



**Woodview
Extra Care**
Focus Group
January 2018

Summary

Woodview is an Extra Care sheltered housing scheme in Swarcliffe. There are 92 flats and bungalows within the complex. The Extra Care service provides support to up to 46 customers who live in the scheme.

Healthwatch Leeds facilitated focus groups on three sites where the home care services are provided. The focus group that took place at Woodview Extra Care is the second one in the series. Our aim was to find out customers' experience and views of the homecare service provided on site.

During the focus group, we received a lot of praise for the care staff and positive comments about the service. The support which the customers received has helped them to maintain their independence and continue to live in their own home.

Customers offered constructive feedback on improving the service as well. We have made several recommendations based on customers' opinions in the following areas:

- Rota system and continuity of carers
- Management and communication
- Social activities

What we did?

Healthwatch Leeds staff and volunteers visited Woodview Extra Care on the 18th January 2018 between 10:30am and 12 noon.

Seven customers and one relative took part in the focus group facilitated by Healthwatch Leeds staff. The relative answered our questions on behalf of her loved one.

Seven people have lived there for over 3 years and one customer just over a year.

Customers received multiple support on site. Below is the breakdown of the number of customers and the kind of support they received.

Service Provided by Woodview Extra Care	How many people?
Personal Care	8
Mealtime / Nutritional Support	4
Medication Support	6
Financial / Budgeting Support	0
Social Support	0
Cleaning / Laundry Support	3
Shopping	1

The findings represent a snap shot of customers' and relative's views on their experience of the home care service provided to them and their loved one.

Findings from the focus group

1. Good outcomes achieved for customers who have received the home care support. However, social isolation has been highlighted as one of the issues the customers were facing.

All 8 people agreed that the support they received helped them to “regain independence”; “continue to live in their own home” and “feel safe and secure”;

However, only three customers agreed that receiving the support “stops social isolation”.

One relative commented on the importance of the interaction the carer has brought to her love one. One customer commented “if I did not have the care support I would not be able to go out.”

Only one agreed that they “live within a close community”. Location of the home is one of the issues-no real sense of it being a close community.

2. Customers know their care workers and what they should be doing. However, they don't seem to know whether a named worker has any specific role.

Six out of eight people knew all the care workers that have visited them. This is important to the clients as they have different care workers who visit them.

Almost everyone (7) knew who their named care worker was. However, they said they did not have full understanding of named workers' specific role.

Everyone knew what their care workers should be doing on a daily basis.

3. The home care service provided at Woodview has generally been flexible and accommodating.

Everyone (8) said that the care workers come at days and times that they need them to.

All eight customers said that care workers tried to work round them to the best of their ability when they had a change to their routine.

However, one customer said that the rota was so structured, if customer get back late from an appointment they would have missed their time. “If I miss my tea call, I have to wait till 10pm to see a carer.”

Six out of eight said the care workers arrive on time mostly but 15 minutes leeway is known and accepted by all respondents.

Customers (6) said that they were not informed of any changes at Woodview. Most of them (5) don't mind. 3 customers said they would like to be informed though. For example, one customer's dinner was usually taken out by the carers from the oven- if the carers are late and the customer isn't informed then the dinner is ruined.

4. Involvement from customers in care planning

Although everyone (8) agreed that they had a say in their care planning, people have varied experiences.

One said that she filled in a form and was happy with that arrangement; another said that the carer will contact office if changes are required. Some customers thought the Leeds City Council "tick box" form was the care plan review as it was filled in with care workers periodically.

Nobody seemed clear about the formal procedure. This needs to be made clearer to people and care staff.

5. Raising complaints and concerns

Only two people said that they have had a copy of the Leeds City Council, 'Tell us what you think' leaflet.

The customers said that they would usually talk to the management directly or via a carer if they have any issues with the service.

Customers were not aware that they could complain to Leeds City Council independently.

6. The customers were satisfied with the support provided by their care workers.

Everyone (7) said that the home care service met their needs; the care workers treated customers with respect and their dignity was maintained when receiving care.

“The majority of carers are doing the best they can in challenging circumstances”

Every customer (8) would like to recommend the care service to others. Some customers added they would preferred greater continuity of care staff; i.e. fewer staff changes.

“The care I get is wonderful. Full marks all the way to the top”

“They make you feel at home. They are so jolly. If they see that you’re upset, they’ll sit down to talk to you. I wouldn’t manage without them.”

“my dad wouldn’t be alive if it wasn’t for this place”

7. Things that could be improved from the customers point of view

Rota system

The general view is that the care staff are very busy. This has led to one customer commenting that they did not get the full time they paid for - “I pay for my care, and sometimes someone else comes or they have to leave early.”

Continuity of carers

People had a general sense of lack of continuity with carers.

Continuity and consistency in the carer who comes was an issue for the customers, particularly for people with complex needs.

“I understand the continuity of carers can’t be achieved all the time but it doesn’t happen at all. I don’t think the carers like lack of continuity either.”

“last week, which I admit was exceptional, I had 20 different carers (two carers each time)

Two other customers agreed about the lack of continuity of carers.

Management and communication

Some people thought poor communication is probable reason that some of the requests/changes have not been actioned or lost in the system.

“I have no grouch with the care staff. Just with the management. If you ask for something, they don’t act on.”

Three agreed: “there is lack of communication.” e.g. things were put in the diary but not on computer, so it doesn’t get done.

Two customers commented that management say things will be done or they are working towards doing but nothing happens.

Some customers said that the manager was not visible.

Social activities

During the focus group, people talked about spending a lot of time alone. Social activities are welcome amongst customers to tackle social isolation.

Recommendations

During the focus group, customers praised the care staff highly and were satisfied with the service. We would like to highlight the areas that could be improved based on their views and make recommendations for the provider to consider.

Rota system and continuity of carers

We recommend that the management review how rotas are organised in order to address carer continuity and enable more flexibility in arrangement.

Management and Communication

We recommend that the management look at ways of communicating to customers more effectively. This includes:

- feeding back to customers in good time whether the request can be met or not and why.
- explaining both internal and external complaint/feedback procedures
- explaining formal procedures of care planning/review
- identifying the role of key workers and explain it to customers
- exploring ways of communicating to customers about the changes in their caring routine

Social Activities

We recommend that the management explores ways of providing additional support to enable people to take part in social activities organised in house or externally.

Providers Response

During January and February 2018, the Extra Care Service carried out a three comprehensive customer experience gathering exercises. An important part of this work was to work with Healthwatch Leeds and hold focus groups at each scheme. These gave customers of the service opportunity to share their views on the how we are doing and how we can look to continually improve the service we deliver to the people of Leeds. These focus groups

have added a further level of external scrutiny to our service and are positively welcomed.

An action plan has been received which responds to our recommendations in detail. This is published along with the report on our website.

Next steps

This summary will be shared with Woodview Extra Care as well as Leeds City Council, the commissioners for this service and the Care Quality Commission.

The document will also be published on the Healthwatch Leeds website.

Acknowledgement

This report has been written by Tatum Yip, Community Project Worker at Healthwatch Leeds, in collaboration with Martin Kennard and Alison Garford. Healthwatch Leeds would like to thank them for their involvement in the focus group.

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Finally, we would like to thank the customers of Woodview Extra Care for participating the focus group.

