



Enter and View Visit

**West Abbey Care Centre
Stourton Way, Yeovil BA21 3UA**

13.11.14

Authorised representative(s) undertaking visit:

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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Somerset would like to thank the staff and residents of West Abbey Care Centre for making us feel welcome and offering assistance 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 the Enter & View team could chat to residents in more depth.

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

Summary

West Abbey care home is a large modern home accommodating 90 residents. It provides both residential and nursing care.

Many good practice examples were identified during the visit and in particular, practices relating to the care of those who have dementia and resident and visitor involvement. Some good practices around community involvement were also noted

Staff were observed to support residents in a respectful and dignified way and a good range of activities is delivered.

On the day of our visit, the upstairs was quarantined due to an outbreak of Norovirus, however the Enter & View team were able to talk to residents in downstairs areas.

Overall the Enter & View team were impressed by the environment and noted many innovative ways in which the home support and care for residents.

Some concerns were communicated to the Enter and View team about resident's privacy, safety and staffing levels and some recommendations concerning this have been made at the end of this report.

Findings

The Environment.

West Abbey Care centre is a large modern building with 96 bedrooms. There were 90 residents living there on the day of our visit. The home was observed to be clean and warm and well decorated. There were a number of communal areas where residents could sit or receive visitors. One wing of the home was dedicated to providing support and care to residents who have dementia and it was apparent that a lot of time and innovative thought had gone into this. The Enter & View team noted that there were several areas designed to promote stimulation and remembrance for residents. For example, there was a table and display of weddings with a photograph album showing pictures of residents wedding days. There were materials and sensory pictures on the walls that residents have been involved in making. Outside an area of the garden had been planted in seaside fashion which included a small boat that was named 'Dignity'. It was also noted that toilet doors in this area were painted red as this is one of the colours that remains prominent for people who have dementia.

During our visit, a child was observed being supported by a member of staff to get a drink for his grandfather. The Enter & View team did not observe any toys or play area in the home. Many residents will no doubt get pleasure from visiting grandchildren and it is therefore recommended (*See recommendation 1*) that the home give some thought to providing a selection of toys or small play area for visiting children.

At present, the home do not have reliable Wi-Fi that the residents can access. Residents are able to pay to have a phone line connected in their room and their own Wi-Fi if they wish. The activities coordinator told us that she had been thinking about purchasing a dongle that would enable residents to access the Internet. It was noted that the ability for residents to access Skype to talk to family would be a definite plus. The Enter & View team would recommend that the home look into the 'Get Connected' grant which exists to help those in social care access the Internet. Their website contains details about how this may also help those with dementia. <http://www.scie.org.uk/workforce/getconnected/> (See recommendation 2)

The Staff

During our visit, staff were observed to provide support in a caring and dignified way. From observations, there appeared to be enough staff to support the residents. However, some of the residents told us that often, there were not enough staff and sometimes they did not get the one-to-one time with their key worker that they expected to. In particular, concerns about staffing levels at night were raised on more than one occasion. (See recommendation 3)

We spoke to an activities coordinator and it appeared obvious that they were dedicated and passionate about their job. The manager also told us that they liked to ensure that they spoke to as many residents as possible during the day, and this was observed by the Enter & View team.

One of the staff that we spoke to said that they received good training. We were told about an 8 week training course about Alzheimer's and dementia called 'Yesterday Today and Tomorrow' that had been run by the Alzheimer's Association. This course was unfortunately no longer run, however, Barchester Healthcare did provide their own dementia and Alzheimer's training called 'So Kind' training.

Involvement.

Suggestion boxes were noted at several areas in the house, we were shown the suggestion cards that are given to residents and visitors which asked two simple questions. These were; what did you find positive about your experience today? And; what could we improve upon?

The Home apply a concept called 'Resident of the Day' whereby all staff and departments will communicate with and about a particular resident for the day, thus helping to ensure the residents needs are brought into focus and communicated across all staff.

The home holds monthly residents and visitor meetings, however the home struggle to get many people to attend these meetings. The Enter & View team had made some recommendations that may help to increase the numbers of people attending. (See recommendation 4)

The home also have a regular satisfaction survey which is circulated to residents and visitors. The results of this survey are published and discussed at residents meetings.

In addition to residents meetings, the home also hold meetings called 'food for thought' which are held monthly and discuss the popular topic of menus. The home have also hosted cheese and wine evenings for residents and visitors.

We were also told that many of the residents had been involved and helped with materials in pictures that decorated some of the corridors.

Community involvement.

During previous Enter & View visits to other homes, residents have told us that they sometimes feel cut off from the local community and unable to get out and about. It was therefore noted a definite plus that the home had their own minibus. When the Enter & View team arrived they spoke to a resident who was about to head into town to do their shopping.

As well as being able to get residents out and about, the home try to bring the local community into the home. This included visits from the Salvation Army, four different choirs, bell ringers and visits from the Donkey Sanctuary. We were also told that on occasion pets such as rabbits and dogs also visit the residents.

The activities coordinator that we spoke to also told us that they were building a mobile bar so that drinks could be taken to residents.

How do the residents of West Abbey access health and social care services? And what issues about health and social care services are there.

Faith and Religion.

The local vicar visits the home monthly. The manager told us that residents are also supported to visit the local church their choice.

Dental Services

A dentist visits the home

Hospital Appointments

The manager informed us that residents are supported by family or staff to attend hospital appointments. The home have experienced some difficulties when residents

are discharged from hospital back to the home. These include being discharged at night when fewer staff are available.

GPs

GPs visit the home is needed.

Transport.

Transport did not seem to be such an issue as it did for other homes that the Enter & View team had visited. It was felt that this was because the home had its own minibus which was able to take 7 residents which can include for wheelchairs.

Physiotherapy.

For those who have suffered a stroke, we were told, that physiotherapy sessions are limited. This can have a huge impact on the extent of an individual's recovery and consequently their ability to lead an independent life. The Enter & View team felt that this was an issue that Healthwatch Somerset should look into further.

Other Services.

Podiatry services, chiropodists and music and dance therapists also visit the home.

Hospital discharge.

The manager informed us that the home have experienced difficulties with residents being discharged from hospital, in particular residents are sometimes discharged late at night when there are fewer staff available to help settle them in.

What do the residents think about West Abbey Care Centre?

Staff.

The majority of residents that we spoke to said that the staff were kind and friendly. Some of the residents we spoke to were concerned about staff, they said that staff were very busy or overworked and often did not have the time to take a few minutes to sit and chat. We heard that at times it can be too long before staff answer call bells and that this had been worse since the home had an outbreak of Norovirus. *(See Recommendation 5)*

Privacy and Safety

We heard from residents who were concerned about their privacy and safety. We were told that residents could not lock their rooms and that at times other residents may wander into their rooms when they are not there. We also heard of occasions where a resident would walk into other resident's rooms when they were there. This

not only made residents feel uncomfortable but also caused them to be concerned for their safety. The manager was aware of this situation and informed us that one-to-one support for a particular resident who is prone to wandering into others people's rooms had been found and would be provided between 8pm and 8am. The Enter & View team would like to highlight that feeling safe in your home and having access to privacy is fundamental. We would therefore recommend that the home prioritise seeking advice about locks for resident's rooms. We were also told by a resident that there were only 2 or 3 staff working at night and residents told us that they did not feel this was enough, given the size of the home. (See *recommendation 6*) The manager has since informed us that there are 10 staff on shift at nights (3 nurses and 7 care staff).

The Enter & View team heard that it was sometimes difficult for some residents to sleep at night due to the noise made by other residents who were very vocal due to their dementia or disability. Residents we spoke to said that those who have dementia should be accommodated in the appropriate wing or area of the house and felt that it was unfair to be subjected to high levels of noise during the night. (See *recommendation 7*)

Food and Dining.

Several residents told us that the food was always very good and that there was plenty of choice.

Communication.

It was noted that the home do not have a hearing loop system. Action on hearing loss have researched that 80% of those living in residential care have a significant hearing loss. It is therefore recommended that the home seek advice about hearing loop systems and other aids from action on hearing loss. (See *recommendation 8*) Residents also told us that at times communication between staff is not at its best. It was suspected that this was due to the being too few staff and staff being rushed.

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

Specific Areas of Good Practice to Note.

- The service at mealtimes was observed to be good and delivered with respect. Appropriate support was offered to those who needed it.
- A variety of health care professionals visit the home regularly.

- At their own cost residents may have a phone installed in the room if they wish
- The Home apply a concept called 'Resident of the Day' whereby all staff and departments will communicate with and about a particular resident for the day, thus helping to ensure the residents needs are brought into focus and communicated across all staff.
- Music therapy is provided and residents were observed to be engaged with and enjoying the interaction.
- The home have their own minibus.
- All residents receive an individual Christmas present at Christmas.
- Suggestion boxes located at several places in the home.
- Monthly residents/visitor meetings.
- Regular satisfaction surveys for residents and visitors.
- Each resident has 2 key workers.
- Food for thought meetings monthly.
- Cheese and wine evenings.
- Music therapy and dance therapy offered to residents.
- Interactive displays decorating the dementia unit.
- Local schools, choirs and community groups such as the Princes Trust visit the home. The local school attend the home as part of a history lesson regarding World War II.
- Health professionals such as chiropodists and dentists, visit the home.
- The home have a hairdressing salon and visiting hairdressers.
- Residents are encouraged to be involved with decorating areas and interactive displays. Resident's rooms are personalised by photos and memorabilia.
- 'Growing Together' project of 16 allotments for staff, residents and visitors.
- A selection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, were available for residents.
- There were a number of areas where residents could receive visitors and make hot drinks if they wished and were able to do so.
- Involving family in activities.
- Encouraging residents to use their knowledge and skills. We were introduced to a resident who used to be an engineer and enjoyed fixing and adjusting doors and small maintenance tasks.

Conclusions

West Abbey Care Centre was found to have many good practice examples that the Enter & View team have highlighted in this report. In particular these relate to care

and support for those who have dementia, resident and family involvement and creative activities. Care was observed to be delivered in a considerate and dignified way. Staff were seen to be friendly and the manager had an open door policy and made efforts to speak to many residents on a daily basis.

Some concerns relating to privacy and safety have been highlighted in this report and recommendations made. In essence the majority of these concerns appear to relate to there not being enough staff, and residents had concerns that staff were tired, in a rush and overworked.

Residents appeared to have good access to health services and the home's minibus meant that residents could still access community resources and social opportunities.

Healthwatch Somerset have noted concerns about physiotherapy sessions being limited to those with certain health conditions.

Recommendations

Please see recommendations document Appendix B

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)**