

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Enter & View Report

Pearthouse Care Home

Care Home Series 2014

Thursday 31st July 2014

Susan Henry and Evalina Strum
August 2014

Visit details

Service address	Peartree House Care Home, 24 Gordon Road, London, E4 6BU
Service Provider	Tamaris (South East) Limited
Service description	Accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care, Dementia, Diagnostic and screening procedures, Mental health conditions, Caring for adults over 65 yrs
Number of residents	30
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 reps 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 31 st July 2014
Authorised Reps	Susan Henry and Evalina Strum
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 Peartree Care Home on Thursday 31st of July between noon and 1.30pm. We spoke with 10 residents and 6 staff and observed the serving of lunch. There were several relatives visiting during our visit and we were able to speak with them. The manager who we had arranged our visit with in June had since resigned and not noted our intended visit. Nevertheless we were made welcome and shown around the home by Dorothy, the senior staff member on duty. We looked at the following 4 areas

- Catering
- Activities
- Staff responsiveness
- Complaints

Our recommendations are based solely upon what we observed at the care home during our visit.

Description of facility and overview of findings

Peartree is a purpose built home in a residential street that can accommodate up to 55 residents; there were 30 people there at the time of our visit with a mix of long term residents and temporary residents on short term respite visits. The outside of the home looked welcoming and well maintained. The lobby had a notice board listing the weekly activities and it also included photographs of past events, menus and other information for visitors.

The home has several lounges and in the main lounge we were introduced to about twelve residents taking part in a social activity, there were a further seven residents in a quieter lounge and several residents were in the garden. The fully enclosed garden was well maintained and had chairs and tables for residents to use and was accessible from several public rooms in the home.

In the main lounge a staff member was painting residents fingernails when we arrived and several other residents had already had theirs done. The courtyard garden off the lounge provided a cool breeze in the room. A television was on, though not loudly and no one appeared to be watching it. In the quieter lounge all but one were asleep. One resident was watching the television but asked us to switch the channel for him so he could watch the Commonwealth Games.

We were introduced to the chef and observed the serving of lunch in the main dining room, in a smaller dining room and in the quiet lounge. One person dined in the garden.

Staff we met were friendly and we observed them interacting well with the residents. They were seen to cope well with a resident in distress. They spoke to residents by name and appeared to know their preferences and treated them all individually.

Observations

Catering

We were introduced to the chef who talked us through the lunch menu, today a choice of stewed steak or mince. He showed us pictures of cakes and other special meals he has made; he bakes a cake each month for residents' birthdays.

Lunch was due at 12.30pm and some residents were getting restless, apparently because it was served nearer 1pm. later than usual. One resident told us they sometimes skip the lunch because they eat a big breakfast of grapefruit, cereal and then a cooked breakfast. We observed staff asking this resident if they would be eating lunch today before theirs was served.

The residents in the quiet lounge were served lunch, from a heated trolley, in their seats at individual tables set in front of them. Some had potatoes and others had rice with their lunch, according to preference. All were given drinks at the start of their meal, offered a choice of blackcurrant or orange and encouraged to drink before and during their meal. When we entered the quiet lounge only one resident had a drink in front of them and no one had a drink in the main lounge, but all were served drinks with their meal shortly after.

In the quiet lounge residents woke up to eat and most seemed enthusiastic about their food. Others appeared frailer and were assisted and encouraged by staff to eat. All had been given tabards before lunch, to keep their clothes clean.

Before lunch one resident told us that the food was "sometimes alright". After lunch another told us "there is no choice but it is very good and you can have seconds". It looked and smelt appetising.

In the smaller dining room most residents were, again, wearing tabards and they all sat around one large table. Most were feeding themselves and a few were being assisted. This room is also the activity room. It appeared that residents from the main lounge and garden chose where to eat and approximately seven ate here.

In the larger dining room, slightly further away from the lounges approximately eleven people were dining. We observed a pleasant light room, with four circular tables, three set for up to four people, each table had salt and pepper pots and a small vase of flowers. Residents sat where they wanted and were brought their plated lunch, followed by a bowl of trifle. We observed some conversation between residents and all appeared to be enjoying the meal.

There were fewer staff in the main dining room but here fewer residents appeared in need of assistance to eat their lunch. One was encouraged to eat but did not eat much lunch, preferring the trifle.

Activities

When we arrived we saw a staff member offering nail pampering to the residents in the main lounge. Several had already had their nails painted in the colour of their choice and were enjoying seeing what colours others would choose. This appeared to be a regular and popular activity amongst the female residents. While this activity was aimed at the women there were also men in the lounge chatting and enjoying the social atmosphere.

We saw the Activity Room, which is also used to serve meals. This is off the main hall and clearly signposted on the door. There were no activities taking place in the room during our visit. Some residents spoke enthusiastically about the range of activities offered at the home. The hairdresser who comes in every two weeks is popular and has a “mini-salon” to offer a full service to the residents.

One resident said there were not activities everyday and they were unaware of particular activities but felt that it was the residents choice whether to get involved or not. They enjoy watching television and staff will change the channel if asked to do so. The remote control device appeared not to work and I was asked to change the channel so the resident could watch the Commonwealth Games. Other residents in the room were dozing and not watching the television.

The same resident told us that there is a quiet room across the hall, open to the garden, where it is nice to read. When we went through the room to the garden there was music being piped into the room although it was empty. They also like to watch television in their room in the evening and the garden is a pleasant space to sit in. They said the mobile library comes to visit and newspapers are available. They also said that staff will take residents shopping on a one to one basis.

Another resident spoke about external activities they attend, including going to the Markhouse Centre. They said staff will accompany residents or arrange for their transportation. It was unclear whether a resident on a respite visit, was talking about external activities they attended at their usual home or at Peartree. They spoke of tea dances and social outings.

As we were leaving we saw the list of activities displayed in the lobby, which matched what the residents had told us. The list included quizzes and bingo arranged by staff for residents. We were told by residents and staff that there are regular (bi monthly) meetings between residents and staff to discuss what activities should be offered.

Staff responsiveness

We saw all staff interacting well with residents; they appeared very familiar and comfortable with them, dropping down to talk to seated residents or sitting beside/in front of them. Residents spoke highly of the staff to us, describing them as “marvellous” and “very kind”.

During lunch extra staff came to the quiet lounge and the activity room to assist residents who needed help, so all had one to one support if required. We observed that one resident, dining alone in the garden, was also checked on by staff. The former manager also popped in to say goodbye to residents before starting her new job. She chatted with all residents around the home, who appeared pleased to see her; she is clearly a popular figure.

Several residents spoke about existing injuries they had, one had been badly sunburned but had seen the GP and was using cream to treat it and another had fallen and again been treated by the GP. We were told that the Doctor visits every Friday and a District Nurse visits every two weeks to see residents. There is a silent room available for any residents who feel anxious, it is a place for them to calm down and is offered as an option when the need arises.

We spoke to one resident about call bells. A resident told us they are in most rooms including the bathrooms and bedrooms and when used staff respond quickly. We did not observe any bells in the garden, but being open to several rooms residents out there needing assistance would easily attract attention.

In the quiet lounge we did observe two stacks of ring binders, labelled with residents' names, piled on the floor under a chair. The content of the files was not apparent but they did not appear to be in an appropriate location.

Comments & Complaints

We did receive several comments from residents about staff behaviour. In one instance a resident said they were handled roughly by night care staff and told their children about it, rather than other staff. Another resident said that staff won't give them their child's address but also said they do visit every week. We also heard from a resident who wanted to move out of the home into a flat but had no information about how to do so. It was unclear whether staff had explored the practicality of this option for them but the resident was insistent that they would like some information about it.

We did not observe a complaints policy displayed in the public rooms or in the lobby, though it may have been, although this area is closed to residents. Residents that we spoke to said they would talk to the carers if they had any complaints and it would be escalated to the manager. One resident told us they had never had cause to make a complaint about anything in the home. Perhaps the complaints policy could be discussed at the residents meetings and plain English or easy read versions displayed prominently in residents areas, to assist those with Dementia.

We did not observe any residents notice boards in the lounges, the walls had paintings and film posters displayed on them. The wide hallways between lounges and the dining rooms displayed photographs of past activities on the notice boards.

Asked what they liked best about living at Peartree residents said it has a good atmosphere and that staff members are very kind.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although our visit was previously arranged it was effectively an unannounced Enter & View visit because staff members were not expecting us and we were impressed with what we saw. We observed the staff interacting well with residents before, during and after lunch. Residents spoke highly of the staff and said they enjoyed living at Peartree. The physical environment was pleasant and well maintained offering residents a choice of public rooms as well as the garden to socialise in. We were concerned that residents we spoke to rely upon telling relatives about issues or complaints. We were also concerned to see residents files left unattended in a lounge.

Our recommendations are as follows

1. That a plain English or easy read version of the complaints policy is given to the residents so they understand how to make complaints directly to staff and don't have to rely upon telling relatives in the first instance. The policy could also be prominently displayed in public areas used by residents.
2. That all files and paperwork pertaining to residents is stored and handled appropriately.

Service provider response

I would like just to say that I apologise for not sending this report in sooner but as you may know the Manager left and I am new in post as from the 1st September, as Acting Manager.

I received this report today (16.10.14) and shall to try and answer some of your points that I picked up when reading it.

The report was very detailed and was glad that you had a positive experience.

1. The remote controls will be checked by the Maintenance man on a regular basis, I also have spare batteries in the office if required.
2. The ring binders should be kept in either in the resident's room or in the nursing station when completing any paperwork. I am unable to furnish you with the reason they were left unattended at this time.
3. The resident who was being treated roughly at night to my knowledge has not made an internal complaint. I can assure you that I will be monitoring this very closely in the future.
4. There is a complaints policy folder in the foyer, but I have also commended a "what families want to say" book in the nurse's office for relatives. This is checked weekly and acted upon.
5. The next Relatives and Residents meeting is at 7.30pm on Friday 17th October, where I will be, along with other issues, talking about the complaints procedure.

If there any other issues you would like to discuss please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards
Sue Bennett
Home Manager

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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