

healthwatch

Cumbria

Dalton Court
Care Home

12th June 2017

your
voice
counts

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Introduction

About Healthwatch Cumbria

Healthwatch Cumbria (HWC) is an independent community based organisation for the people of Cumbria. It was set up to champion the views of patients and people who use health and social care services in Cumbria. The goal of HWC is to make services better and improve health and wellbeing. HWC achieves this by talking and listening to people in all parts of Cumbria and telling providers of these services local people's views and challenging organisations that need to do better and highlighting examples of good practice.

HWC is part of Healthwatch England who act as the national consumer champion for all local Healthwatch.

Details of visit

Service Provider	Priory Adult Care Services
Service Address	Europe Way, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 0RJ
Date and Time of visit	12/06/17 1.30pm-4pm
Authorised Representatives	Sue Hannah Robin Powell
Healthwatch Cumbria contact details	Healthwatch Cumbria, The Best Life Building, 4-8 Oxford Street, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 2AH Tel: 01900 607208

Acknowledgements

HWC would like to thank Millie Broome and all the staff, residents and visitors who made us feel so welcome and made valuable contributions.

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.

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Cumbria has a statutory right (Health and Social Care Act 2012) to carry out Enter & View visits to health and social care services to gather the views and experiences of customers, patients, families and staff for the purpose of service improvement. Service providers have a duty to respond to our reports and recommendations.

Healthwatch Cumbria will share its findings with Healthwatch England, the Care Quality Commission, services and the public.

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. This is so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Purpose of the visit

To engage with residents in care homes in Cumbria to collect and record their experiences of accessing health and social care services, primarily the out of hours GP service Cumbria Health on Call (CHoC).

To identify and champion examples of best practice with regard to resident experience including: surroundings, activities and meals.

Methodology

Dalton Court was made aware of the Enter and View process through promotion of the visit via a telephone conversation with HWC. An email detailing the purpose of the visit and a poster for the home to display were sent for all to read and be aware of the visit and how to take part should they wish to. It was also explained that the report following the visit would be provided to the home manager to inform them of the findings prior to publication on the HWC website.

Seven homes were selected for visiting in West Cumbria. The selection was based on the geographical location of the homes and their respective recent participation in the HWC CHoC survey that highlighted issues affecting those in care homes with accessing some services.

HWC representatives were greeted by the home manager who, after discussing the nature of the visit and the HW guidelines governing it, gave a thorough walking tour of the home and introduced the HWC representatives to staff, residents and visiting family members. The manager then gave HWC permission to look around the home and talk to anyone we wished in the public areas of the home.

The HWC representatives engaged with staff, residents and family members and initiated conversations around the following topics.

- Access to Health Services
- Satisfaction with food and activities on offer
- Comments about life in the home

There were:

- 10 Residents spoken to
- 6 members of Staff spoken to
- 3 Family members spoken to

Responses were recorded and observations noted.

Findings

The day that we visited there was a Wild West Open day in full flow (in celebration of the forthcoming National Care Home day), and so on been greeted by the manger we couldn't fail to notice the liveliness, colour and excitement associated with this event. Staff and residents and visitors wore Wild West costumes and the menu for the day reflected the theme. There was a collection of stalls in the lounge opposite the main reception that included a cake stall, a raffle and a body shop table, and we saw many residents enjoying the festivities.

The main reception area was bright and airy, with a signing in book, hand sanitiser and suggestion box. A large activities board was prominently displayed and had different activities scheduled daily for each morning and afternoon - all shown on large A4 size cards that contained clear information including pictures to help residents and visitors plan their day's activities. These activities were varied with little repetition and included visits from local entertainers and singers, one resident commented, "We love the visiting musicians when they come in - music helps everyone."

We observed the Healthwatch Cumbria poster informing people of our visit displayed throughout the home.

The décor felt fresh and inspiring as it included local photographs of lakes and hills, natural images such as butterflies and a tree made up of the hand prints of residents and staff members. There were several quiet lounges, all with good views and none with televisions. Throughout the home was a sense of light, space and calmness.

In the main lounge residents were enjoying watching "Singing in the Rain", feet were tapping and some sang along with the songs. The staff were attentive to those requiring support and we noted the quiet, compassionate way in which they helped those requiring help.

One visiting family member said, "The level of care here is so good. It felt good as soon as we walked in.". While another commented, "They're great here, they do whatever is necessary to make sure my wife is comfortable."

Another visitor said, "I wouldn't want my husband anywhere else - if you have a problem you just tell the staff and they sort it out."

We noticed that some name plates on bedroom doors had full names and some had abbreviated, first names - we understood this reflected the individual's choice as to how they wanted to be addressed.

In a quieter moment we overheard a member of staff politely asking permission to enter a resident's room to clean it, this typified the level of respect the staff clearly have for the residents.

Residents are encouraged to give feedback at monthly meetings designed to allow people to put suggestions forward, ask questions and make any compliments or complaints. Similarly there is a quarterly meeting for residents families. These are future facing meetings and not designed to be "moan and groan sessions".

We observed the schedule of meeting dates on the wall.

One visiting relative said, "I thank my lucky stars I found this place, it's wonderful here, they all know the residents so well."

We noticed that the fire alarms and extinguishers were encased in plastic cases for safety and to stop them being misused.

Access to Health Services

One visitor told us that the local opticians (from Cockermouth) don't visit the home. The home have to use a company who visit annually. They also told us that a local GP will visit the home when required - and this is organised through a member of staff. The Manager told us that they have no problems accessing the out of hours GP service (CHoC).

On a broader issue, a visitor told us they believe, "There are gaps in communication in the care system between hospital, care homes and GP's."

Activities

As well as the planned activities we observed the positive effect the homes open door policy towards the visits of family pets brought to the home. A visiting relative had brought the family dog with them and it became the focus of everyone's attention, residents faces lit up as they stroked and talked to the dog.

Although most residents were watching a film there was plenty of reading material, CD's and games available (including a giant connect 4 game). In the downstairs lounge people were throwing small bags at a 'tin can alley' game, this physical game proved popular with residents and visitors alike and produced plenty of laughter.

One visitor told us that they stayed at the nearby Travelodge so they could spend Christmas with their loved one, only returning to the Travelodge to sleep. They "lived" there for a week and were very positive about the level of care residents received at all times.

Meals

We observed on a noticeboard in the main reception area a notice informing people that all meal times are protected at the home.

On being asked about the food one resident said, "I like my food, and you can't get any better than here." He pointed out that they had a special menu that day with "cowboy food" which he'd enjoyed and he said there is always a good variety here. We noted the abundance of home made cakes (and enjoyed sampling one) and saw the week's menu prominently displayed in several areas throughout the home. Cold refreshments were also easily accessible to residents, and we saw staff asking if people wanted hot or cold drinks.

Staff told us that residents are asked at night and again in the morning (in case they change their mind) to make their meal choices. The cook told us that she would make bespoke food choices where possible if required.

One visiting relative told us that sometimes he is given a meal with his wife when visiting because he lives a long distance from the home.

Provider Feedback

The home manager said she was happy with the report and welcomed HWC visiting in the future.