



Enter and View Visit

To Croft House Residential Home.

Bridge Street Williton, TA4 4NR

14 October 2014

Authorised representative(s) undertaking visit:

Cliff Puddy Jonathon Yelland.

Healthwatch Somerset

Tel: 01823 751404

Email: info@healthwatchsomerset.co.uk

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Somerset would like to thank the staff and residents of Croft House Residential Home for making us feel welcome during the Enter and view visit.

Purpose of the visit

- *To seek the views of those who live in residential services, on the health and social care services that they use, including the residential service that they live in.*
- *To find out how those in residential care access the health and social care services they need.*
- *To identify and highlight areas of good practice to share with other providers.*

Methodology

The home was notified about the Enter & View visit 2 weeks prior to the visit. A letter was written to inform residents and visitors, which the home was asked to display.

On the day of the visit, the Enter & View team were keen to ensure that their presence did not get in the way of the care being given to residents. They had therefore requested to meet with the manager or senior member of staff on duty to discuss how the visit could be best managed, and be informed of any issues that they needed to be aware of.

The Enter & View team were then given a tour of the home, before being free to wander the communal areas in the home and chat to residents and staff. The team then joined residents for lunch and it was found that this provided a social occasion in which to chat to residents in more depth.

The team then met in a quiet area of the home to collect their findings before giving a brief verbal feedback to the manager.

Summary

Croft House Residential Home was found to be a spacious modern home for 67 residents. Overall the Enter & View team were impressed with the environment and care given that they observed. We spoke to 17 residents and 5 members of staff. Several examples of good practice were noted and a few residents raised wider issues with the health and social care services that they use. Transport was noted as

a key area of concern for some residents as well as the support needed to get out into the community.

The team found that it was not always easy, having just introduced themselves to residents, to obtain details about their views on health and social care services. It was discussed that an alternative format to future visits could be adopted and that this could be in the form of an organised activity for residents to choose to join, which will look at health and social care experiences past and present in group conversation.

Findings

The Environment.

The home appeared welcoming, clean and relaxed upon arrival. Croft house is a large building and home to 67 residents. There are several lounges and communal areas where residents can choose to sit or receive visitors.

A well-equipped hair salon is located within the home, as is a small shop where residents can buy essentials and treats. All rooms are ensuite and very spacious.

Outside there were well-kept gardens and the team noted exercise stations in the garden. These were small units which each contained exercise equipment offering different gentle exercises. The Enter & View team thought this was an innovative way to help residents exercise while providing an interesting feature. A timber built teashop was also in the grounds and opened in fine weather so that residents could enjoy the sunshine with a cuppa and a slice of cake.

We were also told about the 'forget me not' garden of remembrance, where there are plaques and flowers placed for residents who have passed on. We also noticed that in the foyer there was a remembrance display, which the Enter & View team thought added to the sense of community and respect in the home.

The staff were observed to be helpful and kind. We were shown round by a member of staff who informed us that he is the 'dignity champion' and he seemed very knowledgeable about issues relating to dignity.

How do the residents of Croft House access health and social care services?

Faith and Religion

The manager informed us that Catholic and Church of England clergy visit the home regularly and hold services. Where possible staff also offer to assist residents to attend the local church.

Dental Services

Residents are supported to visit the dentist in the village if required.

Hospital Appointments

Residents we spoke to confirm that the staff had assisted them to attend hospital appointments.

GPs

Residents told us that GPs attended the home but they were not often able to see the GP of their choice. Healthwatch Somerset believe this reflects the views of those who live in the wider community.

Transport

Several residents we spoke to noted that it was difficult for them to get out and about. The manager informed us that staff are sometimes able to take residents into the town and occasionally hire a minibus for trips out. One resident noted that since moving to Croft house, they no longer receive disability benefits and therefore cannot afford a taxi. Another resident told us that he would have liked to have gone to a nearby steam show but was unable to afford to do so. The Enter & View team concluded that access to transport is fundamental for those in residential care to maintain the social connections and independence. They also recognise that there are no benefits or government funding to enable those in residential care to access transport. Healthwatch Somerset will ensure that Healthwatch England are aware of this.

What do the residents think about Croft House?

Residents we spoke to noted that the staff were kind, the home was well maintained and that there were a selection of activities that they could choose to join.

Residents spoke well of the meals provided although it was observed that only squash was provided at mealtimes and the Enter & View team would recommend that water is also provided. One resident we spoke to said that it would be nice to have a glass of wine with his meal and was unaware whether or not he could. The Manager informed us that sherry is offered on a Sunday and the residents can drink alcoholic beverages at any time if they wish. The Enter and View team recommend that residents are reminded of this.

The most popular comments we received about the home was that the residents had company and that many of them had friends who lived in the home.

For more detail about what residents told us please see Appendix A

Specific Areas of Good Practice to Note

- Croft House have been involved with making Williton a dementia friendly town.
- Archie's story is a book and a play about dementia aimed at school children and promoting awareness of dementia. The home has helped to promote this locally.
- The home tries to involve residents in activities like gardening and have a greenhouse and gardening activity that residents can join in with.
- The home has a shop and hairdressing salon, some residents choose to attend their own hairdresser in town.
- The home hire a mini bus on occasions which they pay for from fund raising and the resident's fund. A trip to a war memorial was recently arranged.
- The home have a tea room outside which they open up on sunny days and special occasions.
- The home have a number of rooms that residents and their family can use. Staff told us about a family who chose to have a wake in one of these rooms.
- The home have a hearing loop system installed. This is particularly important as Action for Hearing Loss report that on average 80% of residents in older peoples residential homes are likely to have significant hearing loss.
- The home has an activities coordinator, and on the day of the visit the Enter & View team observed music therapists working with residents who have dementia. We also spoke to a resident who was looking forward to a piano lesson in the afternoon.
- The manager informed us that residents are encouraged to get involved and continue using the skills that they have. We met a resident who is keen on gardening and uses the homes greenhouse regularly.
- Toilet doors were all painted yellow which research suggests is the last colour recognition to go for those who have dementia.
- Hand rails were placed on store cupboards to help ensure that these were not entered by mistake.

- A Music Therapy student was working with some residents, and it was thought that the use of volunteers and students helped to provide the residents with more activities and therapeutic intervention.
- Memory aid boxes were observed outside of resident's rooms to help them identify their own room. Doors were also painted different colours for the same purpose
- Staff were present in communal areas with the exception of handover time

Conclusions

Croft house was observed to be a well-kept caring environment and the residents we spoke to seemed happy there. Staff were observed to be kind and supported and the home should be praised with the work they do to build on community links and in helping to create a dementia friendly community and environment.

Residents had good access to health and social care services and many health professionals visit the home regularly. Where possible other residents are supported to access services in the community. Residents were not always able to see the GP of their choice but it was noted that this is an issue that affects many people who do not live in residential care.

For those living in residential care their disability benefits are likely to be affected. For some this can be both the care element and the mobility element of their DLA benefits, depending on how their care is funded. For many this means that they can affectively become prisoners in residential care unable to afford the transport costs or the support needed and they can become reliant on care staff or family to access community services and friends. Croft House have made efforts to take residents out when time allows and also to bring the community to the home on occasions and should be commended for this. This does however highlight a wider issue about isolation from the community for those needing residential care.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

We would recommend that the

Home's Response To Recommendation A

The Manager has Since informed us that, *'Sherry is available as and when requested this is routinely serviced on a Sunday however, residents can have alcohol at any time.'*

Recommendation 2

The Home should review

Homes response

The manager has responded by saying *'I would just like to confirm that within our dementia wing there is one member of staff on duty in each unit to cover the handover. With regard to the residential unit the two activities coordinators would normally be on duty during the handover, unfortunately on the day of your visit one of these activities coordinators was unavailable to go to the residential unit.'*

Recommendation 3

Water as well as Juice should be available at meal times.

Homes Response

Water is available for those who prefer it.

Disclaimer

- **This report relates only to a specific visit (a point in time)**
- **This report is not representative of all service users (only those who contributed within the restricted time available)**