



Healthwatch Wirral

Familiarisation visit - Sandrock Nursing Home, 1-3 Sandrock Rd,
New Brighton, Wallasey CH45 5EG

Date of visit 10 April 2024

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Canning & Karen Prior



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Site Introduction



Sandrock Nursing Home is situated in Wallasey adjacent to Earlston Park & Library and close to local shops and transport systems. Sandrock Nursing Home is registered to provide nursing and personal care for up to 28 people.





Foundations of Quality

‘Foundations of Quality Improvement should always have what patients tell us about their treatment and care at the heart of everything, as a system, that we plan and do. We must be able to evidence that all actions and decisions made come back to this, making certain that everyone feels respected, involved and valued at each part of the journey. We should all feel confident that we are either giving or receiving quality care.’
Healthwatch Wirral, Age UK Wirral, NHS England and ECIST, Wirral System??

What is enter & view

Healthwatch has statutory powers and duties to carry out Enter and View visits to any site where Regulated care is given. Local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and can make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers in premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who use, or provide, the service firsthand.

Healthwatch can also be invited in by Providers to seek a ‘fresh pair of eyes’ on their service and gain some external assurances that they are on the right track prior to their CQC inspections.

The visit is an opportunity for Healthwatch Wirral to get a better understanding of the service by seeing it in action and talking to staff and service users, and carers /relatives. The revisits provide a snapshot view of the service and findings are reported based at the time of the visit.

If during a visit, Healthwatch Wirral identifies any serious concerns these will be referred to the appropriate regulator. Any safeguarding issues identified will be referred to the Local Authority or Commissioner for investigation and our visit will cease with immediate effect.

Purpose of the Visit

Revisit.

The original visit was carried out in October 2022. The revisit was initiated as Sandrock Care Home had a CQC inspection which resulted in the Care Home receiving an ‘inadequate’ rating. This resulted in Enforcement Actions as the provider had failed compliance in safe maintenance, completeness of records, and fire safety and cleanliness of the environment.





Although improvement plans were written with CQC, the Registered Provider had failed to demonstrate they had taken reasonable steps to monitor the quality and safety of the service to mitigate risks to people. The Care Home has since lost a contract with Wirral Council and now only has residents who are self-funders.

The purpose of HWW's revisit was to seek assurance that staffing levels are appropriate, and safe, and that residents are receiving the correct care and support from GPs and the wider services as well as Eye & hearing Tests, Oral checks and podiatry.

The Care Home requires modernising and refurbishing if the aim is to provide good quality care to vulnerable people in Wirral. This could also improve the Care Home's name and build on the current asset which is the remaining staff. The building is embedded in the local community and there is a real need for a Care Home of this size. The Registered Owner should take the opportunity to decide on future plans as soon as possible, for the benefit of all concerned.

What we discussed

We were welcomed by Karen Lea. We signed in and convened in the Manager's office for a short meeting.

HWW explained to Karen that our intention was to be supportive and act as a Critical Friend. We would have liked to have met with the Registered Owner to explain our intentions who was unavailable but who had offered to attend on Zoom at a later date.

We discussed the findings of CQC with Karen and explained the reason for our revisit which was to encourage open and honest discussions so that a clear picture of the current circumstances could be understood and what this might mean for the current residents, families and staff.


Karen told us that the families had been kept informed, as much as possible, about the circumstances since the CQC report - she also informed us that the longest residency in Sandrock has been since 2019 and that there were good relationships with the families.

In 2022 the Care Home employed 37 members of staff: -

- 6 Nurses plus 1 bank nurse
- 4 Cooks
- 14 HCAs plus 3 long term sick plus 1 bank carer
- 5 Domestic
- 1 Activities
- 2 Maintenance
- 1 Personal Assistant

Karen told us that Sandrock's registration was for 28 bed occupancy, however, currently occupancy is low. There were also much higher numbers of staff during our previous visit and there are now 15 staff, various roles doing various shifts, and some staff now had reduced hours. Karen said that some staff were doing dual roles to ensure residents were kept as safe as possible.





Karen explained that, although staff supported each other, morale appears low due to the uncertainty of the lack of plans for the Care Home. Some staff are long serving and there was some evidence of compassion & care. However, we observed that staff were challenged because of the number of staff on duty at the time of the revisit (1 Duty Manager, 1 RGN, 1 HCA, 1 Domestic person, 1 Cook and 1 Maintenance person). We also observed, a member of staff asking a colleague for support so that they could have a quick comfort break as they were alone with the residents.

Although this ratio between residents and staff is almost 1 to 1 – the question must be whether the appropriate skilled staff numbers are enough to keep patients safe?

We observed files on display relating to IPC, Training, Safeguarding & falls, weight management etc, the content was unobserved by HWW during the visit. Karen informed HWW that some of the processes, such as Tissue Viability & falls, had changed and more information was required from Care Homes before action was taken.

Karen informed us about some concerns that were shared by the staff with the Registered Owner relating to the environment such as: -

- Flooring
- Environmental health issues such as pigeon problems
- General wear and tear of the property and décor improvements

HWW also raised with Karen the previous concerns from our report in 2022 relating to ventilation, flooring, activities, and the lift (although the lift is maintained, it was in need of some modernisation).

At the time of the revisit, Staff appeared caring and residents appeared clean and cared for. However, there were no activities taking place although all residents were in the Lounge area, and it was just before lunchtime. There appeared little stimulation for residents with just the TV switched on. Some residents have cognitive issues and the colour scheme appeared bland and lacked energy. It was not determined, during the revisit, whether the Activity Coordinator was still attending.

General Observations

During the conversations with Karen, the Duty Manager, we were advised that the services such as GPs (including the ‘Ward Round’ takes place fortnightly in person and once per week over the phone) Pharmacy and the use of Tele-triage, along with other supporting agencies, were being utilised for the timely care of residents. Karen advised the Safeguarding process they previously followed is still in place.

HWW did have some apprehension that there were enough staff with the appropriate skills on duty during the revisit to manage residents needs in a timely manner. Some staff had had their hours of work almost halved.

Karen advised that the ‘care and safety of residents’ is her priority. Although HWW found no evidence of poor care during the revisit, it was apparent that stimuli was lacking for the residents.





In Summary

HWW would summarise the revisit by suggesting that the Registered Owner should decide on the future plans for the Care Home which are then communicated to the staff, residents and families as soon as possible.

The environment needs modernising and refurbishing (inside and out) with some issues easier to manage than others, such as the pigeon issue. With the upper floor being out of use, deterioration in the building will lead to further environmental and facilities issues.

The current residents have little stimuli and staff appeared pressured. Although their loyalty to the Care Home and compassion to the residents was not in question there appeared a need for more activities and at least one other, appropriately skilled, staff member per shift to allow for important comfort breaks.

Glossary

- CQC- Care Quality Commission
- D2A - Discharge to assess
- DOLS- Deprivation of liberty safeguards
- ECIST- Emergency care improvement support team
- EMI- Elderly mentally Infirm
- Evacu-chair- A specialist piece of equipment that allows staff to help people with mobility issues safely exit a building during an emergency evacuation.
- GP- General Practitioner
- HWW- Healthwatch Wirral
- IPC- Infection Prevention Control
- LA- Local Authority
- LAQIP- Local Authority Quality improvement officer
- MCA- Mental Capacity Act
- PC- Personal Computer
- PPE- Personal Protective Equipment
- RGN- Registered general Nurse
- RM- Registered Manager
- UTI- Urinary tract infection

Distribution

Healthwatch Wirral will submit the report to the Provider, Commissioner and CQC. Healthwatch Wirral will publish the report on its website and submit to Healthwatch England in the public interest.





Comment box

No comments were received by Healthwatch Wirral

Disclaimer

The contents of this report are based on what the residents, staff and manager told Healthwatch Authorised Representatives. The information within this report does not recommend or advocate on behalf of any service. Individuals should use a variety of information, such as CQC reports, when making a decision on where to reside and/or where to obtain care.

