

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

Mr & Mrs Tillotson
Daws Lea, High Wycombe, HP11 1QG
07.12.17 – 11 am
Joy Johns, Susan de Kersaint-Seal

Summary of findings



- High quality of personal care with kind, quiet, efficient staff;
- Comfortable, clean and well decorated home with pleasant garden;
- Quality of food was praised but no written or pictorial menus were seen; Options seemed limited at some meals.

The Visit

Little Oaks provides residential care for 29 people currently (has 34 rooms). We talked to 5 residents, 3 members of staff, (plus the Deputy Manager and one of the owners) and 1 visitor. We observed another 2 visitors, around 20 other residents and 7 staff .

How people are treated



We were impressed by the quiet and caring atmosphere in this comfortable home. The residents and a visitor, we spoke to, were unanimous in their praise for the care they received. One resident said, “staff are very good to residents”, another said “we are well treated”. Another remark regarding a resident living with dementia was “everything is done gently and carefully”. This was confirmed by our own observations of staff sitting with residents and helping them with activities, such as reading a book. And by the way they spoke in a non-patronizing and caring way. We observed one resident being smoothly hoisted by two staff members. They worked together well, reassuring the resident, placing a blanket over the resident’s legs to ensure their dignity. Any alarm buzzers that sounded, while we were there, were answered within a minute or so. Two staff members said, independently of each other, “I really enjoy working here”.

Personal Choice



Residents told us there were often activities, but that “you don’t have to join in; it’s your choice if you just want to read a book”. There was also a choice when residents went to bed or got up in the morning, although we were told by a staff that they try to encourage people to be up by 10:30am. There are two residents’ lounges and a pleasant conservatory overlooking the garden. Residents can go wherever they prefer. Everyone we spoke to praised the quality of the food. We saw a substantial meal of roast chicken, vegetables and potatoes (with a choice of two juices) served at lunch. We were told that wine was served on Sunday and a cooked breakfast was only available one day a week. We did not see a written or pictorial menu or another lunch option. We were told by residents that there are several options for the evening meal, including hot and cold choices such as scrambled eggs, soup or sandwich and yoghurt. Although we saw some snacks in the lounges, and tea/coffee served, we did not see cold drinks in the lounges.

Just like Being at Home



The home has a welcoming atmosphere, is clean and well decorated throughout, with good temperature and noise levels. It has lifts and stair lifts. The original home was extended about two years ago and this work, including changes to some bathrooms, has been completed to a high standard. Rooms can be decorated with personal items and a new resident’s own furniture was being moved in while we were there. A visitor said that they are made to feel welcome at any time. There are two Family of Residents days per annum and people are encouraged to attend. One inclusive event is a ‘Christmas lunch’ which is held a week or so before Christmas Day. For residents, there is a schedule of activities and outings such as an upcoming trip to the pantomime in Wycombe and a visit from a local school.

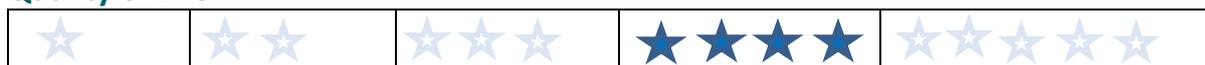
We did note that there was limited signage in the halls and that room doors were not personalised. We were concerned it would be confusing for residents to find their way around, as there are several corridors and stairways that look similar.

Privacy



Residents said that staff always knock on the doors to the rooms, “even when they are open”. One of the staff came up to the deputy manager when we were talking to her during lunch and she just quietly said, “could you come and assess Mrs X.” She was very careful not to divulge anything more. However, a bedroom door was open when one resident was having bandages changed and we were walking past.

Quality of Life



The residents and the visitor we spoke to felt that the home offered safe, good quality of life, although one resident had found it “hard to find another resident to talk to”. Another said that that if they ever had any concerns about anything that they would speak up and be listened to. There are occasional resident meetings. We were told that there are two part-time activity coordinators. A variety of weekly activities/outings (such as keep fit, quizzes) are advertised on a notice on a door and on blackboards by the lounges. The day we were there, a hairdresser was visiting, some residents were having their nails done, and a priest came to offer communion. We also observed someone playing dominoes. Newspapers can be ordered. We were told that the home uses Skype to help residents keep in touch with families who live in other areas. The home has a lovely garden with views from a residents’ conservatory and patio. Residents can access the garden from the ground floor and with several steps (up to nine in one place) from the conservatory level.

Recommendations

We recommend that Little Oaks:

- improves the signage in some of the corridors and personalizing residents’ doors

- helps residents get to know each other better by appropriate introductions and encouragement by staff
- introduces both written and pictorial menus to help residents with of menu choice;
- has more water/cold drinks easily available to residents in lounges.
- could consider how I-pad technology could help residents in future, such as creating pictorial options for food.

Service Provider Response

Thank you for taking the time visiting Little Oaks on 7th December 2017 and for your very prompt and complimentary report. Feedback is always helpful and we very much appreciate your comments and recommendations, knowing that they are all for the good of our residents.

I am pleased to advise that improving the signage at Little Oaks was already in progress and we anticipate that all the new signs will have been installed by the end of January 2018.

Our residents meetings are held regularly, on a monthly basis, but it was agreed by all that attended the meeting in November that there would be no meeting held in December. December is always a hectic month with a full calendar of events scheduled which were all enjoyed by the residents. Some of the events that the residents participated in were the local Panto, festive lunches, Christmas services, Choirs, relatives Christmas get together, visiting a children's nursery and much more. Our next meeting is scheduled for next week.

An in depth pre-assessment is undertaken prior to a new resident arriving at Little Oaks and contained within this is a resident's food preferences. Our menus are planned in advance and whilst our facilities may not be those of a large business, we are able to offer a choice of meals for the residents to select and enjoy. We pride ourselves on this personal touch, which would not have been obvious on your visit, as it's all discreetly carried out to bring the least amount of unrest among the residents, especially those with memory problems.

Thank you for suggesting using iPad technology, we already have one and taking forward your recommendation of photographing meals to enable residents to visualise the menus that are being offered, is a good idea. We will also look at other innovative ways the iPad can be used to assist the residents achieve personal fulfilment.

In relation to privacy sadly this was a visiting nurse who may not have been as privacy conscious as ourselves. This has been brought to their attention so another thank you for this observation.



Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank the residents, visitors and staff at Little Oaks 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.
