

Care home life, what it's really like!

## The Pavillion



Date of Healthwatch Sunderland visit:  
13<sup>th</sup> December 2017





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## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Sunderland would like to acknowledge the support of the residents who allowed us into their home and talked openly and honestly with the team. We would also like to thank those staff members, family and relatives who took time out of their day to answer our questions and give their feedback.



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## 1. Introduction

### What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch England is the national consumer champion in health and social care. It was set up by the government to ensure that people's views around health and social care services are listened to and fed back to service providers and commissioners with a view to improving services.

There is a local Healthwatch for every Local Authority area in England. Healthwatch Sunderland aims to be a strong local consumer champion working with our partners to support:

- People to shape health and social care delivery
- People to influence the services they receive personally
- People to hold services to account.

We achieve this by:

- Listening to people, especially the most vulnerable, to understand their experiences and what matters most to them
- Influencing those who have the power to change services so that they better meet people's needs now and into the future
- Empowering and informing people to get the most from their health and social care services and encouraging other organisations to do the same.





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## 2. Background and rationale

Independent Age and Healthwatch Camden have recently carried out some initial research into the information currently available on care homes. The results indicated that there is a need to provide qualitative information on care homes that goes beyond basic safety standards. It shows that the information needed by people looking for a suitable care home, should provide a real sense of what a home may be like to live in.

Healthwatch Sunderland have responded to this need and will be carrying out visits to all 47 care homes currently available to older people across Sunderland. The complete results will be published to enable members of the public to make more informed choices when considering which care home to move into for themselves or their relatives.

To enable this, 8 indicators have been devised to be used and will focus specifically on issues of quality, such as how much residents and family can have a say in how the home is run, and whether residents are able to pursue their hobbies etc.

### **The 8 indicators are:**

1. A strong visible management
2. Staff with time and skills to do their jobs
3. Good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing
4. A varied programme of activities
5. Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes
6. Ensuring residents can regularly see health professionals such as GPs, dentists, opticians or chiropodists
7. Accommodate resident's personal, cultural and lifestyle needs
8. Provide an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used.



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### 3. Methodology

An initial pre-visit meeting with the home Manager, Nichola was held at The Pavillion. This was to explain the reason for the ‘Care home life - What it’s really like!’ visit, to understand the needs of the residents and to arrange a visit that would cause as little disruption as possible.

The ‘Care home life - What it’s really like!’ visit took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017 and was carried out by Healthwatch Sunderland staff and volunteers who are trained so that they can effectively capture the resident’s experience.

At the visit residents were asked a range of questions via a set questionnaire (see appendix 1). The questions were constructed to reflect the objectives of the visit. Observations were also made on the physical environment and staff/resident interaction.

Staff and relatives were also given questionnaires to complete (see appendix 2, 3 and 4).

We also ran a facebook campaign asking local people to comment on their experiences of care homes across Sunderland. Any feedback we received was incorporated into the findings.

## 4. Findings - Summary

The Healthwatch team collated the survey findings we gathered from residents, their family and friends, staff and Managers and our observations made during our visit. The findings have been scored against the eight indicators in terms of the degree which they were met, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A neutral rating indicates both positive and negative feedback, which when averaged results in a neutral score. A summary of this can be found below:

Here is the key which shows the indicator scores



Strongly disagree



Disagree



Neutral



Agree



Strongly agree

1.	A strong visible management	 Strongly agree				
2.	Staff with time and skills to do their jobs	<table border="0"> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disagree</td> <td>Agree</td> </tr> </table>			Disagree	Agree
						
Disagree	Agree					
3.	Good knowledge of each resident and their changing needs	 Strongly agree				
4.	A varied programme of activities	 Strongly agree				
5.	Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes	 Agree				
6.	Regular access to health professionals	 Agree				
7.	Accommodation of resident's personal, cultural and lifestyle needs	 Agree				
8.	An open environment where feedback is actively sought and used	 Agree				



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## Findings

The Pavillion is located on North View Terrace, Colliery Row, Houghton Le Spring, DH4 5NW. The centre provides nursing and residential care for up to 68 older people, some of whom were living with dementia. All rooms are en-suite and some have their own wet rooms.

The home has a conservatory which looks out onto the sensory garden, which can be enjoyed by the residents.

All dietary needs are covered and residents may bring their own furniture and choose their room decoration.

See the latest CQC inspection report here:

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-126495028>

At the time of our visit there were 64 residents living in the home. Due to the capacity of the majority of the residents, the Healthwatch team were only able to support 6 residents to fully complete the survey. The team received 4 complete and 1 partially completed staff and 3 friends and relative surveys back.

The results of these surveys are given below:

### Indicator 1 - A strong visible management

The indicator states that the Manager should be visible within the care home, provide good leadership to staff and have the right experience for the job  
**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

Two of the residents at The Pavillion had difficulty identifying the Manager but this may have been due to their own individual health or capacity. The majority of the residents knew the Manager by name, one resident said “She treats you with respect and dignity.”

All of the friends and relatives who completed the survey process knew the Manager by name and found her to be friendly and helpful. One person said “The Manager always speaks when we meet and knows who I am. She will try to immediately address any concerns that I may have.”

The majority of staff respondents said that they feel supported by the Manager. One person didn’t answer this question. All staff who completed the survey told us that they find the Manager easy to talk to. Their comments included; “Our Manager is easy to approach and always supportive with staff,” “I find the Manager easy to approach and she is always there if we need her support” and “We can approach her with any worries or concerns.”

The Manager stated that she was a care home Manager for another provider before being employed at The Pavillion. She was attracted to her current role as she felt she could make a difference to people’s lives who reside in care and she also has a particular interest in dementia care. She went on to say that she enjoys the



challenge of managing a care home and working with other professionals to overcome challenges in order to improve the quality of life of the residents, enabling them to live life to the full despite the restriction and limitations of their illnesses.

## Indicator 2 - Staff with time and skills to do their jobs

The indicator states that staff should be well trained, motivated and feel they have the resources to do their job properly.

**The Healthwatch team DISAGREE this was met for staff time and AGREE this was met for staff skills.**

The majority of residents stated that the Pavillion has good staff and their comments include; “They are very kind. If I need help, I ask, but I try to stay as independent as possible,” “They are all good and I feel well looked after” and “The majority are good, but there are one or two who are not.”

Some of the residents asked told the Healthwatch team that the staff at the home have time to stop and chat to them, whilst others had a mixed response, with some residents stating that they chose not to engage with staff and that this was due to their own personal preferences. Another resident said that some do and some don’t, but added that they would press the buzzer in their room if they needed to alert staff.



(Christmas raffle)

Two of the friends and relatives felt that the staff have both the time and skills to look after their friends/relative, one commented “The level of care and the skills of the staff are excellent. The care provided by everyone in the home is first rate.” Another person said “The staff definitely have the skills to care for my brother. Time is a different question. They work so hard but are understaffed.”

All of the staff who completed the survey process stated that they do not feel there is enough time. Their comments included; “Some days there is not enough time in the day to spend quality time with the residents due to the high dependency of residents” and “At times I feel that we could do with more hours in the day.”



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All of the staff stated that they feel they are encouraged to undertake training to develop their skills. These include, National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), e-learning opportunities as well as other training courses. All of the staff who were asked added that they enjoy their jobs and here are some of their comments; “I’ve always liked working with the elderly and find it rewarding. Also I have good work colleagues” and “I like all aspects of my job.”

The Manager said that she sees her staff daily, either during meetings or when walking around the home. She conducts staff supervisions and appraisals sessions, which enables her to work with staff members to identify training needs, explore their career pathway and actions are completed to support staff to achieve their career goals.

### **Indicator 3 - Good knowledge of each resident and changing needs**

The indicator states that staff should be familiar with resident’s histories and preferences and have processes in place for how to monitor changes in health and wellbeing.

**The Healthwatch team STRONGLY AGREE this was met.**

The majority of the residents that the Healthwatch team supported to complete the surveys said that the staff at the home know them and know what they like and don’t like. Other residents said that they think this is the case. One comment given was “They have big hearts.”

All of the friends and relatives felt that the staff know their friend/relative’s life history, personality and health and care needs and notice and respond when their needs change. Comments included; “They respond instantly. The staff quickly note any problems that may arise.”

The Manager informed us that she carries out a pre-admission assessment for all new residents coming in to the home. Where possible family members are included in this process, as well as the resident and obtain life history. The Manager added that she then meets with the staff from the unit which the resident will be residing on and she gives this information to ensure that the admission process is not distressing and that resident’s needs and wishes are known by the staff.

Staff stated that they get to know a new resident’s life history, personality and health and care needs by having conversations with residents and their friends and relatives, healthcare professionals, staff handover meetings by reading their individual care plans. Information about changes in a residents needs are noted in the Communications Book and nurse and managers reports and are shared in handover meetings. Care plans are updated when changes arise, evaluated on a monthly basis and also audited by the Manager to ensure they are relevant and up to date.



## Indicator 4 - A varied programme of activities

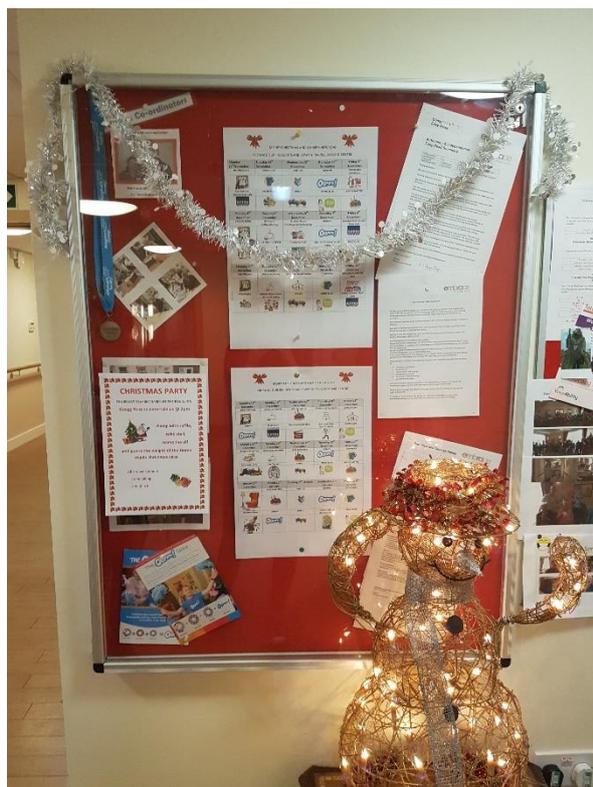
The indicator states that care homes should provide a wide range of activities (and ensure residents access these) in the home and support residents in taking part in activities outside the home.

The Healthwatch team **STRONGLY AGREE** this was met.

Some of the residents who took part in the survey process were able to share some of the activities which are available to them at The Pavillion. These included; balloon volleyball, knitting and bingo, which one resident said they particularly enjoyed when they win. One resident stated that there wasn't really any activities available, but went on to say that they weren't really interested in taking part in activities. All but one of the residents (who didn't answer the question) stated that the staff remind them when activities are about to start.

During the Healthwatch team visit we witnessed a game of balloon volleyball being played in one of the lounge areas. This lounge had a vibrant, yet relaxed atmosphere, with several of the female residents sitting chatting to one another, whilst knitting. A Senior Care Assistant reminded the residents that a game of bingo was about to start in another room and arranged for other staff to support them along to where it would be taking place.

When the team asked the residents if they get the chance to do the things they used to enjoy before they came to live at the home one resident stated that they miss their greenhouse and the ability to grow onions. The Healthwatch team later mentioned this to the home's Manager, who showed a team member the garden area and some raised beds which had been installed to allow easy access for the residents.



(Activity schedule)

All but one of the residents the team spoke to said that they have opportunities to go on trips outside of the home. Some of the residents spoke about going out and about with their families and friends. One resident said that she likes to sit outside in the garden in the summer months, but chooses not to go on any of the homes trips due to personal preferences.

All of the friend and relative respondents shared that they feel there is a good selection of activities both inside and outside of the home. One person said, "A wide range of activities are offered, including trips outside of the home to stimulate the residents." Two felt that their friend/relative is properly



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encouraged to take part in the available activities. One other respondent stated that it was difficult for their relative to take part in group activities due to their own health issues.

The Manager informed the Healthwatch team that there is a full time Activity Coordinator employed at The Pavillion. Activities are planned using information which is gathered on resident's likes and dislikes, past hobbies and life history. There are activity boxes on each unit so that care staff can also facilitate daily activity outside of the activity coordinators normal working hours.

The staff and Manager gave a detailed list of the activities available at the home which included; Men's club, dominoes, film afternoons, 'Oomph' exercise classes, rummage and memory boxes (to prompt conversations and dexterity), pamper afternoon, skittles, pet therapy, craft sessions and weekly visits from the children from the local school. There is live entertainment on a monthly basis and the home hosts regular birthday parties for the residents. The Pavillion has its own mini bus allowing staff to take residents out in to the community to various activities which include; singing for the brain, local coffee mornings, shopping trips and a weekly visit to the local pub.

The Manager stated that residents are encouraged daily by the care staff and the Activity Coordinator to participate in activities and changes are made for those who may be restricted to allow them to participate. Staff added that they encourage residents to take part in activities by joining in with them and by giving assistance to those residents who require support to take part.

The Healthwatch team witnessed this; a Care Assistant was seen to be encouraging residents to take part in activities for the first time, explaining what was involved and tell them how fun it was.

## **Indicator 5 - Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**

The indicator states that care homes should offer a good range of meal choices and adequate support to help residents who may struggle to eat and drink including between mealtimes. The social nature of eating should be reflected in how homes organise their dining rooms and accommodate different preferences around mealtimes.

**The Healthwatch team AGREE this was met.**

Although two of the residents felt that the food in the home had 'gone downhill recently' the majority of the residents enjoyed the food at the home. All of the residents supported to complete the surveys told the Healthwatch team that there is always plenty of choice. Some of their comments about the food at The Pavillion included; "The food is fabulous, I have never been fed so much," "I have cornflakes and four slices of toast for breakfast. I love my breakfast" and "There are two choices for dinner; two hot meals and then something lighter if you



prefer.” One resident went on to say that cups of tea, sandwiches and cakes are also served during the day in the lounge.

Some of the residents stated that they eat their meals in the dining room and said that they enjoy mealtimes. Several of the residents added that conversation is sometimes difficult with some of the other residents, which may have been due to the health and capacity of these residents.

During the Healthwatch team visit a team member witnessed a staff member who was servicing a variety of drinks and snacks to the residents, giving a resident with a visual impairment her drink. The staff member took time to physically show the resident where the drink had been placed, by gently leading the residents hand to the drink. The resident went on to explain to the Healthwatch team member that this was common practice and that the home had provided a specially adapted side table with a lip all around the surface to prevent items falling or being knocked off.

All of the friends and relatives asked said that they are happy with the quality and choice of food at the home. One person said “It’s excellent, sometimes I wish I was eating here!” All went on to say that they are confident that their friends and relatives are supported to eat and drink as much as needed and two people felt that mealtimes at the home are a sociable time. One person agreed that staff made mealtimes a sociable time, although some of the residents are unable to join in sociably.



Staff informed the Healthwatch team that resident’s individual person food preferences and where they prefer to eat their meals are documented in their care plans. Residents are encouraged to eat by both visual and written menus being available to them to enable individual food choices to be made. Staff ensure that food looks attractive on the resident’s plates and kitchen staff make alternative meals if residents do not like the menu choices.

(Pictorial menu boards)

Staff told us that they facilitate a calm atmosphere in the dining rooms and are available to support those residents who need it. They encourage conversation around the table and residents are seated in their friendship groups.

The Manager added that there are satellite kitchens on each unit that consist of kettles, fridges, microwaves and toasters so staff can support residents to make a cup of tea or make a light snack. There are also snack boxes available on each unit,



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which consist of individually wrapped cakes, biscuits, crisps and fruit that they can help themselves to. Residents are involved in menu planning, the staff support the residents to give feedback on their meal each day using daily food surveys and menus are reviewed at each monthly residents meeting.

She went on to say that some residents are vegetarian and this is respected and catered for. There are also residents who require a specialist diet as advised by SALT (Speech and Language Therapy) and the kitchen staff have received relevant training in order to prepare and provide meals to meet the resident's medical needs. There are also residents who require a low sugar diet due to a diagnosis of diabetes the catering staff ensure that low sugar puddings etc. are always available so the resident can still enjoy their meals.

### **Indicator 6 - Regular access to health professionals (GPs, dentists, opticians, chiropodists etc)**

The indicator states that residents should have the same expectation to be able to promptly see a health professional as they would have when living in their own home.

**The Healthwatch team AGREE this was met.**

All residents spoken to said that they have regular healthcare check-ups. Some stated that they have visits to the home from a chiropodist, dentist and GPs, others said they visit the GP in the local community. Some of the residents told the Healthwatch team that the staff at the home support them to attend appointments in the community.

Of the relatives/friends who completed the survey stated that they are happy with the access to healthcare professionals.

The Manager and staff said that the home encourages residents to retain their own GP where possible but when this is not possible due to geographical areas, the resident and relatives are given information and support on the local GP practices to help them make their choice. The home uses the Vision Care at Home Optical Service, which visit residents routinely to carry out sight tests within the home. Residents can also retain their own optician if they wish to do so and staff support them to attend appointments as necessary. They also benefit from NHS podiatry, this is a free service available to all residents in the home, who visit every 12 weeks for routine foot care or more frequently when needed.



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## **Indicator 7 - Accommodate resident's personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**

The indicator states that care homes should be set up to meet residents cultural, religious and lifestyle needs as well as their care needs and shouldn't make people feel uncomfortable if they are different or do things differently to other residents. **The Healthwatch team AGREE this was met.**

Residents told the Healthwatch team that a hairdresser visits the home on a Monday to cut, wash and style their hair. The gentleman added that the staff at the home are always available to assist them with showering and shaving if required. When asked one of the residents was unaware of any church services being held in the home.

Two of the friends and relative stated that their friend/relatives have no specific lifestyle, religious or cultural needs. Another person said that their relatives dietary needs are very much respected and are accommodated.

The Manager and staff informed the Healthwatch team that information about an individual's religious and cultural needs is obtained prior to admission using the pre-admission assessment, this information is also gathered from medical records, guidance from other professionals, the resident and relatives. This is then documented in the care plan and shared with staff.

One staff member stated that members from numerous churches and religions visits the residents in the home.

## **Indicator 8 - An open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**

The indicator states that there should be a mechanism in place for residents and relatives to influence what happens in the home, such as a residents and relatives committee. The process for making comments or complaints should be clear and feedback should be welcomed and acted on. **The Healthwatch team AGREE this was met.**

The majority of the residents stated that they get asked what they think about the home. Their comments included; "Yes, the staff ask me and it suits me here," "I always speak my mind" and "I'm comfortable. I have a nice bed and my clothes are washed nice." One resident said that they are not asked what they think and that they had been in attendance at one resident meeting. Only one resident who was asked said they would like to change anything about the home and that was that they would like more freedom to go to the shops themselves, as this would enable them to meet more people. They had been told by staff that it was unsafe for them to do this as they might fall.

When asked, the residents said if they need to ever make a complaint about the home they would either go directly to the Manager or to their relatives.





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## 5. Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Questions for residents

1. Do you know the Manager of the home?
2. What do you think of the Manager?
3. What do you think about the staff here?
4. Do the staff have the time to stop and chat with you?
5. Do the staff know what you need and what you like and don't like?
6. What activities are there for you in the home?
7. Is it easy to join in the activities?
8. Do you get a chance to do any of the things you used to enjoy before you came here?
9. Do you go on trips outside?
10. What do you think of the food here?
11. Is there enough choice of what you eat and when you eat?
12. Do you enjoy mealtimes?
13. Have you seen a dentist to check your teeth or an optician to check your eyes recently?
14. Is there respect for your religion or your culture here in your home?
15. Do you get asked what you think about the home?
16. Would you like to change anything about the home? Have you told anyone about this and what happened?
17. What would you do if you wanted to make a complaint about the home?



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## Appendix 2 - Questions for Managers

1. **Have strong, visible management**  
What attracted you to the role of care home manager?  
  
What do you enjoy about the role?
2. **Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs**  
In what ways do you encourage staff to develop their skills?
3. **Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How do you ensure that staff get to know a resident's life history, personality and health and care needs when the resident first arrives?  
  
How is information about a resident's tastes and their health and care needs updated as these change?
4. **Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What activities are available for residents inside and outside the home?  
  
What encouragement and assistance do you give to residents so that they can take part in activities?
5. **Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**  
What systems are in place to support residents to eat and drink at mealtimes and outside of mealtimes?  
  
What choices do residents get about what they eat and drink and when and how they eat and drink?  
  
In what ways do you try to make mealtimes sociable?
6. **Ensure residents can regularly see health professionals such as GPs, dentists, opticians or chiropodists**  
Do residents have regular, preventative dental and optometry (eye-care) appointments?
7. **Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
How does the home find out about and cater to residents' cultural, religious and lifestyle needs? Can you give an example?
8. **Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
In what ways can residents and their family have a say in how the home is run?  
  
Are staff able to have a say in how the home is run?  
  
How do you make use of feedback or complaints from residents and relatives?



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## Appendix 3 - Questions for staff

- 1. Have strong, visible management**  
What support do you receive from the manager?  
  
How easy is it to talk to the manager when you want to ask a question or raise an issue?
- 2. Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs**  
Do you feel you have enough time to care for residents?  
  
Are you encouraged to continue to develop your skills? In what ways?  
  
What do you enjoy about your job?
- 3. Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How do you ensure that staff get to know a resident's life history, personality and health and care needs when the resident first arrives?  
  
How is information about a resident's tastes and their health and care needs updated as these change?
- 4. Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What activities are available for residents inside and outside the home?  
  
What encouragement and assistance do you give to residents so that they can take part in activities?
- 5. Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**  
How do you make sure residents are able to eat and drink at mealtimes as well as outside of mealtimes?  
  
What choices do residents get about what they eat and drink and when and how they eat and drink?  
  
In what ways do you try to make mealtimes sociable?
- 6. Ensure residents can regularly see health professionals such as GPs, dentists, opticians or chiropodists**  
Do residents have regular, preventative dental and optometry (eye-care) appointments?
- 7. Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
Can you give an example of how the home caters for religious and cultural needs?
- 8. Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
In what ways can residents and their family have a say in how the home is run?  
  
Can you provide an example of how a resident or their family member has influenced how the home is run?  
Do you feel staff can have a say in how the home is run?



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## Appendix 4 - Questions for friends and relatives

- 1. Strong visible management**  
Do you know who the Manager of the home is?  
  
Is the Manager friendly and helpful?
- 2. Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs**  
Do you think the staff have the time and skills to care for your friend/relative?
- 3. Have good knowledge of each individual resident and how their needs may be changing**  
How well do you think the staff know your friend/relative's life history, personality and health and care needs?  
  
Does the home notice and respond when your friends/relative's needs change?
- 4. Offer a varied programme of activities**  
What do you think of the activities available for residents inside and outside the home?  
  
Is your friend/relative properly encouraged and supported to take part in the activities?
- 5. Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**  
What do you think of the quality and choice of food?  
  
Are you confident that your friend/relative is supported to eat and drink as much as needed?  
  
Do you think that mealtimes are sociable?
- 6. Ensure residents can regularly see health professionals such as GPs, dentists, opticians or chiropodists**  
Does a dentist and an optometrist (optician) come to see your friend/relative regularly or only if there is a problem?
- 7. Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs**  
Does your friend/relative have any specific lifestyle or religious or cultural needs? Are these respected and accommodated?
- 8. Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**  
Do you feel that you are a welcome participant in the life of the home?  
  
In what ways can you and your friend/relative have a say in how the home is run or give feedback?  
  
Would you know how to make a complaint if you wanted to?  
  
Would you feel confident to make a complaint and do you think it would be acted on appropriately?



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**DISCLAIMER:**

- The observations made in this report relate only to the visits carried out.
- This report is not representative of all residents' views; it only represents the views of those who were able to contribute within the time available.

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