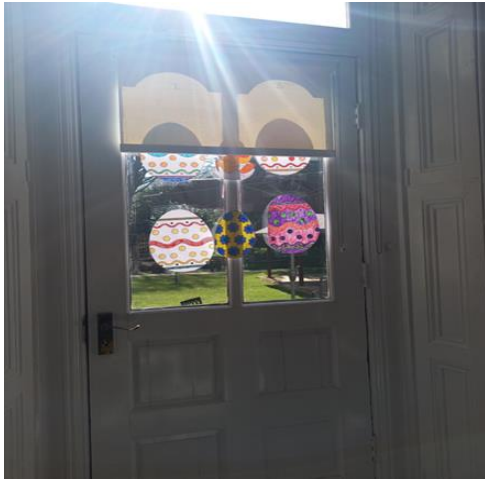
There is one activities coordinator who works part time, 25 hours per week, every day from 10:30 am until 4:30 pm.

There is an activities planner displayed on the board in the reception area and every morning the activities coordinator will write the main activity of the day on a white board under the television in the main lounge room, which allows all residents to see what is taking place.



“We have a weekly planner on the notice board, and sometimes the activities do change. Our activities coordinator knows what the residents like. e.g. some people enjoy painting so the canvasses will be brought out for them to use. We do bingo, quizzes, and they love Karaoke. There is a singer coming in this afternoon, and Jo Jingles will visit with local nursery children, to play, sing and exercise to music. Some residents will do planting in the garden where we have raised boxes.” (Manager)

The manager explained that the activity coordinator will ask the residents what they enjoy doing and will encourage them to be involved. There is a photo album in the manager’s room, showing past activities. We heard there are no 1-to-1 activities as nobody stays in their room alone. All residents sit in the lounge most of the time.



Newton Hall always celebrates special events, including Mother's Day, Chinese New Year and Burns Night. All the residents each receive an Easter egg.

The manager told us they *"have competitions between Spring Care's homes, e.g. making Halloween cakes, who's got the best decorated door or the best Guy Fawkes."*

The home shares a minibus with the other five to six homes under the Spring Care umbrella. They take residents out on trips around once a month, and sometimes more often if the bus is available. Relatives can also go on the trips, and they could either meet them at the destination or, if there is room, they go in the minibus. Examples of places visited are, New Brighton, Cotebrook Shire Horse Centre and Anderton Boat Lift.

All the residents were either "very happy" or "happy" with the activities on offer at the home.

Person Centred Experience

The manager explained that everyone staying in Newton Hall is different and has their own quirks. Staff are aware of these and document them in the care plans and accommodate residents, e.g. their times for getting out of bed.

Newton Hall does not have a resident of the day. However, senior staff in charge are allocated different rooms and will take each resident every month and update their care plan. This includes such things as oral care,

dependency needs, choking risk, moving and handling requirements and fall risks.

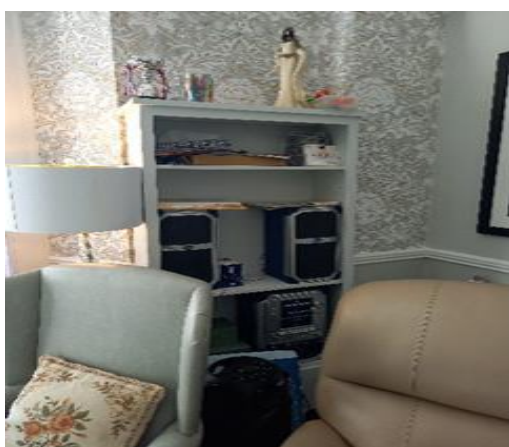
There are several ways that residents and their families can raise a complaint, concern or feedback. Residents can raise concerns or complaints through family, can talk to staff or manager, or raise issues at the residents' meeting (held six monthly by the activity coordinator). The home also has a complaints procedure.

The home has links with the local church, and they come in every so often. A couple of residents go to church on Sundays, and either family take them or someone from the church will pick them up.

Newton Hall allows pets in the home, *"Pat dogs visit weekly, and we did have a resident's parrot live in the home"* the manager said.

Communal Areas

The home is split over two floors. The communal areas are mostly located on the ground floor (music room, lounge, dining room and large main entrance). The exception is the "bar" which is upstairs. This is turned into a Namaste sensory room by the activity's coordinator, for those who enjoy it. Healthwatch observed there was a great deal of natural light in all areas. There are also fabulous secure grounds and gardens.



The home is well presented, free from odours and all the furniture and fittings look to be in good condition.

The communal areas are decorated to a good standard and are free from any obstructions, allowing residents to move freely around the home.



All corridors have handrails and are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs. Also, all the corridors and any exit doors (the main door, garden, and stairs gate) are secured with keypads to which only staff know the code.



There were several communal toilets and bathrooms across the home for the residents' use, and these were well equipped. Staff ensure that residents are safe in the bathroom and each bathroom is well stocked with everything that may be needed.



The majority of residents were either "very happy" or "happy" with the temperature, noise levels, cleanliness and tidiness of the home.

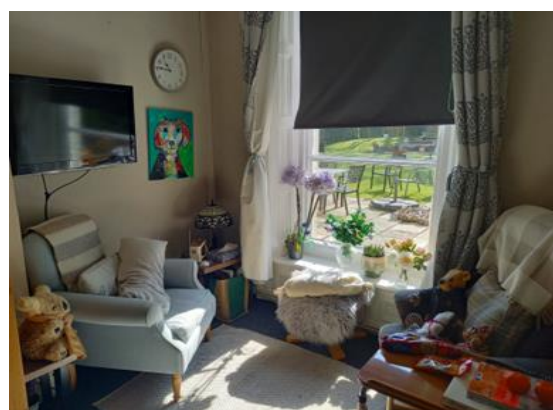
Residents' bedrooms

There are 32 bedrooms at Newton Hall (it says 31 on carehome.co.uk), 15 of which are ensuite fitted with a toilet and sink. They are a very good size and fully furnished. Most of the rooms have large windows providing ample natural light and a view of the gardens or the green fields offering wonderful views. All rooms have the name of the resident on the door.



The manager explained to Healthwatch that the home encourages residents to make their room more personalised and bring their own style to their home. *"We have painted walls different colours for residents, bought a three-quarter double bed, some residents have brought their own bedding".*

Also, staff will write residents' names on belongings and take photos of them (purses, handbags, jewellery etc). They ask family if they would bring in costume jewellery instead of valuable jewellery and keep valuables at home.



The home can accommodate couples who wish to sleep in the same bedroom; the home has three double rooms.

Outdoor areas

Newton Hall has an attractive, accessible and secure garden at the rear for residents' use.

There are several benches and bird feeders to allow residents to sit and take in the surroundings. Care has been given to the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers. There are raised planters for the residents to be involved in gardening, if they wish.



The manager told Healthwatch *"We have held annual summer fayres in the past. If the weather is fine, we have eaten outside for those who wish to do so. Some residents do gardening. In the winter we will put coats on and walk around the garden."*



There is also a large, covered area with plenty of seating which is used in the summer for BBQs and outdoor dining, but now needs some maintenance.

Food and drink

Newton Hall has its own catering staff, so all meals are prepared fresh and homemade. There is a set menu with two choices each day, at all mealtimes, each serving, lunch and sweet. They will use show plates at mealtimes and the staff will help the residents choose which one they would like. And then the staff will ask the residents if there is anything in particular, if they would like, or give other options (chips, sandwiches, omelette, Jacket potato, soup toast,)

Everyone is encouraged to use the dining room; however, meals can be eaten anywhere in the home, and relatives can join their loved ones if they wish. *"We always offer family drinks and biscuits."* (Manager)

The home will cater for any special dietary requirements and one of the residents has Coeliac disease, and they would follow the dietician's advice.

The manager told us they used to have a tray in the main entrance with a variety of snacks, but a new resident ate everything on tray. They now use a snack trolley which is taken around the home at breakfast, mid-morning, after lunch, mid-afternoon and later in the evening.

For Teatime the care home has three options, soup, sandwiches, and a hot, some of the residents like all three.

Those residents, friends and relatives, who completed the Healthwatch survey, overall were either very happy or happy with the quality, taste, choice and quantity of the food, and availability of the drinks, provided in the home.

Care Home Best Practice Initiatives

During Enter and View visits, Healthwatch observe which NHS care initiatives have been adopted at the care home. The three we focus on are:

MUST (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool)	A tool used to identify adults who are malnourished, at risk of malnutrition(undernutrition), or obesity. It also includes management guidelines which can be used to develop a care plan.
Restore2 (Recognise Early Soft-signs, Take Observations, Respond, Escalate)	A tool designed to help staff recognise when a resident may be deteriorating or at risk of physical deterioration and act appropriately according to their care plan to protect and manage the resident.
RITA (Reminiscence /Rehabilitation & Interactive Therapy Activities)	A digital reminiscence therapy with user-friendly interactive screens and tablets to blend entertainment with therapy. It assists patients (particularly with memory impairments) in recalling and sharing events from their past through listening to music, watching news reports of significant historical events, listening to war-time speeches, playing games and karaoke and watching films.

Newton Hall uses MUST with every resident and Stop and Watch Early Warning Tool (similar to Restore2). The manager showed us an example of an Early Warning form completed by a member of staff.

The home engages with End-of-Life Partnership – *“Staff have training and senior staff have had Deterioration in Health training.”* (Manager)

Recommendations

- To display Healthwatch paperwork and leaflets in reception area
- Think of alternative ways to encourage relatives to attend meetings.
- Healthwatch suggested holding staff meetings during the day, when residents are occupied with an activity, so staff would not need to come back to work in the evening.
- To consider using RITA or equivalent interactive digital display programme with residents
- Encourage residents' family members and relatives to spend time together in residents' rooms
- Paint the front of the building.

What's Working Well

- Healthwatch observed most of residents out of their rooms and in communal areas with other residents, talking and watching television together
- All residents we saw appeared well cared for and looked after
- Warm relationships appear to exist between staff and residents
- Good connections with the wider community

Service Provider's Response

Recommendation 1

To display Healthwatch paperwork and leaflets in reception area.

Service provider's response

These have been in place, but the dementia residents have moved them around the home.

Action

We are looking at a locked glass cabinet, for documentation and leaflets to keep them safe.

Recommendation 2

Think of alternative ways to encourage relatives to attend meetings.

Service provider's response

We have tried several different times for residents, even cheese and wine evening, quiz nights.

Action

We will keep trying to have meetings when there are regular visitors in.

Recommendation 3

To consider using RITA or equivalent interactive digital activity programme with residents

Service provider's response

Digital display programme is very expensive, which we will ask HO to see if they will assist in purchasing a digital display programme.

Action

Looking at different way to purchase a digital display for the residents.

Recommendation 4

Healthwatch suggested holding staff meetings during the day, when residents are occupied with an activity, so staff would not need to come back to work in the evening.

Service provider's response

We do have an open-door policy which the staff find reassuring and will often come and talk to the manager or Deputy in private.

Action

We are going to try more frequent staff meetings, to catch all the staff on different shifts.

Recommendation 5

Encourage residents' family members and relatives to spend time together in residents' rooms.

Service provider's response

All family members are allowed to use the residents room, some prefer not to, and sit in the dining room or outside if possible.

Action

N/A

Recommendation 6

Painting the front of Care Home.

Service provider's response

This job is down to Spring Care, and they will organise for the building to be painted.

Action

I will put it onto Fault Fixers, which will highlight your requirements.