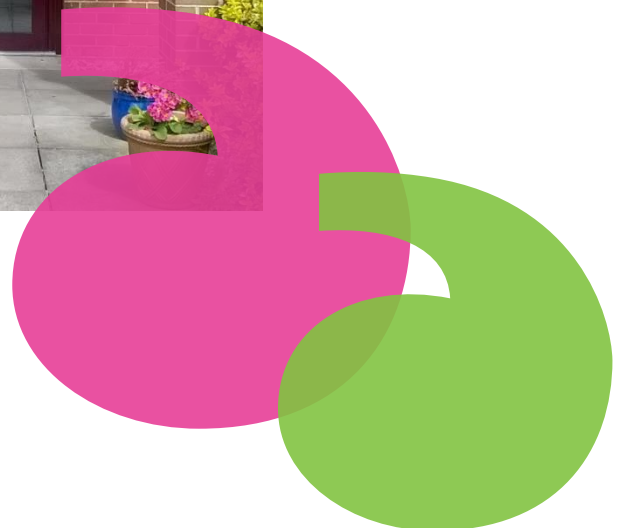


Care home life, what it's really like!

Bryony Lodge Nursing Home



Date of Healthwatch Sunderland visit:
25th April 2018





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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?

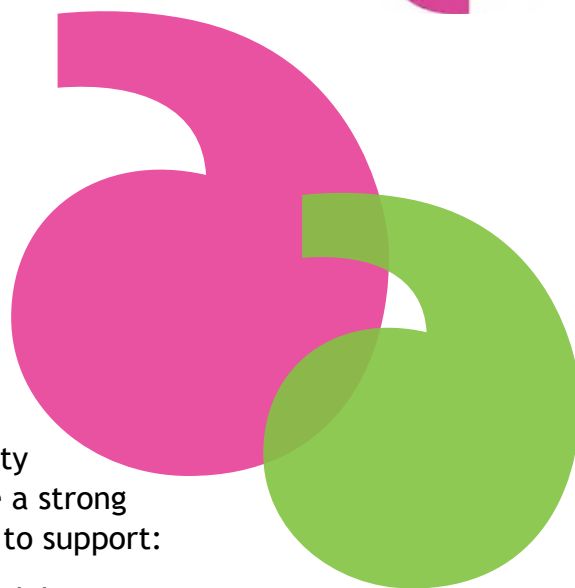
Healthwatch England is the national consumer champion in health and social care. It was set up by the government to ensure that people's views around health and social care services are listened to and fed back to service providers and commissioners with a view to improving services.

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.





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.



3. Methodology

We invited the home Manager, Sharon to meet with us for an initial pre-visit meeting, she failed to respond to our telephone calls. Initial meetings give us the opportunity 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 25th April 2018 and was carried out by Healthwatch Sunderland staff 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	 Agree
2.	Staff with time and skills to do their jobs	 Agree
3.	Good knowledge of each resident and their changing needs	 Agree
4.	A varied programme of activities	 Agree
5.	Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes	 Neutral
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



Findings

Bryony Lodge is a purpose built nursing home located on Leechmere Road, Grangetown, Sunderland SR2 9DJ. The home has good access to public amenities, with a bus stop and major supermarket 250 yards away.

The home offers nursing and personal care for up to 45 residents who may have physical difficulties and/or terminal illness. Long stay residents are accommodated as well as short stay and a respite facility is also available.

Residents may bring their own furniture and choose their room decoration, there is flexibility around meals and activities are arranged daily. There is access to the home's garden and residents can usually bring their pet to live with them.

At the time of our visit there were 36 residents living in the home. Due to the capacity of the majority of the residents, the Healthwatch team were only able to support 2 residents to fully complete the survey. The team received 10 staff surveys back. Friends and relative surveys were delivered to Bryony Lodge, but Healthwatch Sunderland received no completed 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 AGREE this was met.

The two residents who were supported to complete the survey process were able to identify and name the Manager of Bryony Lodge and spoke positively about her. One residents stated that the Manager is new to the home and is 'finding her way.'

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

The staff at the home who completed a survey all stated that they receive the support they need from the Manager and their experience of talking to her when they want to ask a question or raise an issue has been positive. Their comments included;

"I feel I can always approach my Manager at any time and she is always happy to help."

"I find it easy to go and speak to her if I have any issues."

"If I have any issues or ask a question it gets answered or dealt with straight away."

When asked what attracted them to their current role in care home management, the Manager said; "The company."



Her deputy said; “I believed I had the right qualifications, attitude and personality. I worked in a similar position for seven years and I strive to make things better.”

The Manager went on to tell us that building trust and close relationships with residents and the home’s staff is what she enjoys most about her role. Her deputy stated that she enjoys everything about her role, she enjoys it when days go well and she also enjoys challenges.

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 **AGREE** this was met.



When asked about the staff at the home, the residents who responded to the survey gave positive responses. They also both went on to say that the staff at the home do have time to stop and chat to them. One resident said;

“You can always find one of them to chat to you if you need it.”

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

All of the staff respondents who offer support to residents as part of their role agreed that they all have time to care for the residents. One staff member said; “Most of the time, yes.”

Other staff comments included;

“Yes, I have good support from my colleagues.”

“I feel I have enough time for each resident.”

When the management team were asked how they ensure staff have enough time to care for the residents they told us that duties are shared out equally, good team work is encouraged, staff have good relationships with residents and the home employs two Care Coordinators.

Staff all stated that they feel encouraged to enhance their skills and there are training opportunities available to them. Comments included;



“Yes, I am encouraged a lot by colleagues and one day I would like to become Senior.”

“Yes, there is always help at hand and further training offered if needed.”

The Manager stated that she encourages her staff to develop their skills through communication and motivation. Her deputy added that she encourages staff by offering training, the opportunity to practice their skills and being available to them to enable them to ask questions they may have.

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 AGREE this was met.



The residents which the Healthwatch team spoke to said that the staff at the home know them and know what they need, like and don’t like. Comments included;

“Yes, I’ve been here a long time now.”

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

Staff and management told us they and their colleagues get to know new resident’s life history, personality, health and care needs by speaking to residents, their families and their own colleagues, reading care plans, life history documentation, diet information sheets and attending hand over

meetings. They went on to say that if a resident’s tastes and needs change, these are detailed and updated in resident’s care plans, which are evaluated on a monthly basis, at least. Also staff are updated at daily hand over meetings,

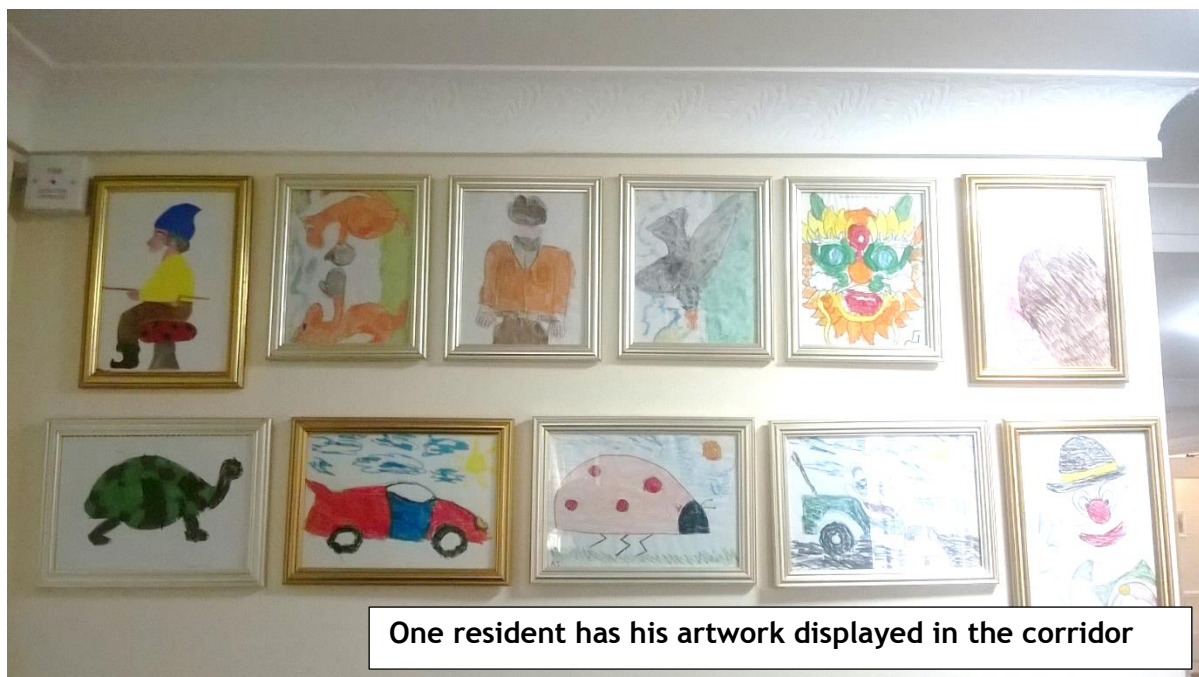


encouraged to read care plans and liaise with other team members. One staff member added; “It’s all about communication.”

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 AGREE this was met.



When asked about the activities at the home, one of the residents told a member of the Healthwatch team that the Activities Coordinator, Michelle, facilitates various activities for the residents of the home. He had recently planted sunflower seeds alongside other residents and there is a competition to see who can grow the tallest plant, which he hopes to win. This resident also took great pride in showing the team his artwork. This is a hobby which he is able to continue whilst living in Bryony Lodge and he added that he still enjoys attending a local art group on a Monday.

Both of the residents stated that they enjoy watching their own TVs, with one adding that he also enjoys reading his books, which he has always enjoyed, he also told the team that he remains quite independent, which he values.

When asked about activities outside of the home, one resident stated as the home no longer has access to a mini bus there are no outings available to residents.

Both residents agreed that it is easy to join in the activities if they wish to do so with one resident adding that Michelle, the Activities Coordinator tells residents when an activity is about to start.



Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

Staff and the management team informed us that there are daily activities inside the home and went on to list the variety of choice available to residents, these included; 'chit chat' club, cookery, pool games, bible stories, movie time, pamper sessions, musical exercise, arts and craft, dominoes, card games, bingo, gardening, knitting, sing a longs, drawing and sewing.



Pool table in one of the communal rooms and the sunflower competition

They went on to tell us about the activities which are available outside of the home, these included; gardening, shopping trips, pub visits, visits to coffee shops, art classes, get-togethers at other homes and various day trips.

Staff and management informed us that residents are encouraged and assisted to take part in activities by various means, which include; asking them if they would like to join in, staff sitting with residents to make them feel more comfortable, make the activities as much fun as possible and offering physical assistance for those residents who require it.

A member of staff said; "Staff enjoy joining in with activities with residents, which they enjoy."

The Manager said "The residents enjoy taking part in activities."

The Manager and her deputy explained that they support residents to continue to do the things they used to enjoy before coming into the home by asking families for a life history, so the home is aware of resident's interests to enable these to be accommodated within the home. This information is then entered into the individual care plan, where staff can familiarise themselves with the information. Families are also asked to bring in family pets when they visit the home.

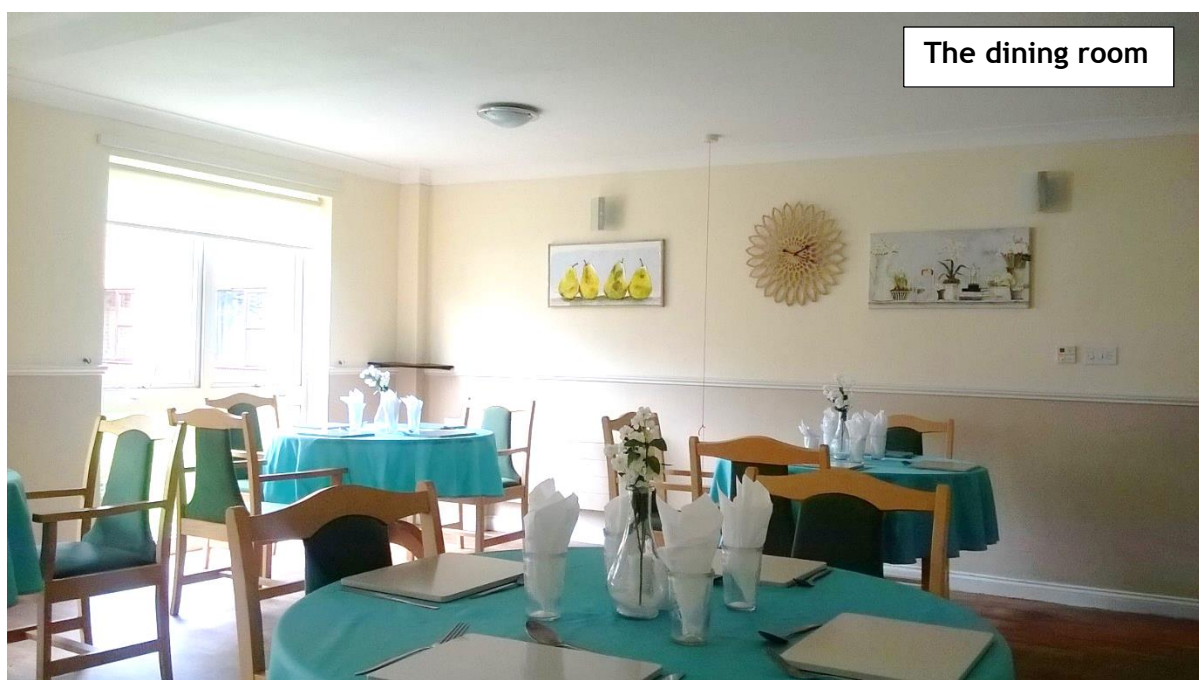


Indicator 5 - Quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes

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 gave this a NEUTRAL rating which indicates both positive and negative feedback, which when averaged results in a neutral score

When asked about the food at Bryony Lodge the residents which the Healthwatch team supported to complete the survey process spoke favourably. One of the residents said that the fish and chips are particularly tasty and the other resident said; “The food is good. I go along to the kitchen and choose my meals. I often pop out to local pubs for food with my family.”



Residents added that there is enough choice of food and they can also choose where they eat their meals. One resident said; I can choose to eat in the activities room or in the dining room, where I can chat with other residents. Both residents agreed that they look forward to mealtimes at the home.

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

When the staff were asked about both the quality and choice of food at the home, the Healthwatch team received a very mixed response. These ranged from poor or not good, average to good. One staff member went on to tell us that the menu is varied, although the budget is tight and another member of staff said; “Good choice and quality and the chef is open to new ideas.”



When the Manager was asked about the quality and choice of food, she said; “Residents have a good choice of food and I think the food is of good quality.”

The Deputy Manager said; “Residents choose what they would like to eat from the daily menus and alternatives are always offered if they do not like what is on the menu.”

The staff and Manager informed us that they ensure residents are able to eat and drink at mealtimes and outside of mealtimes by offering encouragement and assistance when necessary and staff sitting with residents at mealtimes. Staff went on to say that the kitchen is always open and there are fruit bowls accessible to residents, the tea trolley is available regularly throughout the day, there are jugs of juice in residents bedrooms and snacks, fruit and drinks are available at supper time. The Deputy Manager said;

“If anyone is seen by the S.A.L.T. (Speech and Language Team) we must follow their instructions, unless the resident has capacity and decide to choose something that is not advised. Risk assessments must also be in place. One carer will assist one resident at a time with their meal (if needed). Staff will talk to residents and let them know what they are eating.”

Both staff and management told the Healthwatch team that residents are given options to choose from for both dinner and tea and alternatives are readily available to those who do not like what is on the menu. Residents are also able to make choices around where they eat their meals, whether this be their own rooms or the communal dining areas, their wishes are respected. One staff member went on the say that they try to encourage residents to eat in the dining room to prevent them becoming isolated.

The Deputy Manager said; “All residents are able to choose what they would like to eat from the daily menus. For those who are not able to choose, we ask family what the resident would have liked to eat.”

When asked how the home makes mealtimes a sociable experience the staff and management stated that staff sit with residents to encourage and facilitate conversation, background music is played and residents sit with other residents who they get along with. Staff comments included;

“Talking about day to day things and getting everyone involved in the conversations.”

“By making it a happy dining room, by talking to the residents.”



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.

One resident informed us that they have had regular access to a dentist. The other resident stated that this hadn't happened yet, as he had not lived at the home long enough. Both residents said that they had seen an optician, with one adding that he had been issued with new glasses, which were working well for him. One of the residents also added that he has regular visits from a chiropodist.

When we asked the residents what happens if they need to see a doctor or have a hospital appointment, one of the residents we spoke to said that the doctor comes to the home to see him or he attends his own GP surgery himself, as he remains independent. The remaining resident was unsure about this question but this may have been due to his individual health and capacity.

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

Staff and management stated that the home has regular visits from a range of medical professions including, GPs, nurses and chiropodists. The Deputy Manager said; "Two Nurse Practitioners call into the home once a week. If we have any concerns we let them know and they will check the resident over. If a resident needs to see a GP, they will be called before 10.30am for a visit. Sometimes they advise us to call the Recovery at Home Team."

The recovery at home team offer short term health and or social care support that can help to keep them living at home, with care wrapped around them while they're at their most vulnerable.





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.**

One of the residents supported to complete the survey process informed a Healthwatch team member that church services are available to the residents within the home, although they themselves are not religious and don't take part. Both residents stated that they are happy with the laundry service at the home.

Comments included; "The laundry service is good, as long as you label your clothes there is no problem." The management of the home confirmed this.



One resident told us that there is a hairdresser who visits the home to cut/style resident's hair. He added; "They do a good job."

The remaining resident stated that his sister cuts his hair and he is able to shave himself.

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

The Manager, her Deputy and staff members informed us that information about resident's cultural, religious and lifestyle needs is gained by speaking to the residents themselves and their families. They went on to say that visitors who tell Bible stories

visit the home weekly, there are also regular visits from a local priest who offers Holy Communion to those residents who wish to take the opportunity and dietary needs are met. One staff member told us that vegetarian meals have been supplied to residents who request them. Staff comments included;

"Every religious holiday and every bank holiday are celebrated. There are activities, parties and the kitchen puts some food on."

"Many of our staff follow different religions and are able to speak different languages, to accommodate in case someone doesn't speak English."

When asked what mechanisms are in place to ensure that residents are always clean and appropriately dressed, the management team informed us that information is documented in residents care plans around bathing and showering, residents' preferences and frequency. The Deputy Manager added that residents are washed every morning and evening.



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 residents who engaged with the survey process stated that they do get asked if they are happy living at Bryony Lodge by their social worker and the home's staff. One resident stated that although he aims to eventually live independently, he is happy at the home. The remaining resident said; "A few people have asked if I've settled in here. I am happy here."

When asked if there is anything about the home they would like to change, one resident said; "No I am happy here" and the remaining resident stated that he would like pet budgie in his room.

When asked who they would go to if they felt they needed to make a complaint about the home, one resident stated that they would go to see Sharon (the Manager) and the remaining resident stated; "I would tell someone with a nice voice."

Healthwatch Sunderland invited both friends and relatives to complete the survey but no responses were received.

Staff and Management informed the Healthwatch team that residents and their families can have their say on how the home is run by attending regular resident and relative meetings which are held every six to eight weeks. Review meetings take place when needed, which involve families and the Manager has an open door policy to enable her to be accessed at any time.

Staff told us that the implementation of the resident and relatives meetings came from feedback gathered from residents and relatives.

When asked how they make use of feedback or complaints from residents and relatives, Management said that the home has a complaints procedure in place, which is followed, there are staff surveys and feedback can also be given on a review website.

The staff and management of the home stated that staff can have their say on how the home is run by attending staff meetings and handover meetings where ideas can be shared, the completion of staff surveys, staff supervisions and appraisals.

One staff member added: "I am proud to work here."



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. What activities are there outside the home?
8. Is it easy to join in the activities?
9. Do you get a chance to do any of the things you used to enjoy before you came here?
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. What happens if you need to see a doctor or have an appointment at the hospital?
15. Is there respect for your religion or your culture here in your home?
16. Do you get asked what you think about the home or if you are happy?
17. Would you like to change anything about the home? Have you told anyone about this and what happened?
18. What would you do if you wanted to make a complaint about the home?



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?

How 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?

How do you support residents to continue to do the things they used to enjoy before coming into the home i.e. hobbies/interests/pets
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**
Please tell us about visits from health professionals such as GPs, nurses, dentists, opticians, chiropodists or other health care support mechanisms.
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?

What provision is there for residents to regularly get their hair cut/styled?

How do you ensure that the laundry staff getting the residents own clothes back to them?

What mechanisms are in place to ensure that residents are always clean and appropriately dressed?
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?



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?



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?



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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