

Care Home Provider:
Care Home Address:
Date and Time of Visit:
Authorised Representatives:

Porthaven
Gatehouse Rd, Aylesbury, HP19 8EH
10.07.15 – 12.30 pm
Alison Holloway, Judith Young, Sharon Gurney,
Steve Baker MP

Summary of findings



- Avondale demonstrated very high standards of care with regard to dignity and respect,
- staff worked confidently around us and told us they enjoyed working here,
- both residents and relatives praised the level of individualised care given

The Visit

Avondale is a home for 90 residents who live in 6 units, each with their own dining room and lounge. Three of these provide nursing care whilst the others provide care for those living with dementia. We were given full independent access to all units and talked to 5 relatives, 10 members of staff and 10 residents in communal areas. We also observed another 20-30 residents and staff in the same locations.

How people are treated



We saw different staff members working together unobtrusively using different but gentle strategies to persuade residents with dementia to sit down to eat and to help residents to eat independently but within their capabilities. One resident was reminded where his knife was and was asked if he would like his food cut up.

One relative gave an example of care they have experienced. Her relative, who no longer recognises them, still thinks his wife is looking after him and is unable to go to sleep unless he holds her hands as he has done since they were first married. So each night, a staff member holds his hands for ten minutes or so until he goes to sleep. Another person with dementia, who loves football, is encouraged to have a gentle kick about with a ball in a corridor with a care assistant.

Staff told us that it was a very good place to work as management is very supportive and organised. One said it was the best place they'd ever worked in.



Personal Choice



We visited at lunch time and saw a variety of drinks and meals being offered to residents including soft options. A range of different cutlery and crockery was used to enable residents to maintain their independence. A visitor also confirmed that their relative had a personalised diabetic menu.

Residents confirmed there were outings to the pub and to garden centre and the manager told us that the following day a trip to the beach was taking place. We did not see any activities being undertaken except a game of carpet bowls being started in a dementia unit lounge due to the timing of our visit. However, an activity programme was advertised.

Just like Being at Home



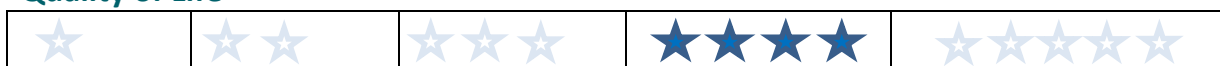
Everyone was addressed by name and staff had time to chat. There are pictures on people’s room doors in the dementia units as well as memory boxes. One visitor explained that their relative had enjoyed the outside life and was unhappy and unwell in his previous home. Their face lit up when they saw the big window in their room on arrival, and says their relative “flourishes” here. Another relative described Avondale as “fantastic”. Their relative had become very frustrated in other care homes but here time was taken to communicate with them differently and they had become much calmer.

Privacy



One resident was helped to the toilet, and then left alone whilst the staff member waited outside until called. They then helped the resident back into the dining room. Another resident was quietly and quickly helped when their trousers fell down. In the dining room, we observed that care was also taken not to discuss a medical condition of another patient in front of others.

Quality of Life



Avondale is a calm, modern home where very good individualised care was seen to be given. Medication was quickly administered when a resident said they had shoulder pain. The tablets were named as they were given and the staff member waited patiently until they had been taken before moving away.

Whilst talking to a group of residents, one said they were going for a nap after lunch, another was expecting a visitor whilst another was going to read in their room. When asked, did they not want to read in the garden, they said they couldn’t get downstairs on their own but didn’t know what to say when we suggested using the lift and going with a member of staff. We were informed by staff that appropriate assistance was available to access the garden and we did see clients doing so later on. We did not see anyone use the quiet lounges (except staff) or the gym. After lunch we only observed residents retiring to their rooms or being taken to the lounges where the TVs were on. We found one dining room very warm (it was a hot day) in comparison to other areas.



Recommendations

We recommend that Avondale:

- periodically suggests to residents in the nursing units different locations such as the garden and quiet rooms where reading, art, cards or other activities could be done just to add variety.
- regularly review the temperature in communal rooms, such as the dining room we visited, when it is particularly hot outside and take measures to ensure a consistent acceptable temperature in all areas.



Service Provider Response

The manager agreed that the report was factually accurate and had no other comments to make.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank Avondale residents, their visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View visit as part of the Dignity In Care project.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report, on dignity in care, relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all residents and staff, only an account of what was seen and heard at the time.

Methodology

This was an unscheduled Enter and View visit in that the care home were given up to 2 weeks' notice of our intention to visit but not the time and date. Authorised representatives noted what they observed and were told.
