

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Enter & View Report

Aspray House

Care Home Series 2014-2015

Thursday 12th February 2015

Susan Toole
Sheila Macdonald
February 2015

Visit details

Service address	Aspray House. 481 Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, London E10 7EB
Service Provider	Twinglobe Care Homes Ltd
Service description	Aspray House is a nursing and residential home that provides care for up to 64 people, some of whom may be living with dementia.
Number of residents	64
Reason for visit	Part of programme. This is one of a series of visits to older people living in care homes in Waltham Forest. This programme is to introduce our Enter & View representatives and develop their role. We wanted to talk with older people about their experience of living in care homes. We looked at 4 areas - meals, activities, staff responses and complaints
Status of visit	Announced
Date of visit	Thursday 12 th February 2015
Authorised Reps	Susan Toole, Sheila Macdonald
Declarations of interest	None

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Waltham Forest would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their co- operation and hospitality in hosting this visit. We welcome all contributions to this Enter and View programme.

Enter & View

Enter & View is a statutory power conferred upon Healthwatch by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It gives Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch Waltham Forest the right to enter and observe publically funded health and social care services in the borough. Enter & View visits are visits and not inspections. Enter & View visits are used to get a lay perspective on the service concerned and are an opportunity for service users to talk about their experiences with the service. This takes place in the communal areas of the home, as our visits preclude talking to people on their own in their private rooms. A report of each visit is produced which includes any recommendations for change or improvement arising from the visit. This is shared with the service prior to publication. All Healthwatch Waltham Forest Authorised Representatives undergo training and background checks before joining the Enter & View programme.

Disclaimer: This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the service users, visitors and staff who contributed to the report on that date.

Summary of the visit

We visited from noon until 2.30pm on a weekday. On entering the home, there was a bright and pleasant entrance lobby and reception area. We noticed a variety of information on the noticeboard including details of hairdressing services and an advert for a relatives' meeting plus a list of activities taking place in the home during the week of our visit. We found the manager and her staff to be pleasant, friendly and open to this visit and thank them, service users and relatives for their co-operation with our observation.

2 enter & view representatives visited and we looked at 4 areas:

- *catering, activities, staff responsiveness and complaints*

Description of facility and overview of findings

This home caters for 64 people with a variety of residential and nursing care needs. It is a new, modern building on 4 floors. The care is divided into 4 Unit - 2 units of 20 people each, and 2 units of 12 people each. There are lounges on each floor, one of which is to be converted into a cafe for residents and visitors. The décor is clean and bright, and it appears well-maintained.

Observations

Catering

We observed lunchtime on the 2nd floor Unit. This was a small unit for 12 people. 4 people took their lunch in their rooms on this day. For some people this was a choice that varied from day to day but for others it related to their poor health and restricted mobility. There was flexibility about the timing of lunch, as we saw one member of staff take lunch on a tray to a person who asked to have it later on in the day.

The dining room was attached to a lounge area, where seating was arranged so people could look out onto the street or sit near to the TV. There was a visual display board that indicated the day, date and local weather. We noticed that the TV was on all of the time, including when there was no-one in the lounge. We asked staff why this was the case, and they said they had forgotten to turn it off - but it remained on.

The lounge and dining area were light and well decorated, with three tables where people could eat. Two people were eating in the lounge near the TV for some of the time. We noticed that staff were very responsive to their behaviour, as both of them wandered in and out of the lounge and up and down the corridors. A member of staff engaged with one lady to encourage her to eat. She was given tea and ham sandwiches and then encouraged to try some rice and meat stew. Another lady was eating cake which she seemed to enjoy. Neither wanted to sit still for long and

staff were flexible in supporting them and helping to prevent them becoming too agitated.

The dining area had a nice, calm feel to it, being small and intimate. One person sat with their partner who was feeding them, and another 2 people sat at another table. While they were eating, staff noticed some spillage so asked them if they would like a bib, which they agreed to. We noticed that drinks were plentiful, mainly squash and tea seemed to be most popular

The meal was mashed potato, mixed veg and pork mince stew, followed by custard and cake or fruit yoghurt. Most people seemed to enjoy their meal and ate most of it, including the person who said “disgusting” when the meal was put in front of them. Staff told us that this person always said this to every meal but seemed to enjoy eating them. Staff told us that there was always a choice of food and people were asked the day before about menu options. Half an hour before lunchtime, they were asked again, and could have a choice of food including something light such as an omelette or sandwiches if they wanted to. They confirmed that the kitchen catered for a variety of diets including diabetic, Kosher, Halal and Jamaican food. If someone did not want the meal they had ordered, they could easily change their minds and have something else.

One wheelchair user needed support to eat. While other people were eating their meals, a member of staff came to sit with this person and fed them.

We also observed lunchtime on the 1st floor unit, where 6 people came into the dining room to eat. This room has 5 round tables, and residents were assisted to sit, some remaining in their wheelchairs. This involved staff in having to move chairs out of the way and space for this mobility appeared somewhat restricted. As in the other unit, some residents always eat their meals in bed, while others get up when they feel well enough. Those in bed and needing assistance were served after lunch in the dining room had finished. Three gentlemen sat together, and although very quiet, appeared to enjoy their meals, eating well. Two ladies sat together; one was clearly very weary and fell asleep through the meal. Staff told me that she had been to the activities session in the morning and would need to go to bed straight after lunch. She would be offered assistance to eat something before leaving. The second lady had been observed earlier by us in the activities session as somewhat agitated and verbally complaining, which continued at the meal table. She said that she had nothing in front of her to eat, but then shared a laugh with staff when she thought her place mat was her lunch. She liked her drink of squash and staff brought her a second drink immediately she finished it. She pushed her food away after eating very little, and staff told me that she will be offered a sandwich or alternative which she often prefers.

A third lady sat alone. She had pureed food and needed assistance. We observed that she had been served before the others, which meant that she had to wait as only one member of staff was serving. Twice she tried to pull her plate towards her to eat, but was unable to manage, and the nurse giving out medication drew the staff member's attention to this. The nurse noted that it was not protocol for her to give eating assistance. Residents accepted their medication without difficulty as she moved around.

Activities

The home has 2 activity organisers, with one more post currently in recruitment. A variety of group activities took place in the morning and afternoons. People were encouraged to join the group in the activity room and had been making Chinese lanterns. This was linked to the theme of Chinese New Year and the year of the Goat and would also be reflected in menus. The group engaged with 8 people, and produced a variety of brightly coloured lanterns. One person became quite agitated and a member of staff gently moved them out of the group room and gave them some individual attention. We thought this was a good example of being responsive to people's different needs.

The programme of activities was well displayed throughout the home and there were pictorial version of the weekly activities, too. We thought this was very helpful, both as a reminder for people living there and for those visiting their loved ones. A particular favourite is the monthly Singalong.

As well as group activities, there were 1:1 session with people in their rooms, which could reflect the activity of their choice - reading, having their nails done etc. We thought this was a good system as it meant that people who did not join group activities still got some personalised activities. Activities were based on what individuals liked to do and this information was sought from the initial admission to the home, as staff built a life history of people's likes and interests. One younger resident told us that having her nails done was her favourite activity, and staff said that they attempt to offer this 1:1 session to everyone at least once a week.

The activities included a "meet and greet" session in both morning and afternoons, and we thought this was a good way for staff on each shift to engage with the people living here.

There were lots of TVs in the lounges and DVD equipment. The home has a selection of books which are changed monthly by a local library. A few people took a daily paper in the morning by individual arrangement. There is a Reminiscence Room, specifically designed with furniture, music, photo boards and games. This can be used by a group or individual, and residents may take articles to their rooms. This room also had three adapted chairs for those usually confined to bed.

One lounge is to be adapted into a cafe for residents and visitors to use informally throughout the day. The manager told us that this is to encourage a more engaging atmosphere where people may relax and serve themselves drinks or snacks. We thought this was a good way to enliven a lounge and make it more welcoming.

We noticed a lot of people in their own rooms, watching TV or listening to music. Staff told us that they do try to encourage people to socialise but this is a choice and some prefer their own company.

Staff responsiveness

One relative we spoke with explained that the staff were “ pretty good”.

We observed staff had a lot of detailed knowledge about individuals' likes and dislikes and patterns of behaviour, mainly from working consistently on the same unit so they had the chance to build up rapport with the service users. They spoke respectfully to people living here, using their names or forms of address that were appropriate. Staff seemed both flexible and responsive to the different demands that service users were making.

We spoke with some of the staff who said they liked working here as there was good teamwork and that they felt supported by managers, with their ideas listened to. One said she particularly liked meeting a range of residents and listening to stories about their lives.

We observed that when one resident said he had a pain in his leg, it was suggested that he speak with the nurse and he said he would, which we thought was a good example of encouraging independence as far as possible.

Complaints

One relative we spoke with confirmed that if they had any issues or concerns they would talk to people “in the office” or the manager.

One resident said that the staff were mostly ok and she did not have any complaints.

We noticed that the home organised regular meetings with relatives to discuss any issue. Healthwatch Waltham Forest would be pleased to accept the invitation to attend the next meeting to explain our work to relatives.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This was our first visit to this home, and we were pleased to observe a calm, pleasant and well-maintained atmosphere with sensitive and caring interactions between staff and residents. We enjoyed seeing decorations from the activity sessions in the reception and halls. This home includes many who are not able to leave their rooms to join the community and we were pleased to hear how activities are taken to them so that they are not isolated. The staff were

knowledgeable about residents' needs and interests, and responded appropriately to their behaviour. The home is increasing its capacity for activities and is to provide a cafe as an informal meeting space. There were few recommendations to make, which are below.

Recommendations:

- 1) In the 1st floor dining room, it may be helpful to consider the layout and space in order to assist easier mobility of wheelchairs around the tables.
- 2) We observed some sensitive and appropriate support for residents at lunchtime, and suggest that all staff are reminded that those needing assistance to eat are not served until help is ready, so that their food is not getting cold.
- 3) The TV remained on in one lounge area even though no-one was watching it, and we suggest that TVs are turned off so that they are not a constant background noise.

Service provider response

Aspray House was Thankful for the visit of Susan Toole and Julie Mc Donald, not only they have given us recommendation they have open the eyes of the staff in some areas that they can improve the activity of daily living of the residents.

On the next day of the visit Aspray House re-arrange the first floor dining area which is now more conducive to the environment needed for the residents.

All staff has been reminded regarding meal times ethics and explain to them regarding the benefit of serving the meal at the right time, so that the food is not going to be cold. This has been mention in the staff meeting.

All staff has been informed to ensure television is switch off when serving meals or it has been suggested to put soft soothing music in the background instead. This will create an ambiance to have good meals for residents.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences of this or any other care home in the borough please contact us.

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