



Enter & View Report

Care Home: Birkenhead Court

Service address: Challis Street, Birkenhead. CH41 7DH

Service Provider: Ideal Care Homes

Date and time: 28th January 2015, 2pm to 4pm

Authorised representatives: Audrey Meacock

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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Wirral would like to thank the Manager, residents, relatives, carers and staff at Birkenhead Court who gave us a warm welcome and spent time talking to us about their or their relatives' experiences of living at the home.

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date and time of the visit. 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.

The visit also takes into consideration the fact that many of the residents spoken to will have an illness and/or disability, including dementia, which will have an impact on the information that is provided.



What is Enter and View?

Part of the Healthwatch Wirral's work programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and 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 on 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 the service first hand.



1.0 General profile of the service that was entered and viewed.

Birkenhead Court is a care home which provides accommodation for people who require personal care.

The home provides a service for up to 60 older people who may also have a cognitive impairment. Birkenhead Court is close to local shops and transport links to all parts of Wirral and Liverpool.

2.0 Purpose of visit

To verify service user feedback

Responding to a request from a services regulator or commissioner

Responding to a request from the service provider

Incoming Concern/complaint

Familiarisation ✓

Other



3.0 Type of E&V visit undertaken

Unannounced visit

Announced Visit ✓

4.0 Methodology

The visit is not designed to be an inspection, audit or an investigation, rather it is an opportunity for Healthwatch Wirral to get a better understanding of the service by seeing it in action and talking to staff, service users and carers/relatives. Healthwatch Wirral seeks to identify and disseminate good practice wherever possible. However, if during a visit Healthwatch Wirral identifies any aspects of a service that it has serious concerns about, then these concerns are to be referred to the appropriate regulator or commissioners of the service for investigation or rectification. Any safeguarding issues identified will be referred to the Local Authority or Commissioner for investigation.

The rectification of less serious issues may be directly with the service provider.

The Enter & View visits are a snapshot view of the service and findings are reported based at the time of the visit.

Enter and View visits are conducted in a way that works in accordance with Wirral Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board's principles and procedures. Information will be shared accordingly in order to safeguard adults at risk on Wirral and promote quality of local services.



5.0 Findings and observations

Healthwatch Wirral authorised representatives attended Birkenhead Court Care Home at 2.00pm. The car park was clean and tidy providing ample parking spaces for staff and visitors.

On entering the property the manager gave Healthwatch Wirral authorised representatives a warm friendly greeting. We were asked to sign in before being escorted to one of the 'quiet lounges' on the ground floor to have a discussion about the home.

The manager informed us that the home can accommodate 60 residents over 2 floors in single rooms with en-suite facilities. There are currently 58 people residing in the home. Residents can be provided with a key to enable them to lock their rooms, if they wish to do so, and may personalise their rooms with their own items such as pictures and ornaments.

Birkenhead Court has an active Facebook page and uses other technology such as the virtual notice board sited in the entrance hall. These systems enable families to be kept informed.

The home has a complaints procedure and staff, residents and their relatives are aware of this. The resident and relatives meetings, which are held regularly, are well attended by residents. The manager has an open door policy to enable staff, residents and relatives to discuss any issues. Some complaints are about mislaid laundry. These are dealt with quickly but some are unavoidable as residents may swop clothes. The home has a key worker and care plan co-ordinator for each resident. One of their roles is to contact relatives each month to address any issues.

Birkenhead Court has a Whistleblowing Policy which is available in the office and staff room along with the Safeguarding Policy. We were assured that staff would be supported and protected when voicing any concerns. Staff may also voice any concerns or issues at the daily handover meetings.



This home has made around 10 Safeguarding alerts in the last year which have been resolved or dealt with by the Department of Adult Social Services (DASS). These have included conflict between residents and a financial issue when a relative stopped paying a resident's bill. Healthwatch Wirral representatives were told that all residents' wishes for their future care, including end of life, are recorded when they are assessed either before they arrive at the home or on admission. DNAR (Do not attempt resuscitation) forms are in place for residents that require it and are issued by the doctor.

We asked the manager whether she felt that staffing levels were adequate to cover the needs of residents and her response was "yes". She said that staffing levels are continually assessed including using monthly dependency charts. Adjustments are made to meet the needs of the residents. The home does not use agency staff but has bank staff who are very reliable and flexible and are used to working in the home.

During the day there are a manager and a deputy (who are supernumerary) 2 senior care staff, who can administer medication, a non rotered senior plus 9 care staff on duty. From 8pm to 10pm there are 6 staff and during the night there are 4 staff plus 2 who are on duty from 7am -8am.

Training for staff is delivered by a company called Medex 6 to 8 times per year. Other training modules are available at The Lauries Centre and Arrowe Park Hospital. Staff have a full training programme including First Aid, Dementia, DOLS (Deprivation of Liberty), Food Hygiene, Falls Prevention, Pressure Ulcers and all mandatory training. All staff have induction and appraisals.

Meal times are protected and there is a good choice of meals on offer. We were told that resident's weight are monitored and recorded.

Falls are also recorded and relatives are informed.

Residents are pre assessed for pressure ulcers by using a full body map and currently there are no occurrences of pressure ulcers.

District nurses attend the home to deal with any pressure ulcers that residents acquire. They use specialist equipment and residents can be repositioned on the profile beds.



The manager informed us that they do not have a dedicated activities co-ordinator but all staff are involved in the planning and organisation of activities. These include coffee mornings, pie and a pint (non-alcoholic version available) get togethers, reading, singing, dancing, watching films, visiting the theatre, bingo and outings. Residents had recently visited the Liverpool Museum, House of Memories.

Birkenhead Court has a good relationship with the 3 GP practices that look after their residents, Claughton Village, Miriam and Cavendish.

Claughton Pharmacy also provides a very good service to the home.

We were told that there are sometimes problems with residents discharge from hospital. These include DNAR forms and discharge notes not being returned with the resident, staff being unaware that the resident is being discharged and residents being discharged in inappropriate clothing. There have been occasions when there has been a lack of information from hospital staff when a resident is due to be reassessed before returning to the home.

We asked the manager whether she had introduced any service improvements recently and were told that key staff are invited to attend the admission meetings, the home has forged links with the Carlton Players Theatre group, residents are invited to attend interviews for new staff and a large screen and projector has been purchased to enable the residents to watch films.

We were also told that the home has engaged with local young people using the National Citizen Service.

After having these discussions with the manager Healthwatch Wirral authorised representatives were invited to have a tour of the premises.

Environment

The corridors and stairways were wide, bright and free from obstruction. One of the notice boards displayed contact information on emergency plumber, electrician etc and useful reminders for staff in how to engage and work with people who have dementia.



Thank you cards were on display in another area.

Each resident's door had a photograph of the resident and dementia friendly signage was evident throughout the building. The quiet lounge viewed was well decorated and comfortably furnished with views over a school playing field.

The reception area was large with comfortable seating areas, a large fish tank, a sweets dispenser and a virtual notice board flat screen TV. Information provided on this electronic board ranged from pictures of the staff that are currently on duty (this is automatically updated as staff sign in) activities, menus and employee of the month. This service can be accessed from home electronically for staff and relatives.

We observed files displayed on the coffee table showing photographs of activities and events that had happened each month.

There was a lift providing access to all floors. It was well lit and large enough for wheelchair access.

One resident and her relative invited us into her room. It was tastefully decorated, clean, fresh and bright. The resident had personalised her room to her own taste.

The shower room and bathrooms viewed were clean, tidy and well equipped.

Activities were taking part in two of the large lounges. A group of residents and staff were dancing and singing to entertainment provided by a student who was studying music at a local university. They all appeared to be enjoying themselves. One resident was seen to be holding a doll which we were told was a dementia doll. The home uses these to relieve anxiety or aggression in residents with dementia.

Residents who did not want to participate, but only observe the activity, were sitting comfortably in the seating area of the lounge.

There was also a kitchen area in the room to enable resident to have refreshments.

A Bingo session was being held in one of the other lounges and residents were enjoying themselves, particularly eating the chocolate bars which were awarded as prizes.

The hairdresser was in attendance at the time of our visit and the salon was well equipped, clean and tidy.



We were shown the kitchen and laundry on the top floor. Both areas were well equipped, clean and organised. The store room off the kitchen was large and tidy and we were told by the kitchen manager that fresh food is delivered 3 times per week. The chef and kitchen manager are aware of residents preferences regarding food. The kitchen had a food hygiene rating of 5 displayed on the notice board.

Staff use the top floor for training and their staff room and office is situated on this floor.

Outside the gardens were secure and well-tended. There were seating areas for residents to enjoy the outdoor spaces and raised beds for any green fingered residents to cultivate. The home has a summer fair each year and the gardens are used for this event.

Feedback (from Staff, Service Users, Relatives, Visitors, Carers)

Staff - “I have worked at Birkenhead Court since 2005 and enjoy every minute”

“I enjoy working here as a volunteer and run the knitting class and reminiscence room”

“I love working here and feel very supported by management”

Residents - “I like the singing and dancing activities. The staff are fun and care for me”

“I can thoroughly recommend living here”

Relatives - “I am very happy with my mother’s care which is based on her individual needs”

“My relative gets very good care from the staff who are caring and kind. Any problems are dealt with straight away”



6.0 Safeguarding

No Safeguarding issues were identified at the time of our visit.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies.

If any safeguarding issues are identified during a Healthwatch Enter and View the Local Authority will be notified on the same day as the Enter and View visit.

(See page 6 for Safeguarding alerts made in the last year)

7.0 Conclusions

All staff observed at the time of the visit appeared to be cheerful as were residents.

Within the limits of a short visit, Healthwatch Wirral were very impressed by the services, buildings and facilities and also the caring attitudes of the manager and staff. The residents appeared to be well cared for and contented. Birkenhead Court appears to provide a pleasant and impressive environment for people to live and work in. The manager and staff take pride in providing a quality service for the residents.

8.0 Recommendations

None required.



8.1 Supplementary feedback from the provider post visit

Many thanks for the draft report.

Only 1 area of clarification regarding staff. We have 11 staff during the day including manager, administrator, deputy. In addition X 1 cook and x 1 kitchen assistant, X 2 housekeepers, x1 laundry assistant, x1 caretaker. Although this does change on a daily basis taking into account the changing needs of the residents, hospital appointments, outings, activities etc. Extra staff are put on the rota accordingly. We also have extra staff during the night if needed. We have a healthy bank team of staff who can cover at short notice.

I am delighted with the comments made by staff, visitors and residents. The staff team at Birkenhead Court are exceptional.

I enjoyed your visit and the report you have completed. It was very nice to meet you and your team. Please call in anytime for a cup of tea and slice of cake.

9.0 Healthwatch follow up action.

Healthwatch Wirral will share elements of the report to encourage good practice elsewhere.

10.0 Distribution of report

Healthwatch Wirral will submit the report to the Provider, to CQC, and Health & Wellbeing Board.

Healthwatch Wirral will publish the report on its website and submit to Healthwatch England in the public interest



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