

Elm House Care Home

Skelmersdale

Enter and View Report

Tuesday 15th January 2019

10.30am to 12.30pm



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:

Elm House Care Home
Lime Grove
Skelmersdale
WN8 8ET

Staff met during our visit:

Ms. Alison Griffiths - Manager's Assistant

Date and time of our visit:

Tuesday 15th January 2019
10.30am to 12.30pm

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised**Representatives:**

Jeanette Newman Engagement Officer
(Lead)
Michele Chapman 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

Acknowledgements

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

General Information

Elm House Care Home is privately owned by Elm House (UK) Ltd with places for thirty four residents. There were nineteen vacancies at the time of our visit. The person in charge is Angela Finnigan.

Information obtained from Carehome.co.uk states that the home provides care for people from the ages of sixty five who are affected by old age, physical disability and sensory impairment.

Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Tuesday 15th January 2019 10.30am to 12.30pm

We spoke to seven residents, five staff and no 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 of the environment and facilities.

As some residents were receiving visits, choosing to stay in their rooms or being nursed, we spoke with seven of the fifteen 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. It is not our role to censor feedback from respondents.

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.

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:

Elm House Care Home has recently been erected to meet the requirements of a modern purpose built facility in fitting with its environment. It is situated at the heart of Old Skelmersdale with local amenities and public services close by.

The facility uniquely offers an animal friendly environment. During our visit one resident had her dog staying at the care home and we were informed there had been two other dogs in the home at the same time, which had worked well. The staff assisted the owner in the care for the dog by taking it out on walks and looking after it during the night shift. The Healthwatch representatives felt the presence of the dog created a homely atmosphere with residents clearly enjoying the dog's presence.

Staff at the home appeared to be welcoming and friendly to residents and visitors alike. Their enthusiasm for their caring role and the ethos of the home was clear with all the staff stating they would unreservedly recommend the home to a family member in need of a care setting.

All residents spoken to reported the food as good or very good.

Healthwatch representatives felt that the layout of the building lent itself to multiple points where residents can be quiet, receive visitors or interact with other residents. At the time of our visit there was plenty of movement around the home with positive interaction between residents and between staff and residents. Informal activities were taking place in a family atmosphere.

There was a monthly schedule of activities on the notice board which omitted the activities for the day of our visit therefore we were unable to evidence whether a planned activity had taken place. At the time of our visit there was no specific Activity Co-ordinator role with staff sharing the responsibility. Several residents, whilst acknowledging they engage in activities in the home which they enjoy, stated they wanted to engage in activities outside of Elm House. Representatives felt the close proximity of the park, shopping centre, community centres, pubs and town centre could enable these activities to take place.

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

Green

Enter and View observations

Pre-visit and location

Elm House is a newly built care home. It has an Informative website with contact details and staff information. A brochure was requested via the website but not received before the visit.

The facility is situated at the heart of Old Skelmersdale in a built up area opposite Stanley Coronation Park, Sandy Lane Health Centre and Sandy Lane Shopping Centre with its supermarket, newsagents, café, pharmacy, takeaways and pub. It is also within easy reach of Liverpool Mission Hall, The Greenhill Community Hub, Trinity Friendship Centre and several public houses, offering activities and places to socialise.

The home is clearly signposted. However, representatives feel direction signs to the home from the main roads into the built up area will be beneficial.

There are a limited number of parking spaces in the car park of Elm House with additional parking available in the surrounding streets of Lime Grove and Sherrat Street or at Sandy Lane Shopping Centre. Bus stops are about five to ten minutes walk away from the site being located on the main roads of School Lane, the High Street and the top of Sandy Lane. A bike shelter is provided in the car park of the home.

Green

The external environment

The building has recently been converted and upgraded to meet the requirements of a modern purpose built care home. There are two levels to the venue. The gardens are not fully mature, however the environment is pleasant, looks clean and is well maintained. There are plenty of tubs and hanging baskets situated around the building which we were later informed residents had helped to plant. An old fashioned mangle which had been adapted to hold plants makes a nice focus point in the garden. Block pavement leading to seating areas looks attractive and homely.

There is ample garden furniture to the back, side and front of the dwelling. Representatives felt that some of the pathways to seating areas would be challenging to some residents because of the incline, however assistance could be offered to residents or one of the flatter areas could be chosen for sitting out. Representatives considered the layout of the different areas will encourage social interaction between residents. An easy to access area for smoking has been identified just outside the main dining area in response to residents' requests. The staff are required to go to a smoking area further away from the building. The residents smoking area was neat and tidy with a table and chairs provided. Representatives observed residents smoking in the area and noted they looked

comfortable and relaxed. Smoke did not enter into the building when the exit door was opened.

The main entrance was easily found at the front of the building and was secure at the time of our visit.

The driveway was considered to have a steep gradient which may be difficult for anyone with mobility concerns to navigate. As several residents had stated they would like to go out more Healthwatch representatives felt that a flat path from the front of the building to a gate opposite Stanley Coronation Park would encourage residents and visitors to be able to get out more either into the park or through it into the shopping centre.

Green

The internal environment/reception-first impressions

Representatives were greeted in a timely manner and made to feel welcome by Alison Griffiths, the Manager's Assistant. All the other care home staff showed an interest in greeting us which gave us an opportunity to meet all the staff on duty at the time of our visit.

Access had been given through a different door at the front of the building than the main entrance. Alison explained that as an "animal friendly" home they had need to ensure a current residents dog did not wander off out of the building unnoticed therefore they had switched off the automatic opening of the main entrance. We were taken to the main reception, which housed the nurse's station, to sign the visitors' book. Hand gel was available for use in the visitors' reception area as well as at the door we had entered. We were greeted by a friendly dog, who was being given attention by residents and staff alike during our visit. Representatives felt the addition of the pet added to the friendly homely atmosphere. We were told the dog is very well looked after by the staff who take the dog out for walks and attend to it during the night when its owner is asleep. At one point the home has accommodated the needs of three residents having their dogs stay or visit.

There were up to date notices and information on display. The Healthwatch Lancashire poster was not on display as it contained the date of a previously cancelled visit.

Staff wore different coloured uniforms and name badges to help residents to identify them and their different roles. Representatives felt residents and visitors would further benefit from having pictures of the staff and their roles on display.

The facility was nicely decorated throughout giving a bright clean appearance. Appropriate non slip vinyl wood effect flooring, pictures and flowers all contributed to a relaxing homely environment.

We were given a brochure upon request and a service user guide containing comprehensive information. Representatives considered the pictures in the brochure were not the actual physical environment we observed at the home but did convey the friendly atmosphere. They considered it would be beneficial to have actual pictures of the physical environment as reflected on the website.

Green

The observation of corridors public toilets and bathrooms

Representatives observed the décor and open layout of the building makes orientation easy for residents to navigate and reduces the need for signage. Each resident room has a number and name on the door as well as a personalised memory box with a picture of their choice. The five corridors are painted in different colours and are named after areas in the Lake District: Windermere, Buttermere, Derwent, Coniston, and Ullswater. Alison informed us the residents were surveyed about the décor with eleven out of the twelve residents at the time being happy it.

All corridors were free from clutter, were well lit and had appropriate non slip vinyl wood effect flooring. Wheelchairs and walking frames were safely stored underneath the stairwells which were bright and easily accessible. Some of the access doors to the corridors require fobs to open. Representatives were informed this was to deter access to the stairs for residents who are compromised and may be at risk of falling. There is a spacious, well lit, clean lift giving access to the upper floor.

Thirty out of the thirty four resident rooms are ensuite. A communal toilet and bathroom is conveniently situated in between the four non-ensuited rooms . Downstairs within the dining/lounge area there is a communal toilet. Upstairs the main lounge has a toilet within close proximity to the lounge with an additional toilet sited on the corridor. All the communal toilets and bathrooms presented clean with contrasting toilet seats and handrails. There was no dementia friendly signage on toilet doors as the home does not specialise in dementia. The communal bathroom had a specially adapted bath with side door to walk in as well as a chair hoist option for ease of access.

Green

The lounges, dining and other public areas

The public areas are spacious and well designed, clean pleasant and comfortable. Representatives considered there to be a good variety of quality comfortable seating throughout the home which would give residents and visitors a choice of where to sit. On the ground floor there is a dining room with ample dining tables and chairs to accommodate resident needs. This area is bright, well decorated, spacious and homely. The windows and doors give good views to the garden.

Adjoining the dining area there are two “snugs” furnished to replicate small lounges; one of which has a TV and the other has a radio. Representatives observed the room was very well used with residents appearing comfortable with the facility and the company of other residents. At the time of our visit the male residents had gathered to watch football together. Alison informed us that the residents enjoy frequenting the dining room with its two snugs and have chosen to socialise there most days more than in the upstairs lounge. The area has easy access to the back garden and the residents smoking area. Representatives observed residents appeared relaxed, engaged in their activities (talking, watching TV or listening to the radio) and enjoying the company of others. Representatives felt the home had a welcoming “family” atmosphere.

The upstairs lounge was also pleasantly decorated with adequate seating and a large TV central to the room. It had two snugs; one of which was utilised as a hairdressing salon containing a coffee/ drinks machine. Whilst the provision was felt to be adequate and beneficial representatives felt the cosiness of both the lounge and salon area would be enhanced by a screen dividing the areas. The other snug area was suitable for use as a quiet space for residents and visitors to chat. We were informed the residents utilise the lounge area mainly on Wednesday and Thursdays; the days the hairdresser visits or when they have specific activities in the room. The hallway upstairs had been effectively presented as a further space for residents and visitors to frequent.

Large clocks throughout the building looked decorative and aided residents to know the time. However, it was observed that there were no orientation tools to ensure residents knew the date, day and weather or which staff were on duty that day. Representatives felt this information would be beneficial to residents. The clock in the lounge was displaying the wrong time.

Nicely presented tables & chairs and a varied four weekly menu of hearty home cooked food such as hotpot, fish and chips and cottage pie, promotes a pleasant dining experience which residents informed us they enjoyed. There were alternatives offered on the menu and residents considered that if they wanted something else they would receive it. During our visit representatives observed a spouse was welcomed to join a resident for lunch on her first day in Elm House.

Green

Observations of resident and staff interactions

There was ample staff on duty at the time of our visit. Staff themselves felt that they had the time to offer person centred care and help residents with individual activities. Residents regarded the staff as friendly and caring. One resident who enjoyed baking said she had been making rice crispie cakes whilst a male resident liked to be taken out in nice weather.

An activities schedule was on the notice board for the current month, however there were two weeks dates missing including the date of our visit so we were unable to validate a designated activity was taking place. Activities on the schedule varied on a daily basis such as dominoes, cards, hairdresser, nails, film night, chair exercises, and pat dog therapy. There was no designated Activities Co-ordinator at the time of our visit. One member of staff told us the home was intending to appoint carers as champions to each wing in order to ensure residents have the opportunity to engage in activities of their choice. Representatives observed that activity seemed to happen naturally at Elm House, such as the residents choosing to stay in the dining area in order to chat, gathering together to watch TV and listening to the radio in the snugs. Others went for a smoke together outside. Residents were observed frequently giving attention to the small dog residing in the home. The home had a family atmosphere promoted by the variety and placement of seating which encouraged social interaction between residents, staff and family members. However, a number of residents indicated they would like more activities such as helping make food, visiting shops and places of interest, walking and going to the leisure centre to swim. Representatives felt it would be beneficial for the home to take full advantage of the nearness of the facilities present in their locality.

Healthwatch representatives observed staff proactively approaching residents, respectfully and in a timely manner, chatting to them and finding out if they had any needs. For example one member of staff asked a resident did he want her to turn the TV over as his programme was about to start, whilst the four ladies who looked like they were enjoying listening to the radio were not disturbed. A resident in a wheelchair was asked if she was okay and did she want to be moved. All staff said they had been able to get to know residents likes and dislikes.

No call bells went off during our visit. One resident did comment that staff could take a little while longer than they liked to respond when asked for assistance but the carers would attend to their needs.

Green Amber

Additional information

At the time of our visit the park in front of Elm House was being refurbished and additional play equipment was being installed. As well as childrens play equipment and a Multi Use Games Area suitable for playing both football and basketball the park has a full size crown bowling green with an indoor pavilion and outside gym equipment.

Feedback from residents

Environment

“Nice room I have everything in it I want.”

“It’s a lovely place.”

“I don’t live here.”

“Yes I like everything.”

“My room is cosy.”

“I like my room.”

“I like the outside I can go out and smoke.”

“We have everything we need I have lots of storage in my room and I have my own bathroom.”

Activities

“It would be nice to go on a minibus to Blackpool.”

“I like chatting, I like the company.”

“I walk outside, I play dominoes.”

“I am not bothered.”

“We play dominoes, we went out for Christmas. We play different games.”

“I would like to go out walking more.”

“I’d like to go to the shops.”

“I would like to go to the leisure centre, I used to play tennis and I like to swim.”

Care

“They are super staff, there for you every time.”

“There is a bell but I have never used it.”

“Everybody is lovely I have no complaints.”

“They look after me but sometimes it takes a while for them to come if I call them.”

“I want the GP to tell me when I can go to a bungalow. I need to be more informed.”

“I like the staff, they treat me with respect.”

“The care is good, I get on with staff.”

Food

“Good it’s good, nice stuff. I haven’t got a favourite meal yet.”

“There is tea and coffee on request, it’s very good.”

“Yes I love the food and I like fish and chips on a Friday.”

“I eat anything, if I fancied something different they would make it for me.”

“The food is good I can ask for anything I want.”

“It’s very good.”

“I like the food but I would like to make my own food.”

Relatives and friends’ views

There were no relatives and friends views recorded at the time of our visit.

Staff views

Do you have enough staff when on duty?

“We are never understaffed.”

“I think so, we are not full anyway.”

“Yes we have a good team.”

“Yes we have plenty of staff. We are only half full at the moment and we will take on more staff.”

“Yes we are not struggling at all.”

Do you feel supported to carry out person centred care?

“Yes the residents enjoy pampering and we get to know the family.”

“I treat every resident like my Nan and Grandad.”

“Yes I am able to give assistance when wanted. I feel I know the residents and their interests. I will take them out in good weather.”

“Yes we work as a team and help each other out. You learn about the different residents; what they want and how to cater for their needs, for example we help a resident look after her dog so she can have it here with her.”

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

“Yes I have been a cook for 30 years.”

“Yes I have been caring for 20 years.”

“Yes I have been here since day one, when we started all the training.”

“I have had lots of training including the moving and handling and how to use the hoist equipment.”

“All we need to do is ask and we will get the training we want for example if I wanted to become a Senior I will get the training I need to develop. The management are great and very approachable.”

“I come from a non-care background and the training and support I receive means I feel confident in carrying out my job role.”

“Yes I have had all the mandatory training and medication level three. We have also had “Six Step” end of life training.”

Are you happy working here?

“Yes I got to choose my own kitchen, and I have been involved from the beginning.”

“I love it and I only live 2 minutes away.”

“I love the friendliness, I am very happy I left retail.”

“I love it; there is a good team that works together and we have lovely residents, I wouldn’t do anything else now.”

It’s the best move I ever made.”

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

“I already have done.”

“I really would.”

“Yes I would definitely.”

“100% yes, actually make that 1000%.”

“Definitely, my father in law is in here and he loves it.”

“Everybody is very caring in here and treats everyone with dignity and respect.

“That includes the management you couldn’t ask for a nicer place to live or work.”

Response from provider

Good Afternoon Jeanette,

in response to your draft report we are very happy with the outcome and would like to extend our thank you again for visiting our premises,

we have identified that a staff picture board was needed in reception, I ordered it the same day as the inspection and had it delivered on next day delivery, staff photographs, names and job titles are now on display in our reception area, this will make it easier for residents families and health professionals to identify our staff.

With regards to the photographs on the brochure, the proprietor had the brochures produced prior to the home being finished, he has advised me that on the next batch he orders to be printed the photographs will be updated with those of the home as shown on the website.

We will address a screen separating our hair dressing salon from our lounge, Angela the Registered Manager is currently looking into our options.

We have also placed orientation tools in all main communal areas of the home, reception, lounges and snugs. They were ordered the same day the inspection took place, these tools display the date, day and month, we have also replaced the batteries in the large clock upstairs.

You asked us for feedback regarding your visit, we are happy with the way the visit went, we don't feel it could have gone any better, yourself and your colleague were very attentive towards our staff and residents at the home.

We look forward to future visits and suggestions on ways to improve our services from you and your team.

Kind Regards

Angela Finnigan Registered Manager and Alison Griffiths Deputy Manager

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