

# **Alexandra Care Home with Nursing (Main House)**

## **Poulton le Fylde**

### **Enter and View Report**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018**



#### **DISCLAIMER**

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and residents who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

**Contact Details:**

Alexandra Care Home with Nursing  
Moorland Road  
Poulton-le-Fylde  
FY6 7EU

**Staff met during our visit:**

Tracey Jerrard (Area Manager)

**Date and time of our visit:**

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 10.30am -  
12.00pm

**Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised****Representatives:**

Michele Chapman (Lead) Engagement Officer  
Jeanette Newman Engagement Officer  
Ella Pearson-Glover Engagement Officer  
Sue Turley Engagement Officer  
Lynne Yates Engagement Officer

**Introduction**

This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Lancashire who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the view of those people using the services. The representatives observe and speak to residents in communal areas only.

This visit was arranged as part of Healthwatch Lancashire's Enter and View schedule. The aim is to observe services, consider how services may be improved and disseminate good practice. The team of trained Enter and View authorised representatives record their observations along with feedback from residents, staff and, where possible, resident's families or friends.

The team compile a report reflecting these observations and feedback, making comment where appropriate. The report is sent to the manager of the facility for validation of the facts. Any response from the manager is included with the final version of the report which is published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at [www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank Tracey Gerrard, together with staff, residents and visitors, for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

## General Information

Alexandra Care Home with Nursing is privately owned by Alexandra Nursing Home Ltd. We visited the “Main House” which has capacity for forty two residents. There were fifteen vacancies at the time of our visit. The person in charge is Tracey Gerrard.

Information obtained from carehome.co.uk states that the home provides care for people who are affected by dementia, old age and physical disability.

## Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

We spoke to nine residents, seven staff and two friends/relatives, where possible within the constraints of the home routine, people’s willingness and ability to engage and access to people in public areas. Discussion was structured around four themes (Environment, Care, Nutrition and Activities) designed to gather information concerning residents overall experience of living at the home.

The team also recorded their own observations on the environment and facilities.

As some residents were receiving visits, choosing to stay in their rooms or being nursed, we spoke with nine of the twenty seven residents.

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather the views of service users, especially those that are hard to reach and seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service regardless of their perceived ability to be able to do so.

We use templates to assess the environment of a facility and gather information from respondents, to ensure that reports are compiled in a fair and comparative manner. On this occasion some responses have been excluded from this version of the report as it was felt they compromised the respondents’ anonymity.

Observations were rated on Red, Amber, Green scale as follows;

**Green** = We would choose this home for a loved one.

**Amber** = We may choose this home if some improvements were made

**Red** =We would not choose this home for a loved one unless significant improvements were

## Summary:

Alexandra House is an impressive listed building with some very attractive original reception areas. In general the environment was clean and uncluttered with the exception of some of the bathrooms.

Representatives found the lounge and dining rooms to be comfortable and homely with sufficient areas for quiet relaxation or meeting with friends and relatives. The grounds of the facility were similarly welcoming with a gazebo, seating, and planters to the gardens. The residents who we spoke to reported high satisfaction levels with the environment. *“I have a nice bedroom.” “The place is lovely, clean and tidy”. “Outside is beautiful”*

Representatives observed staff and residents interacting in a positive manner with residents generally speaking well of the staff and reporting them as *“kind”* and of feeling *“safe”*.

However, representatives were concerned by the number of responses by residents, staff, and friends and family alleging a shortage of staff. *“When I first got here it was very good. But not anymore, there is not enough staff for the need”*. One relative /friend remarked *“Normally in the past the place was clean and pleasant. The staff are nice. There just aren’t enough of them to carry out the duties the way they used to.”*

The team also recorded residents reporting waiting for drinks, and having to ask for their bedlinen to be changed on a weekly basis.

Similarly, some residents alleged significant restrictions to their liberty. *“I don’t choose what I do, but it is more and more like school. A couple of the staff are too bossy”. “To live in a family would be good, as family eat when they want. Here you eat according to the time”*

Responses from staff who spoke to our team were predominantly negative in respect of staffing levels, and their relationship with the management team.

Given the negative feedback from a cross section of respondents, representatives concluded that the facility appeared to have some areas of concern.

Based on the criteria, the Enter and View Representatives gave the home an overall score of:

**Amber Red**

## **Enter and View observations**

### **Pre-visit and location**

Prior to our visit we looked at the website which was very informative. The website stated that a brochure was also available on request; however at the time of our visit a brochure was not available.

The facility was easily located and well signposted from the main road, however the home was situated at the end of a lane and representatives did not consider it to be within walking distance of facilities such as transport and shops.

There was a large car park surrounding the grounds with appropriate disabled provision.

## **Amber**

### **The external environment**

As the team approached the main house from the car park we observed that several pieces of old furniture had been left alongside an empty skip. However, other grounds nearer the building were very pleasant and well maintained. We saw a seating area with a gazebo and attractive planters adjacent to the main house.

The reception area to the main house was easily located and access to the home was secure. On our way out however, the door was left unsecured (however this may have been because residents were not subject to Deprivation of Liberty orders).

The door was answered in a timely manner by the activity coordinator.

## **Green Amber**

### **The internal environment/reception-first impressions**

The main building is an extended listed property formerly owned by a local landowner.

Beyond reception the large entrance area is quite spectacular with painted wooden panels, high ceilings, and a double flight wooden staircase featuring a large arched stained glass window. The entrance feeling warm and inviting, with comfortable armchairs, side tables, lamps and cushions.

The activity coordinator was very welcoming she told us that the area manager had asked her to show us around. Shortly after we arrived we met the area manager

who expressed reservations as to the number of representatives (six) in respect of potentially causing anxiety to those living with dementia. Similarly the manager had reservations about staff being available to accompany us on an initial walk through all three units.

The Lead Healthwatch Engagement Officer explained it was our original intention to conduct the visit in two groups of three with two representatives coming back to visit the EMI unit later in the day. However, we agreed to confine our visit to the main house and return to the other units at a later date.

We were able to sign into the visitors' book provided and use the wall mounted hand gel, and we observed the Healthwatch Lancashire poster to be prominently displayed as requested. Staff were easily identifiable by uniform but we did not see a photographic staff noticeboard.

## **Green Amber**

### **The observation of corridors public toilets and bathrooms**

Beyond the impressive reception areas the corridors although clean, bright and uncluttered were relatively nondescript and uniform. The character of the home providing identifiable landmarks, however signposting particularly in the extended "wings" was limited.

In addition to en suite bedrooms the Main House was serviced by six public bathrooms/toilets. Representatives found that not all of the public bathrooms were clean; one in particular had a bath and hoist stained with dried excrement. Several bathrooms were cluttered with wheelchairs and walking aids and the team felt that some of the bathrooms smelt of damp. However bathrooms were noted to have sufficient soap, toilet rolls, and towels and appropriate adaptations such as raised seats and grab rails.

## **Red**

### **The lounges, dining and other public areas**

The facility was well served by a variety of seating areas; particularly attractive was the small and private conservatory area to the front of the building. Staff told us that this area was often used by visitors because it was private and comfortable with views over the grounds. At the time of our visit the majority of residents were in the largest lounge which was equally comfortable and homely with armchair seating around the perimeter. Residents seemed happy and content and were keen to engage with Healthwatch representatives. A TV was on low and some of the

residents were preoccupied watching this. However, a large clock on the wall may well have confused residents as it displayed the incorrect time.

All of the reception rooms were nicely decorated with the added interest of historic panelling, ornate ceilings and other architectural features.

A second smaller lounge was similarly furnished, complete with a bookcase.

The spacious dining room next to the small lounge was provided with sufficient tables to seat all of the residents and there was space to include additional tables if required. Tables were set with tablecloths, cutlery and floral centrepieces.

Representatives did not see a daily menu displayed and when we asked a staff member its whereabouts she responded “*there has never been one.*”

The team observed the dining room to be similarly well decorated and we noticed the provision of a CD player and CDs.

## Green

### Observations of resident and staff interactions

At the time of our visit there appeared to be sufficient staff on duty with several residents remaining in their rooms. However, when call bells were heard the speed of responses was inconsistent.

We saw some positive interaction between staff and residents with residents speaking of staff with genuine affection. We saw staff behaving respectfully knocking on residents’ doors prior to entry and asking residents how they were.

We observed a full activity schedule displayed with activities such as manicures, armchair exercises, the hairdresser, and movie time and snacks. The activity coordinator told us that she was relatively new to post and that she enjoyed her job.

Representatives observed the facility to be well supported by ancillary staff such as maintenance and cleaning staff.

A seating area at the top of the staircase had a resident’s personal file left out on a coffee table.

## Green Amber

## **Additional information**

During our visit to Alexandra Nursing Home the Healthwatch Lancashire Team received information which required the Lead Healthwatch Engagement Officer to raise a Safeguarding Alert with the relevant agencies.



## Feedback from residents

### Environment

*"I love it here. It's friendly, staff are nice."*

*"This is my home for the rest of my life and I am happy to be here."*

*"This is the best place for me to be, not the cheapest by any means. It's comfortable and staff are good."*

*"I have changed my bedroom now as I didn't like the other one. I have a lovely bay window and don't want to be anywhere else."*

*"I feel safe in here."*

*"I like to spend time outside, I go outside myself, and it's very pretty."*

*"I spend time in the lounge with everybody and watch television."*

*"The cleanliness of the building is good and the laundry service is out of this world."*

*"The place is lovely and clean and tidy. Outside is beautiful, however I don't go outside very often."*

*"It's nice and pleasant. I like this room and the TV."*

*"I quite like it."*

*"This room's ok with the TV on."*

*"I like this room and the TV."*

*"I have a nice bedroom."*

*"They look after me. I find it comfortable."*

### Activities

*"I have got friends."*

*"Going out with the staff to the Cemetery and I can do a walk around the gardens with them."*

*"I read my paper in the morning which I have ordered."*

*"Sometimes there are no activities. Name is in for 6 days a week organising crafts and events. She is the craft leader."*

*"No one is watching the TV. It should be off or turned over."*

*"No one bothers with board games, cards etc. I would like to do that."*

*"I am sat next to someone who cannot communicate but I have to be here."*

*"I used to go out a lot until I came here. As soon as I can walk better my daughter will take me out."*

*"They don't share memories here - I have a lot of photos at home but no one is interested."*

*"Name does lots of things with us. I like the crafts and cards and she shows us how to do things."*

*"We go out on trips occasionally."*

*"Name tries very hard to put things on for us. I don't engage with activities really I like to keep myself to myself."*

*"The activities have improved since Name started, sometimes we can do gardening and we had a summer fair but not all the time."*

*"Name does lots of things with me playing with a ball, balloons. Craft activities and the quizzes are very good."*

*"I can't see the TV well because of my eye sight."*

*"I don't know if there are activities."*

*"I like the TV and they have games."*

*"I don't know I'm quite new."*

*"I haven't seen any activities."*

## **Care**

*"The staff are happy and treat me well. I get up out of bed when I want and I go and lie down if I want."*

*"I never went to bed at 6pm at home. We eat at 4.30pm and then I am taken to my room at 6pm and I go to sleep and I've done nothing. At home I used to stay up till 10pm and have supper. Not anymore."*

*"I feel very fortunate to live here."*

*"They look after me in the main."*

*"Yes it's alright."*

*"The care is very good."*

*"They are kind."*

*"I have an artificial eye, and someone always helps me and takes me to my appointments. I'm going today and Name will go with me in a taxi."*

*"There are always plenty of girls around. I can look after myself, I get up and dress myself and go to bed when I like. Most days I'll have my breakfast in my room, and then I have lunch and tea in the dining room. I am quite independent except for my sight. I'm sure in the future I will need more help and I will be looked after."*

*"I'd like my bed changed every week. The girls are always so busy however I'm going to ask today and I'm sure they'll do it."*

*"I wouldn't like to sit in this room all day. The TV is on ITV and I like sport. I would rather be by the sea."*

*"To live in a family would be good as family eat when they want - they live differently. Here you eat according to the time."*

*"There are lots of people who help me and look after me."*

*"Care is excellent, above and beyond. The staff do really go the extra mile."*

*"Staff deserve more than minimum wage."*

*"They keep telling me this is my home but I'm not allowed outside until 10:30am."*

*"I have been here over x years now and when I first got here it was very good. But not anymore, there is not enough staff for the need. They are sent to other wings."*

*"I would like to be in my own home."*

*"I would like concerts and singing. I love jigsaws"*

*"I used to go out a lot before I came here - now I don't get to go out."*

## Food

*“The staff promise you coffee or a drink and then never bring you it. I have to wait longer for everything now it seems.”*

*“It varies, lovely and then not so lovely. Yesterday it was fish pie with not a lot of fish, however, it was edible.”*

*“It’s very nice. I like mashed potatoes. Yes I have a choice. I don’t know what it is today.”*

*“The cooks are good.”*

*“There is a choice. I don’t have fatty stuff so they sort that out for me.”*

*“The food’s not bad. I like ice cream.”*

*“I can choose. Fish and chips would be nice”.*

*“They do too much clever cookery.”*

*“Lovely the food it’s first class.”*

*“My food is blended; there is plenty of variety and each component is blended separately.”*

*“I find it difficult to swallow so I get Angel Delight and yogurts for pudding to make it easier for me.”*

*“I like anything really and it’s good.”*

*“I prefer my own food and I have my own fridge, but the staff are willing to help me with whatever I need. I go out and get my food usually on a Sunday.”*

*“I asked cook what’s on and if I don’t like it they will change it for something I do like.”*

*“I had a nice tasty dinner last week.”*

*“Don’t know what was for dinner - no menu.”*

*“I hate mince but I still have to have it.”*

*“They won’t get me what I want to eat”. “I would like to have a small piece of lemon meringue pie as I am sometimes hungry for something tasty but they won’t let me have it.”*

*“I love puddings but I don’t like all the puddings here cold rhubarb crumble with cream. I like it hot with custard.”*

## **Relatives and friends' views**

### **How do you feel generally about the service?**

*"Not too bad"*

*"Last week was disgusting and a complaint has been put in."*

*"There is generally not enough staff. There has been a gradual decrease over time. Last week when I came it was 10:15 am my friend was still soiled and the nurse said she would get someone. The help was completed at 11am. The residents spouse came in and complained. When you pay so much you expect to be clean."*

*"Normally in the past the place was clean and pleasant. The staff are nice. There just aren't enough of them to carry out the duties the way they used to."*

*"It normally smells okay here but last week wasn't good. Paying out £800 and there are only four staff."*

*"He eats more here than he did at home."*

### **Do you think that you are kept informed about your relative e.g. Health and future care plans?**

*"He is a friend his family all visit and talk about his care."*

### **Do you know how to make a complaint if you need to?**

*"I went straight to their relative, who came in here to complain to the manager."*

### **Are you aware of the social activities at the service and do you feel welcomed to join in?**

*"We don't know about them we only come of a morning. They do have a guitarist. They should bring the resident from the room so that they can join in with the activities."*

*"Our friend gets taken out by his wife as there isn't enough staff to take him out. His wife took him to Manchester on the train as he is interested in trains."*

*"I don't think the staff talk to him about trains. Staff used to pop in to see him but they have not got time now. They need more staff."*

**Would you recommend this service to others?**

*“I wouldn’t there are not enough staff now. But the staff are friendly.”*

*“No I told my friend they should take their relative out of here, it’s disgusting and she has complained about the lack of care last week.”*

## Staff views

### Do you have enough staff when on duty?

*"Yes I can carry out activities without leaving them to support toileting etc."*

*"There are three activities co-ordinators one for each unit"*

*"I wait until the breakfasts are over before I start activities so I can encourage everyone to join in."*

*"No."*

*"No."*

*"There are decreasing numbers."*

*"There's not enough staff so that can be hard, but I always want to give person centred care. Baths are only given once a week, and showers. I sometimes don't have enough time to update my care plans because it takes me so long to get around everyone."*

*"I'm one of two on site maintenance and there is a Health & Safety advisor. I moved from working in a nursing home so have an idea of staffing levels. I know a lot of the staff here and they don't appear to use a lot of agency staff though I don't know about the evenings."*

*"No there are generally four or five people on duty. This is not enough at present there are four people who need hoisting upstairs and three downstairs. These are double ups, requiring two staff and take time."*

*"An emphatic no! Morning shift has generally five staff on duty. Between 5am and 8pm there are three staff. They assist at teatime and get residents ready for bed."*

### Do you feel supported to carry out person centred care?

*"Regarding my maintenance role the Directors want me to have everything I need and I just ask. I made a recommendation for a resident to have a change of mattress to airflow and it was done."*

*"Yes I have a one page profile letting me know each of the residents' interests and I have done a "Getting to know you" activity in my unit."*

*"I don't feel supported at all."*

*"I mostly feel supported, some residents are not treated well, and the way name dealt with (resident) was disgusting."*

*“I have a man who likes Dominoes. We had a singing session this morning. I do arts & crafts and I put a film on for people who like films but don’t like to do arts and crafts.”*

*“When I am aware that someone doesn’t partake in the activities I speak to family and friends to find out what the interests of the resident are so when I discovered one man liked the football I started to cut out the articles from the newspapers to show him.”*

*“I have one lady who likes to wipe the tables down and others help me to sort the arts and crafts.”*

*“The home always promotes independence.”*

*“From a faith perspective there are bibles and crosses for people.”*

*“I have a Halloween event I started planning for yesterday. Typically we invite friends and family to join in.”*

*“We have friends coming in and making scrap books for the residents as well.”*

*“No church or community groups come in from outside - I will look into that it’s a good idea”*

*“It is a good idea to group people into their interests I could do that around magazines, books, dominoes and newspapers.”*

*“I could bring in speakers on things like diabetes, and nutrition that would be interesting.”*

*“Not really I don’t have enough time to chat to residents.”*

### **Do you feel you have enough training to carry out your duties well?**

*“Yes one weeks induction - Health & Safety, Fire procedures, Completing casefiles, Dementia simulator. Also completed my own research for things like doll therapy.”*

*“Health & Safety advisor has a training room and we’re kept up to date with any changes which effect us (regarding the law) Refresher training; fire evacuation/ fire marshal.”*

*“I feel like I have enough training for this unit, but not the others. Brambles and Brooklyn (dementia unit) they are called, we can be sent there because they are short staffed. I’m not trained to be doing some of that work. We don’t get a choice.”*



*“It’s a funny one; we do get lots of training over here, but not for the Brambles (dementia) unit for example. We get sent there even if we haven’t had the right training.”*

*“I look for my own training, I’m technically self-employed. So I am always keeping up to date with development and training, wouldn’t necessarily be in house.”*

*“Training is very good.”*

*“Training is brilliant and support is always given.”*

## **Are you happy working here?**

*“I am very happy here the residents are wonderful and the staff are very helpful and friendly”*

*“No, is the short answer.”*

*“I’m not happy but I’m not miserable.”*

*“I love the patients and staff. Management is not good enough. They will try to find out who has spoken to the CQC, so if there was an issue raised and they knew it would be from one of the staff. With inspections, I’m told to mind my own business kind of thing.”*

*“I have worked here for x years; most of the staff are being treated unfairly. The owners don’t seem to know what is going on. It was better than it is now.” (staff member visibly upset)*

*“I don’t think this place is well managed,. If you had seen me last Tuesday, I was ready to walk out, I had had enough, name, is extremely rude, she spoke to me like something you would scrape off your shoe.”*

*“If we say anything the door is pointed to and we are told, you know what you can do.”*

*“I have worked here for several years and this is my lowest point. The staff turnover is huge. The management changed two years ago and it has been worse since then. If a team of carers seem to be getting on too well they are split up and put on different units.”*

*“It was a good move for me as I’m nearer home. It’s good to have my care experience.”*

**Would you be happy to recommend this care home to a close relative?**

*“Yes the staff are wonderful and they treat the residents as though they are part of the family. They always put the residents first.”*

*“I already have.”*

*“No.”*

*“No, staffing levels are not good enough.”*

*“Yes.”*

*“There are forty two rooms and currently thirteen empty (looking at representative with raised eyebrows). I wonder why.”*

## Response from provider (Received by email 17/12/2018)

### Responses from Healthwatch Lancashire 17/12/2018.

Please find below the response to the draft report -

Page 2 - Tracey Gerrard (miss type Jerrard) is the Registered Home Manager  
**Thank you for bringing this to my attention. The report has been amended.**

Page 6 - (observations of corridors, public toilets and bathrooms)

The report comments that the environment or adaptations such as raised toilet seats and grab rails were not colour coded, however this is a general nursing unit and colour coding would not be beneficial and may be perceived as undignified. Colour coded adaptations and picture signposts are evident in large quantities within the dementia units where this is highly important to aid the residents to orientate to their surroundings.

**Thank you for this information. This has now been reflected in the report**

Page 13 - (residents and friends' views)

*Last week was disgusting and a complaint has been put in*

*There is generally not enough staff. There has been a gradual decrease over time. Last week when I came in at 10:15am my friend was still soiled and the nurse said that she would get someone. The help was completed by 11am. The residents spouse came in and complained I went straight to their relative, who came here to complain to the manager*

*Our friend gets taken out by his wife as there isn't enough staff to take him out.*

*I don't think the staff talk to him about trains. Staff used to pop in and see him but they haven't got time now*

*I told my friend that they should take their relative out of here, its disgusting and she has complained about the lack of care last week*

There are 6 comments above that are documented separately however I recognise these concerns from 1 complainant. The wording of the report suggests that the comments have come from 6 different individuals which would be an inaccurate reflection.

**The Methodology summary at the beginning of the report records us speaking to two relatives/friends. The respondents are asked a total of five separate questions. Often respondents will have more than one comment about a particular issue or even no comment at all. Therefore, numerically responses will not always reflect the number of respondents.**

All of the above concerns were addressed immediately as they were raised, prior to the visit from healthwatch to the satisfaction to his next of kin

Staffing levels are dynamic and variable reflecting occupancy and dependency within the unit. Staffing levels are safe and proportionate to this and are reviewed regularly.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information

I look forward to hearing from you

Yours Sincerely

Michelle Dicks RN  
Acting Home Manager

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[www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

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