

Day time support centre at Walton Lane Community Centre

Report on services provided by Age UK Lancashire

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V1.0

Introduction and rationale

Age UK Lancashire has a number of daytime support centres at locations across Lancashire and requested an independent assessment of four of their daytime support centre services by Healthwatch Lancashire to gather views of service users and their next of kin to inform their quality improvement programme.



Methodology

All participants gave their consent to being approached by Healthwatch Lancashire. The assessment was undertaken in 3 stages:

Stage 1, Service User Questionnaire:

Healthwatch Lancashire staff and volunteers spoke with and completed a questionnaire with 10 service users that focused on:

- Access
- Environment
- Food and nutrition
- Activities
- Dignity, enjoyment and well being
- Conduct of Age UK Lancashire staff and volunteers

Stage 2 Next Of Kin Telephone Survey:

Healthwatch Lancashire spoke with the next of kin of 7 service users, using a telephone survey. The aim was to identify whether both service users and their next of kin benefited from the service.

Stage 3 Environmental Assessment:

Healthwatch Lancashire undertook environmental assessments of each centre. Assessors completed an environmental assessment focusing on food, cleanliness & safety and identified whether the environment was fit for purpose.

Observations

Access

Service users stated that the main reason for attending the service was to experience a change of environment and for 'something to do'. Other reasons included the service user feeling unsafe at home alone, for health reasons and to make friends and participate in activities. All service users commented that access to the entrance of the building was good and stated that they were helped by Age UK Lancashire staff. The day and time was reported as convenient for all service users and their next of kin. Some of the service users stated that they did not receive regular information from the centre and only receive information when they visit the centre, though other service users commented that staff provide updates which are informative and that there are 'useful' noticeboards in the entrance of the centre. Next of kin found it easy to find the day time support centre, Next of kin said that they receive information about the centre via telephone and face-to-face updates.

During the environmental assessment, Healthwatch Lancashire staff and volunteers observed that the building, grounds and social spaces were well maintained, clean and pleasant. Signage was very good. Ramps and support to access to the building are available and clearly marked. Garden area has handrails but no handrails at the entrance of the building. Rear car park with disabled spaces and the exterior of the building was well lit.

Venue environment

Service users and their next of kin reported that they thought the venue was clean and tidy, rating the internal areas as good to very good.

The condition of the building, furniture and the decoration was seen as fit for purpose, with two service users stating that the decoration is 'very nice' and all service users rated the comfort in respect of seating and temperature as good to very good. Noise and light was rated as satisfactory to good. The ambience was rated as very good by all service users with one service user stating that it is

one of the main reasons for attending the centre.

The majority of service users were aware of the emergency evacuation procedure. With two service users reporting that all visitors are shown the fire exits and that this is done on a regular basis.

During the environmental assessment, Healthwatch Lancashire staff and volunteers observed that the reception and corridors within the venue as good. The toilets and bathrooms were generally good, however there was some high level dust and hot and cold tap indicators on taps starting to fade, making this a potential scald hazard.

The communal area was on the whole good, however considerable dust was observed in the ventilation grills/air conditioning within the dining area. There was a good display of relevant information on the notice board in the communal area.

Food and nutrition

All service users reported that they partake in the meals and light refreshments the service provides and that their dietary requirements are 'always catered for' and they were assisted with feeding if required, this was confirmed by their next of kin. All service users stated that there is a very good choice of food and refreshments available, portion sizes are sufficient, and they were happy with the presentation and temperature of food. Napkins were always provided. There is a choice of hot and cold drinks available and that snacks are offered to them during the day, including biscuits, sandwiches and fruit.

During the environmental assessment, Healthwatch Lancashire staff and volunteers observed that service users had access to water independently. The menu was easy to understand and had information relating to food allergens and specific dietary needs. The dining and kitchen area clean and presentable. All unnecessary activity was ceased during the mealtime and all service users requiring assistance with feeding were supported.

Observations continued

During the environmental assessment, Healthwatch Lancashire staff and volunteers had the opportunity to sample the food and commented that the breakfast and lunch looked and tasted appetising and at a good temperature. Napkins and appropriate crockery was provided.

Activities on offer

Service users reported that there were activities on offer, this included bingo, dominoes, puzzles, card games, painting, baking, singing and exercise classes. All but one of the service users reported that they join in with the activities. Over half of service users state that they are not involved in planning the activities, however, a number of service users said that they did not wish to be involved. Only one service user stated that the activities on offer could be improved. Just under half of service users felt that the activities did not utilise their own experience, skills and interests. Next of kin rated the activities on offer as 'OK'.

Dignity, enjoyment and wellbeing

All service users enjoyed using the service, with the majority service users stating that attending the centre gave them a change of environment and alleviated feelings of loneliness and boredom. All service users stated that they felt safe when using the centre and commented that it had good security. All but one of the service users stated that they would know who to talk to comment or complain about the service.

Next of kin thought that their relatives were treated with dignity and respect and that their relatives enjoy attending the centre and that they had noticed an improvement in their relative's physical and mental health as a result of them attending the centre. Next of kin reported that they have noticed an improvement in their own mental and physical health, as a result of their relative attending the centre.

Conduct of staff and volunteers

The majority of service users stated that the Age UK Lancashire staff and volunteers were easily identifiable as the staff wear uniforms and name tags and know all of the service user's names.

Next of kin reported that they felt that the Age UK Lancashire staff and volunteers meet the needs of their relatives and felt that their relatives are in safe care with the staff and volunteers.

During the environmental assessment Healthwatch Lancashire staff and volunteers experienced that staff and volunteers made the Healthwatch Lancashire team very welcome and were helpful, despite the staff not expecting the team on the day. They observed that service users, staff and volunteers seemed very happy.

Other comments

Next of kin felt that the centre was value for money.

In general, next of kin were confident in knowing how to compliment, comment or complain about the service.

Quotes

Following on from our observations and from the opportunity of speaking with service users and their next of kin to gain their opinions and suggestions for improvements, the following have been identified:

Service user quotes...

- “I can help to clean, if I want to”
- “Sometimes the lights are not working”
- “Staff are very friendly and nice”
- “Staff treat me well and are always smiling”
- “Staff are very nice and I miss it when I am not here”
- “Money well spent”
- “I would like it if they sing and bake a cake on birthdays”
- “The hairdresser is fantastic”
- “A grand place!”
- “I love coming to the centre”
- “The food ‘is passable but looks good’

Areas for improvement

Following on from our observations and from the opportunity of speaking with service users and their next of kin to gain their opinions and suggestions for improvements, the following have been identified:

- Provide information about accessing the service and service activity
- Minimise risks such as relabelling of hot and cold taps
- Provide handrails on entering the centre
- Improve standard of cleaning
- Engage service users in suggesting and planning activities

Response from Age UK Lancashire

Age UK Lancashire requested this independent review of our Daytime Support Centres to support us in our ambition for continuous improvement across all services we deliver to and for older people across Lancashire.

Walton Lane is a centre that delivers a high quality service to the elderly frail and those living with Dementia.

We are extremely pleased with the feedback about our staff and volunteers at the centre who always work tirelessly to ensure our customers feel safe and happy whilst they are in our care.

We always endeavour to continually improve our services and welcome the feedback from Healthwatch Lancashire.

We have implemented some very quick operational changes, for example ensuring those who would like to be more involved with planning activities are included in discussions. Also the minor aesthetic issues regarding dust has been resolved by the use of Age UK Lancashire's own Home Help service. We are also introducing a newsletter that will be available for all customers and next of kin, that will include a range of information regarding the centre including who to make contact with regarding accessing the service more frequently or any other general comments.

healthwatch Lancashire

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