



# Report of Enter and View Visit



Charnwood house Nursing Home  
Report published 16 April 2015



Care Home Visited	Charnwood House Nursing Home
Date and Time of visit	11 March 2015 10.30am - 1.30pm
Address	77a Beake Avenue, Radford, Coventry, CV6 3AQ
Size and Specialism	There are 45 places across 3 separate units for adults over 65 years old requiring dementia care and a further 12 places in an assessment unit making a total of 57 places. 42 places are council funded.
Authorised Representatives	Karen Keates, Maggie McHale, Sharifa Ali, Diane Jones

## 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.

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## What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch 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 to gather the perspectives of those who are using the service. We aim to both make recommendations for development and to look for good practice examples of care through our Enter and View visits.

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 so we can learn about and share examples from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

## Reason for the visit

To gather information about the experience of living in care homes in Coventry including quality of life factors such as activities and choices. To look at homes from the perspective of 'would I wish my relative to live here?'

## **Methodology**

There was building work happening in the assessment unit when we visited so we chose not to visit this unit. Our visit was concentrated on the 3 dementia care units.

We collected our information by speaking to 3 of the 45 residents, 1 visitor and 2 members of staff. We have received 2 completed visitor questionnaires.

Information was recorded on semi structured questionnaires asking open questions to establish what people liked most and what people felt could be improved.

Before speaking to each person we introduced ourselves by name, explained what Healthwatch is and why we were there. We established that the resident or staff member was happy to speak with us. We confirmed that their name would not be linked with anything they told us and that they were free to end the conversation at any point. We wore name badges to identify who we were and provided the care home manager with a letter of authority from the Healthwatch Coventry Chief Officer.

We made observations throughout the visit and made notes of what we saw around the home.

Before and after the visit we had a look at the website for the home to see how it compares with our findings.

We left some questionnaires for completion by visitors which can be posted back to our Freepost address.

## **Impressions**

On entering the home it looked clean and bright. At the entrance is a reception area where visitors have to be let in by staff through a secure door. There were fresh flowers in reception and a visitors' book for people to sign in and out.

Staff were friendly and immaculately dressed in uniforms. There was a calm and relaxed atmosphere within the home and we observed lots of laughter and banter between staff and residents who all seemed happy.

We saw staff behaving professionally and they seemed to be well organised.

## **Summary of findings**

There are 3 units for residents - Willow, Oak and Sycamore. Each unit has a different colour scheme so that residents can recognise them. Staff told us that each unit has 15 residents and 3 staff who work on the same unit all the time. Staff seemed to know the residents very well and everyone called each other by their first name.

Residents in each of the 3 residential units are free to walk around within their unit and there is open access to outdoors where there is a garden with circular paths, which has been specially designed for people with dementia. There is also a summerhouse some raised bedding areas and chickens outside kept in a chicken coop.

Each resident has their own room with en-suite shower, toilet and sink. The room we visited had a wardrobe, television, photos, mementos and a specialist bed, which staff told us is provided according to medical need.

As we walked around the home's corridors and rooms we did not notice any unpleasant odours and the temperature was comfortable.

Beech Unit is an assessment unit. We did not have an opportunity to observe anything on this unit and would like to return in order to do this.

The home is in a single story building. There is a shared bathroom in each unit. They were clean, light and spacious with a different type of specialist bath.

It was difficult for us to talk to residents in detail due to varying degrees of dementia. We spoke briefly to several residents and all of them appeared to be happy and comfortable. Staff and residents seemed to get on well.

In a comment made on a visitor questionnaire the home is described as "exceptional".

The home is owned by MHA (Methodist Homes) and is featured on their website. The website shows pictures of the front of the building, the gardens and one taken inside the home. The description depicts how care is delivered within the home.

## **Results of visit**

On arrival we were told that there would be a fire drill at one o'clock however the alarm went off before this. The manager told us to assemble outside the office in reception with some of the staff team. A register was taken and all were present. Another worker turned up and apologised for setting off a smoke alarm with the toaster. We were allowed back after the all clear. As we were in the front of building at this time, we could only observe this part of drill. We did not see any residents evacuated and were informed by staff that one member of staff stays on each unit with residents. Residents stayed in their units and were checked off on a register. We were also told that all locks on resident's doors open when alarms go off. None of the staff or residents knew that this was a false alarm. The drill was carried out quickly and calmly. Staff told us that fire drills were carried out every month. There is a fire evacuation plan and staff received training in this recently.

A visiting relative told us they go to see their relative 6 days per week. They said that staff respect and care about the residents and their relative is very happy at the home. They went on to say that the name labels used on clothing often fall off

or writing comes off when washed and items go missing. They would like the home to use better labels which are more durable.

We were told in a visitor questionnaire that if they raise a concern it is handled promptly. The Manager of the home has an open door policy and relatives are encouraged to chat to staff at any time if they have any concerns.

As part of our questionnaire for visitors and carers we asked them to rate the facilities 1 - 5, 1 being very poor and 5 being excellent. Standard of care was rated 5, quality of meals was rated 5 and 4, quality of activities was rated 3 and 4, the facility as a whole was rated 5.

When asked to tell us how they would describe the home to a friend they said "absolutely first class".

The manager told us that she has been at the home since it was opened 11 years ago and that the hardest part of the job is when a resident dies. Staff like to be available to support the families and it can be a stressful time for all concerned. She also told us that there are 8 short term places at the home for those who are being assessed, these people should stay for 6 weeks but some stay for 3 - 4 months as there aren't any beds available for them elsewhere. All of the short term residents are funded by Coventry City Council. Residents are a combination of self funded, commissioned and top up funded.

We were informed by staff that they have six supervision sessions per year and an annual appraisal. There is a full training matrix, the manager has received project management training and care staff have recently received training such as dementia awareness and health and safety. Staff meetings are every quarter but may be more frequent if issues arise which need discussion. The manager told us that staff turnover is 'very low'.

The home was involved in OPERA (Older People's Exercise in Residential Accommodation). This was a project set up by Warwick University Medical School to look at the effect of exercise on people in care homes. The home was also involved in a Dementia project which ran for two years. It was aimed at up-skilling staff in helping residents to 'have a voice'. The project was funded by Methodist Homes and Age UK.

## **Food and drink**

A relative of a resident told us that residents have a choice of three roast meats on Sundays and can have all three if they wish. Food is freshly prepared and they have freshly made cakes every day. They added that staff make visitors feel welcome and invite them to join the residents for lunch "they always make me a cup of tea".

Staff and visitors told us that if a resident does not want to eat at a specific time they will keep their meal aside for them and offer it to them later. We were also

told that relatives are welcome to join the residents for lunch but if they are not having lunch with a resident visitors are asked not to come during meal time.

Staff told us that breakfast is 7.30 - 9.30am. Lunch is from 12.45pm - 2.00pm. There is a protected tea time at 4.45pm. The manager liked staff to encourage all of the residents to get up for breakfast.

Food was freshly prepared in the onsite kitchen. Residents seemed happy with it. On the unit where we observed lunch, there were 14 of the 15 residents at 4 tables. One lady sat in a chair in lounge to have her meal as she didn't like to be in the group. One resident in dining room was being helped to eat.

On each unit there is a kitchenette where biscuits, soup, snacks and drinks are available if residents want them.

Residents are offered a choice of 2 meals which they are asked to choose at the time the meal is being served. Today's choices were cottage pie or fish fingers and dessert was rhubarb crumble and custard or ice cream. We heard staff offer one lady banana and custard as they knew she liked it.

We observed that there were menus on the tables in the dining room and there was not a vegetarian option on the menu.

## Care

A relative told us that they are confident that issues raised will be dealt with appropriately. They also told us that they never hear staff raise their voices and they are patient.

We observed staff dealing well with challenging behaviour and being patient with residents. One resident was seen pulling at a carer's clothing while they were trying to spoon feed them. The carer was calm and patient and took a break from feeding to calm and reassure the resident and then tried with the food again.

Residents' individual choices are respected. We were told by a visitor that one resident likes to smoke and often asks if she can go out to smoke. Staff have to take her out and never refuse. The visitor also told us that their relative is able to talk to their family via an application called "Real Time". This was important to this resident as his relative is in America and cannot visit. This makes him happy.

Staff and the manager told us that residents are supported to choose what clothes they wear and each resident has a key worker.

We saw that bathrooms had different specialist equipment to meet different needs, such as side opening baths, hoists and chairs.

We only saw one resident who chose to stay in bed; residents were active and freely walking around their units.

## **Activities**

The manager told us that she would like to be able to organise more trips out. They intend to do this by increasing fundraising activities run by volunteers.

There is an activities co-ordinator and key workers who talk to residents as part of their care plan and find out what they like to do. We observed staff doing some one-to-one activities with residents such as playing dominos, reading, doing jigsaws and chatting. We also saw one resident having a hand massage.

Visitors/relatives expressed that they would like more activities for residents. The manager showed us a weekly activities programme which included things such as relaxing after breakfast and watching TV and catching up with family and friends as activities on Sundays. We were told by the manager that they have other activities some weeks such as reflexology, film nights, arts and crafts and flower arranging. The activities programme looked very bare at weekends, with listening to music on the units and watching films on the units being the only activities specified.

Hairdressing and podiatry are also made available and residents pay extra for these services.

The summer house is mainly used by smokers and alcohol is permitted as long as it is risk assessed to ensure it does not interfere with resident's medication.

During our visit there was a karaoke in the lounge and there were around 20 residents joining in. This was a lively activity with lots of laughter and residents and staff having fun.

Staff told us that a music therapist visits once a week and entertains the residents in small groups of six. They also have jamming sessions with musical instruments. We saw a fully equipped music room.

We were told by staff that they take residents to the shops in taxis throughout the year and their relatives also take them out. There is a park nearby, which they sometimes take the residents to and there is a customised dementia garden where residents can roam and staff can observe them discreetly to enable them to have some independence.

A chaplain conducts a religious service once a week. She is employed by MHA (Methodist Homes) for 3.5 days per week. She also does art and poetry and sometimes accompanies people to hospital.

## **Dementia Friendly Design**

This home specialises in dementia care and there were many dementia friendly features within the home. Walls, furniture and floors were in contrasting colours

and residents' own doors are in different colours. Each resident had their name and photo on their door so that they can recognise their own room.

Bathrooms were not labelled with words and pictures, every bathroom door is pink so residents can recognise where the bathrooms are. We did not see any mirrors and taps were indicated with red and blue for hot and cold.

There is a secure dementia friendly design in the garden.

## **Healthwatch Recommendations**

Following our visit we would like to recommend:

1. Purchasing some better quality labels for resident's clothing. Preferably printed labels which can be securely attached.
2. Consideration given to whether a vegetarian choice needs to be available at meal times.
3. Visitors had expressed that they would like to see more activities available to residents. The manager should look at expanding the choice of activities throughout the day especially at weekends. Recognising that some residents who do not wish to relax after breakfast or have family and friends to spend time with, may wish to take part in more stimulating activities.

## **Comments from Care home Manager (can be added)**

Thank you for your report following the visit to Charnwood House on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

We received 3 recommendations, please see below my comments in response to recommendations:

1. Labelling in residents clothing - This is the responsibility of the relatives when clothing is brought into the home, staff will ensure these are sewn on to their relatives clothes if provided.
2. Vegetarian meal choices - One of our residents is vegetarian so we do cater for their dietary needs at every meal time and this choice is also available to any other residents if they wish.
3. Activities for the residents - We have residents and relatives meetings throughout the year with our activity co-ordinators. This is where we review our choices of activities. Minutes are kept and recommendations are followed through, this is tailored around the residents personal interests. The ethos in the home is daily life is an activity and our residents are encouraged to participate throughout the day, we provide activities for exercise and leisure.

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Coventry would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View visit.

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