



Enter and View Visit to Willowdene Care Home - Hebburn 8TH March 2017



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Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion for health and social care patients and service users in England.

Healthwatch South Tyneside has statutory powers under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to carry out visits to gather the views and experiences of service users, patients, families, carers and staff for the purpose of service improvement.

Service:	Willowdene Care Home
Named Manager:	Elaine Proud
Date of Visit:	8th March 2017
Announced/Unannounced:	Announced
Visit Team:	Paul Anderson and Linda Gibson
Most Recent CQC Inspection:	31st March 2016

Purpose of Visit

Residents living in care and nursing homes may find they are not only coming to terms with leaving their own home but also find they are unable to do the things they used to do. They may find themselves very quickly becoming inactive and bored which can impact on their health and mental wellbeing.

Healthwatch South Tyneside considered that conducting Enter and View visits across all the care and nursing homes in South Tyneside would present valuable evidence of what is being delivered around 'Meaningful Activities' and what is in place for residents to keep them mentally and physically stimulated to enhance their quality of life.

Healthwatch South Tyneside Authorised Representatives Team, through Enter & View visits to all care and nursing homes in South Tyneside will:

- Collate evidence of a varied approach to meaningful activity; and how services address increasing levels of social isolation for older people in South Tyneside,
- Look at opportunities for social inclusion within care and nursing homes, whilst gaining an understanding of how meaningful activity is supported within South Tyneside care homes and peoples experience of this; and
- Produce questions that are standardised with a shared understanding of this piece of work so that each care home has the same experience and opportunity.



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

Overall Summary

During our visit we were unable to engage with residents to answer our questions on the activities they may or may not participate in due to their level of dementia. The manager and staff shared with us how they recognised the need to be creative due to the problems they have had recruiting an Activities Co-ordinator.

They enlisted the support of relatives through difficult times when capacity was difficult and the response we were told has been very positive. The idea of bringing the community into the home has been successful with residents looking forward to new people coming into the home. This we were told was also an opportunity for local people to see how the home operates and what Willowdene has to offer for their older residents.

We felt the home having gone through some internal decoration and lack of Activities Co-ordinator had not prevented the manager and staff working with relatives to come up with an interim solution to provide some activities for their residents.

Process

Enter and View officers gathered information and intelligence using a variety of means:

- Observations of the general condition and environment within the home and interactions between staff and service users, including staff carrying out daily tasks.
- Discussions with management and staff and an awareness of any sensitive areas in relation to specific service users.
- Discussions with service users and families using open questioning techniques and non-leading prompts.



Observations

Resident's responses to questions:

Do you take part in the activities provided at the home?

We were unable to have any meaningful discussions with residents as those that were available we were told were all in advanced stages of dementia.

Have you ever been asked what activities you would like to do? Were these offered to you? If not why not?

We were told that monthly meetings are held for residents and their families. It is at these meetings that activities are discussed, predominately with the resident's families.

What kind of activities / interests do you have?

We were unable to gain a response to this question from the residents we tried to speak to.

Families and carer responses to questions:

Do you have the opportunity to get involved in activities around the home?

There were no family members visiting Willowdene at the time of our visit.

Have you been asked about your relative or friends interests in respect of activities?

We were told that this was discussed at monthly meetings

Manager and staff responses to questions:

Does the home display an activities programme?

We did not see an activities programme displayed.

Is there an activities co-ordinator at the home?

We were told that they are currently interviewing for an Activities Co-ordinator as there have been four in the last twelve months. Relatives have been asked if possible to visit their relatives more often until an Activities Co-ordinator is in post, residents are involved in the interviewing for an Activities Co-ordinator. The manager informed us relatives have been very supportive over the last few months.

Are residents asked what they would like to do?

We were told residents are asked what they would like to do but at present there are staff capacity issues. Also we were informed that owing to the conditions and



health of the residents this proved difficult at times, as most of the residents have memory loss due to their dementia.

Do residents have individual activity plans?

We were told that the manager likes to adopt a person centred holistic approach to activities. As most of the residents have dementia engaging with residents on a one to one basis to play dominoes or card games is often more successful than trying to work with a group of residents. Individual information is documented within their care plans.

General Observations:

Is there a garden? Are residents encouraged to use it?

We were told the garden was used for summer fayres with stalls, raffles and entertainers. Unfortunately local residents in the past had complained of the noise when events are held in the garden.

Is there a memory room? Do they have social events? i.e. Christmas Carols or Tea Dances?

We were shown a room which, we were told, is to be developed to have a memory wall and another room to be developed as an audio room, ie for talking books. We were told that they have a Christmas carol service with a local school choir attending.

The manager said that reminiscence workshops using various items and equipment will be in place when the Activities Co-ordinator is in post.

Are outside entertainers invited to the home?

We were told that singers regularly attend and we were shown photos of pets and ponies that visit the home. A hairdresser comes to the home every week.

Are all staff involved or is it down to the 'activities co-ordinator'?

We were told that activities are sparse due to no Activities Co-ordinator being in post. Staff we observed were entertaining residents on a one to one basis playing dominoes or colouring books rather than the resident participating in group activities. We were informed that the chef makes cakes to sell when events or fayres are being held at the home. When the Activities Co-ordinator is in place the programme, we were told, would be evident for relatives and staff to encourage residents to participate in.

Is there a varied programme of activities? i.e. dancing, gardening or exercising.

The staff told us that residents had been taken to Beamish Museum, Bill Quay farm, Dementia Friendly Cinema and pub lunches. Willowdene also offers 'Teapot' Tuesday for independent elderly residents and their carers in the community. We



were also told that there is a 'Care in the Community Day' on a Thursday to help integrate with local people. A regular GP attends the home every two weeks from the Glen Surgery.

Service Provider Response

No response received.

Signed:



Enter and View Lead

Final Report taken to Healthwatch South Tyneside Board on:

Board Comments:

This appears to be a home with many residents who have dementia. There however seems little evidence of creative ways of engaging those residents in meaningful activities. Staffing seems an issue and we wonder if they are understaffed this then could lead to less available time to use time and resources effectively. Perhaps working in partnership with professionals from the local Alzheimer's Society could improve the experiences of those who are becoming socially isolated and need more not less activities specially designed to meet their needs.

