

# **Altham Meadows Morecambe**

**Enter and View Report**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**10.30am to 12.30pm**



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:**

Altham Meadows  
Bartholomew Road  
Morecambe  
LA4 4RR

**Staff met during our visit:**

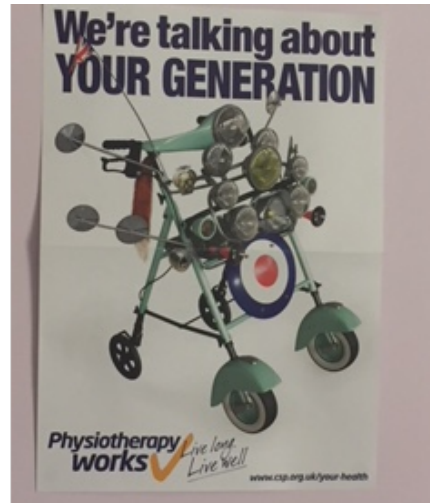
Alison Hepburn (Area Senior Manager)  
Melissa Ward (Registered Manager)

**Date and time of our visit:**

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018  
10.30am - 12.30pm

**Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:**

Michele Chapman - Project Officer (Lead)  
Linda Brown - Senior Project Officer  
Katie Taylor-Rossall - Senior Project 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 clients, staff and, where possible, clients' 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 Alison Hepburn and Melissa Ward, together with staff, clients and visitors, for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

## General Information

Altham Meadows is a combined Health and Social Care and NHS facility contracted to Lancashire County Council with places for twenty-two clients. There were eight vacancies at the time of our visit. At the time of our visit the person in charge was Melissa Ward. The facility provides assessment and rehabilitation alongside enhanced residential intermediate care.

The facility is currently recruiting to open a further eight clinical enhanced beds.

## Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

We spoke to seven clients, five staff, (no relatives where available on the day) where possible within the constraints of the facility 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 staying at Altham Meadows

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

As some clients were receiving visits, choosing to stay in their rooms or being supported by staff, we spoke with seven of the fourteen clients.

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.

Service users are described as clients as this was the term used by the registered manager.

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 made.

## Summary:

Healthwatch Lancashire chose to visit Altham Meadows to review what one staff member described as “one of the first fully integrated health and social care units in Lancaster and Morecambe.”

The facility hosts an integrated provision of short term health and social care for clients discharged from hospital (or at risk of admission) but requiring temporary residential support, alongside an assessment and rehabilitation centre.

Being newly refurbished the environment was very clean and attractively decorated with some homely furnishings. However, representatives heard two people in the lounge area requesting support with cushions, the area manager explaining later that soft furnishings were limited due to infection control measures.

We found that the atmosphere was very pleasant and well-ordered, social care staff told us that they felt professionalised working alongside NHS staff and valued the training they received. They also told us that they enjoyed their contribution to the client journey, assisting recovery and achieving positive outcomes for service users.

NHS staff spoke of the facility as an opportunity to “wrap care around the patient”.

Clients told us that they regarded their stay at Altham Meadows as a positive milestone towards their return home. They also told us that they enjoyed the companionship of clients in the same circumstances and stage of the recovery process as opposed to the generic hospital ward.

Client feedback in respect of food was generally negative. The registered manager told us that this was outsourced and satisfied all nutritional requirements.

However, we observed that clients had the opportunity to have food brought in from home or from their usual home provider for example Wiltshire Foods.

Representatives identified parking problems at the facility due to the number of Assessment Centre visitors and attending professionals. Representatives considered that this may have made it difficult for visitors to the residential facility, but the area manager told us that plans were in hand for a further eighteen car parking places.

External signage too was less than clear and needed updating as did the public information available on the internet.

All the clients we spoke to said they preferred their stay at Altham Meadows compared to their stay on a hospital ward. Feedback from both social care staff and NHS staff was extremely positive. One staff member describing the facility as “brilliant” and being a “good example of integrated working between health and social care”.

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

This visit was originally scheduled for Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2018, when we were unable to gain access. The visit was then rearranged for Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

In the process of rearranging the visit we had difficulty finding up to date details of the facility online and the Lancashire County Council telephone enquiry hub did not have up to date details either.

As the facility is not generally open to the public there was no detailed website, however clients being supported at Altham Meadows are provided with a comprehensive Service User Guide on admittance.

Altham Meadows is conveniently situated close to local transport and shops and is easily located however the signpost outside the building does not make the purpose of the facility clear and this could lead to confusion. When we mentioned this to the area manager she explained that the signpost needed the logo and description of each of the integrated services, and the current signpost did not have capacity to support that amount of information.

Due to the nature of integrated services the car park adjacent to Altham Meadows was busy when we visited, making it difficult for visitors to find parking. The Operations Manager explained later that there were plans to provide another eighteen car parking spaces. The Registered Care Manager stated that the peak time for use of the car park was mid-morning when clinic services were busy, and that at other times the car park had availability.

Staff had not received our Healthwatch Lancashire letter or poster and this was not on display at the time of our visit.

## Amber/ Green

## The external environment

Being a former NHS mental health facility, the building had been refurbished specifically to accommodate the integrated working centre. The grounds were spacious and well maintained with lawned areas to the external perimeter which clients told us they walked around to supplement their physiotherapy.

An internal courtyard provided a private hard landscaped leisure area for clients to sit out, we saw benches, a raised decked area, and a patio with metalwork decorative animals. However, hanging baskets would have benefitted from replanting.

There was free access around the facility as none of the clients were subject to Deprivation of Liberty orders.

## Green

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

It was clear where visitors should report to and access was via a staffed reception area. Reception provided a visitor's book and wall mounted anti-bacterial hand gel.

Just past the reception area we noticed a "You said", "What we did" information display detailing how residents meetings had identified questions about food and activities and how the facility management had responded. Representatives noted that residents were able to select questions to be asked during recruitment of new staff.

Key staff were easily identifiable by uniform, however there was no pictorial noticeboard identifying them.

## Green

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

All public areas were light clean and airy.

Corridors were newly decorated in relaxing colours and contrasting handrails. Doors and public rooms were furnished with dementia friendly signage which was pictorial, written, and colour coded. Flooring throughout the facility was laminate with standards of cleanliness being extremely high. We saw photographs displayed of the facilities various "Champions".

We also observed a large mural of Morecambe seafront in the corridor close to reception.

At several points in the corridor were small private seating areas with coffee tables and comfortable armchairs. Some of these had fresh flowers or houseplants.

The bedrooms at Altham Meadows are en suite. Likewise, public areas are furnished with sufficient adapted bathrooms including baths. We observed all public bathrooms to be clean, nicely decorated and provided with plenty of soap, hand towels and toilet paper.

We observed clients' bedroom doors to be personalised with the client name, landscape prints, and door numbers.

## Green

### The lounges, dining and other public areas

The residential area at Altham Meadows is set around a ground level courtyard.

Communal areas consist of a lounge, conservatory, gym for rehabilitation and a fully fitted clients kitchen (also for rehabilitation purposes).

The lounge area is spacious and light with groupings of comfortable furniture facilitating social interaction. A TV was unobtrusive, and some seating areas were separate from the TV and facing away. We observed games and puzzles stored on shelves alongside books and newspapers. We also saw several songbooks one being “Rock and Roll”.

A clock for orientation displayed the day, date and time and we observed other decorative features such as table lamps and flowers. However, there was little in the way of soft furnishings and we heard requests from clients for “cushions”.

The Operations Manager told us later that soft furnishings may compromise infection control measures.

We observed that the facility encouraged clients to exercise at every opportunity a poster on the lounge door enquiring “HAVE YOU DONE YOUR EXERCISES?”

Adjacent to the lounge was the dining area with sufficient seating for the number of clients. We observed tables seating six and saw that they were set with crockery placemats and napkins.

The registered manager told us that meals were chosen in advance from a predetermined menu and brought onsite.

Choices were available a sample being Chicken and Broccoli Bake, Turkey Cottage Pie. Cheese and Broccoli soup, mixed vegetables and sauté potatoes.

A small conservatory was very comfortable and quiet, the TV in this room being tuned to light music. Access to the surrounding garden areas was nearby in the corridor.

Most residents appeared to be congregated in the communal areas.

## Green

### Observations of client and staff interactions

Representatives observed very good interaction between staff and clients, we heard clients being addressed by name and encouraged to join in group activity. We observed a group exercise session being delivered by an NHS physiotherapy practitioner and saw that residents were encouraged to take part in this.

Staff spoke of delivering person centred care and how they found clients progress rewarding.

### **Additional information**

The Operations Manager told us that it was difficult for the service to respond to individual requests in respect of food as food was outsourced and ordered in advance. Changes to menus could take up to three weeks and that most clients were short term and may have left the facility before changes could be made.

Some residents chose to have food brought in from home. Others chose to continue receiving food from their home-based supplier such as Wiltshire Foods.

The Operations Manager told us that the facility has a care assistant who takes the lead with activities. She was absent on the day we visited.

The registered manager updated us on the 23/05/2018. that a request had been made to Lancashire County Council to update their telephone hub in respect of the contact details for Altham Meadows.



## Feedback from clients

### Environment

*"My room is lovely."*

*"It's warm enough."*

*"It's pleasant."*

*"Very nice environment, clean and smells nice."*

*"Initially it was lovely, everyone was very welcoming, and it's stayed the same!"*

*"Nothing they could do better."*

*"I find the duvet a bit heavy."*

*"It's not so warm in the day."*

*"Someone had been in my toilet and there was dirt all over the toilet seat. You have never seen anything like it. I told someone, and it was cleaned up. I've put a notice on the door for other residents not to use it. I can now lock my door whenever I leave my room."*

### Activities

*"There's having a little walk."*

*"I don't mind exercises but not all the time."*

*"I think I'm getting the treatment I need. I've got up and got the Zimmer and walked through the hall."*

*"Through the day it's a bit slow but evenings flash by."*

*"I keep trying to run before I can walk. They're very understanding. They've even taken me for a walk outside."*

*"I like reading."*

*"I go for a walk outside."*

*"I like word searches. I'm limited as to what I can do."*

*"My family have brought me in some tapestry."*

*"The days are awfully long."*

## Care

*"Staff are good."*

*"They help us any time we need."*

*"Fantastic."*

*"The banter I have with them is good. One came and sat with me after their shift was over just to have a chat."*

*"They are alright really. One or two are better than others."*

*"Everyone treats me with dignity and respect."*

*"Very polite."*

*"The staff look after me, they are really helpful."*

*"You can have a laugh and a joke with staff."*

*"It's been great, we've had some good laughs."*

*"Sometimes they're in such a rush with everything."*

*"They used to help you get dressed but they don't help you as much."*

*"Some treat me with respect but not all."*

*"A carer called me lazy and I was tired. I told them not to send that carer to me again. My complaint was dealt with."*

*"I can't cope with young lads coming into my room at night when I need the toilet. This is private."*

*"It's far better than being in hospital. (Lancaster)" "Royal Lancaster Infirmary was very hectic."*

*"I get more rehabilitation because it's smaller here."*

*"I'm glad I'm here, it's one step closer to home."*

*"I would rather be here than in hospital."*

*"Oh! I certainly prefer to be here."*

*"I wouldn't say it was worse than being in hospital."*

*"I waited 22 hours to get to the home waiting for an ambulance."*

*"It's a lot better than the hospital, it was shocking. I have no faith in Royal Lancaster Infirmary."*

## Food

*“I get my own food brought in.”*

*“They tell you what you’ve got, and they come with plenty of tea and biscuits.”*

*“Breakfast is alright.”*

*“Steak pie was nice; every second day is okay.”*

*“Food on the whole is alright. Not much choice and nothing really offered if you don’t like it.”*

*“My carer brings food for tea because I don’t like it much here.”*

*“There’s a lot of repetition, each choice is worse than the last.”*

*“Yoghurt or ice cream all the time, I could scream!”*

*“Just like hospital food. It’s warm and you get three choices. No choice of desserts, usually yoghurt or ice cream.”*

*“If you can’t eat it nine times out of ten you will be offered toast.”*

*“We get fed up of yoghurt and ice cream if it’s on the menu for both meals.”*

*“The food is absolutely shocking.”*

*“The food is absolutely awful. My family bring me food, so I use a lot of my own. They are happy for me to do this.”*

*“If there was nothing I liked there was nothing they could make me other than toast.”*

## Staff views

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

*"There are always enough staff on."*

*"I love it there are always enough staff on."*

*"Yes, we have enough staff on duty."*

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

*"The Managers and Seniors are great, you can ask them anything."*

*"Yes definitely. Everyone is involved from referral to leaving."*

*"Goals are set by them, like if someone wants to go from walking with a Zimmer frame to a walking stick, we'll do it in stages to help them feel more confident. We'll go from a Zimmer frame to crutches, to two walking sticks, to one, all at your own pace."*

*"Clients are given choices and involved and involved in the rehab plan."*

*"Integrated working is person centred. Wrapping care around the patient"*

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

*"I have done loads of training."*

*"When you come they give you training like first aid, moving and handling, and medication. The courses are ongoing and because we work so closely with the NHS we get access to their training too."*

*"The staff mix works really well. I was probably the most sceptical about it, but I've had to eat my words, it works really well there's no them and us."*

### Are you happy working here?

*"I am. I'd been at my previous place for a long time, so it was a big step to go somewhere else. It's the best decision I ever made."*

*"Yes, I enjoy it."*

*"All the staff are very nice."*

*"Absolutely!"*

*“It’s brilliant! Altham Meadows is a good example of integrated working between health and social care.”*

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

*“Yes.”*

*“Yes, it’s good to see people improving.”*

*“Absolutely!”*

*“This may be one of the first fully integrated health and social care units in Lancaster and Morecambe.”*

## Response from provider

Here's an update regarding the food at Altham Meadows following your visit to us on Wednesday.

It is Lorne Stuart (The facilities management company) responsibility to ensure there is a nutritious and varied diet to all the residents. I have monthly meetings with Lorne Stuart and we discuss any issues/ things that are going well. The menu that we have is varied and we have all of the nutritional information to hand. The dietician from Royal Lancaster Infirmary visited Altham Meadows to consult on the nutritional values of the meals and support us with nutritional requirements of service users on 9/01/18. The dietician found no issues with the nutritional value of the food and made recommendations for balanced menus. We continue to be supported with the dietician service and can consult with them on any individual dietary requirement. We are constantly looking to improve our meals through consultation with our service users. The menu process can take up to 3 weeks to turn menu's round and therefore we cannot always provide for individual taste and preference within the time frame of their residence and rehabilitation admission. The current menus have reviewed and are in the process of being changed. Service user comments are important to us and we will endeavour to continually improve areas of concern.

Kind regards,

Melissa Ward

Altham Meadows

Older peoples service

Lancashire County Council

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