

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

Heritage Care Ltd
Lavric Rd, Aylesbury, HP21 8JN
06.06.18 - 10.40am
Alison Holloway, Sheila Cotton, Judy Vivis,
Graham Faulkner,

Summary of findings



- We were told staff are friendly and staff told us they enjoyed working in the home
- Whilst the units' décor was bright and clean there were too many notices placing restrictions on visitors which may also impact on residents' self esteem
- More care needs to be taken to protect each resident's privacy

The Visit

The Chestnuts currently provides residential care for 40 people in 4 units. Two of these, on the ground floor, are where people live with dementia. On the first floor, one unit provides residential care whilst the other provides exclusively respite care. This new unit only opened a week ago and has only 2 residents at present. We talked to 9 residents, 3 visitors and 6 members of staff. We observed a further 13 residents, 1 visitor and 6 staff members.

How people are treated



Although there are mainly agency staff on duty, many of these regularly work for The Chestnuts and so are familiar faces to the residents. Staff members told us they enjoy working in the units and seemed very cheerful. Residents said staff "are friendly." "They're good." We saw them talk in a kind and gentle way to some residents and in a livelier way to others who were teasing them. We also saw a few residents in both ground floor units talking to each other as friends. Some visitors were offered tea on arrival and we saw a box of toys being given to a visiting baby. A relative told us that "the care here is phenomenal. My (x) has lovely smooth skin and is always clean and smells nice." However, another resident said that they felt some staff undertook personal care only because they were paid to do so which made the resident feel very uncomfortable. In some units, there were several staff who were very visible but no staff were seen in the lounge in the residential unit during our visit. The manager said that relatives' meetings have not taken place this year due to lack of attendance last year.

Personal Choice



We were told the food was good by several residents. We saw written breakfast menus out on the tables in one unit and yesterday's dinner and supper menu on a nearby table. Several residents didn't seem to think there was a choice given to them about what they could eat. We saw no pictorial menus on the ground floor and the manager confirmed they do not use them. Instead she said they offered two alternative plates of food every lunchtime for the residents to choose. We did not see this as mealtimes are protected. No resident we spoke to knew what was for lunch. The visitors we spoke to said they would like the option to sit or eat with their family member. There

were jugs of squash and water in the lounge areas as well as bowls of fruit in communal areas and we saw residents and the visitors with cold drinks and cups of tea in the lounges.

One resident said they used to enjoy reading but couldn't anymore because their eyesight was poor. They had not heard of audio books which they might enjoy instead. Another resident told us they'd had a lie in as they had been watching TV late the previous evening. We saw two residents enjoying a cigarette in the garden although no one else was outside and few residents said they went outside often.

Just like Being at Home



The lounges, dining rooms and hallways in the units were bright and looked recently decorated. There was a quiet area with two seats at the end of each unit's corridor. A TV was on in all the lounges whether there was anyone in the room or not. However, in Beech unit, many of the residents in the lounge were actively singing along to the karaoke songs on the TV. On the ground floor, the chairs in both lounges were in rows rather than in more homely groupings which would have made it easier for residents to talk to each other. Bunting had been put up in Cedar unit. Some black and white photos of classic Hollywood stars and some colourful film posters were on the hall walls in one unit. However, communal areas outside the units were a little scruffy with cups for a drinks dispenser left in an open cardboard box on the floor near the lifts and a step ladder left erected, but unattended for some time, outside the manager's office. The manager told us they had implemented the 'Butterfly Approach' to care in the last two months and there were posters on the wall to illustrate this new method in one unit. However, we also saw posters saying that mealtimes were protected and visitors should not visit in certain time periods. Other posters asked visitors to only see their relatives in their bedrooms when they came. However, the visitors we saw did say they were now allowed to sit in the lounge with their relative although this had not always been the case. Staff knew the residents and their personal history: "did you go picking blackcurrants when you were young then?" Staff also told us that they had tried to encourage those living in the residential unit to get involved in tasks such as laying the tables but that residents weren't interested.

In the respite unit, bathrooms have grab rails in a contrasting colour to the wall tiles and there were pictorial signs on bathroom doors to help those living with dementia. However, the toilets did seem very low to the floor. All the doors to bedrooms were open and we could see that they had been personalised by individuals and their families.

Privacy



Although some people told us staff didn't knock on bedroom doors before entering, and we did witness this, we also did see some staff knock, and wait. Some residents have dietary requirements which had been laminated as A4 posters and put up in the serving area of a dining room. This means that personal information was very visible to anyone in the area and not kept private.



Quality of Life



One resident had seen the doctor the day before and was persuaded to raise their legs on a footstool. The staff member was very empathetic when the resident said it hurt but repeated why it needed to be done “just for an hour”. They also ensured the resident was as comfortable as could be before they moved away. We also saw a visiting foot care practitioner and residents told us about the hairdresser that visits once a week.

In dining room of one unit, we saw a resident doing a word search and another doing a crossword. Two other residents had newspapers to hand. A visitor also told us about a local preschool group who visits some Wednesdays and visiting singers. They felt that the environment in the last few months had become more stimulating for the residents. The whiteboard showed, on the morning of our visit, the activity was buying sweets from the sweet trolley which was pushed around and we could also see a church service was offered weekly. Activities were written up hurriedly on a white board outside the lounge but we saw no pictorial activity noticeboards. A resident told us that there are activities from Tuesday to Friday lunchtime “and we amuse ourselves at the weekend.” They did tell us about an upcoming trip to Southend for some residents at the end of the month. However, most residents said they “would like to get out a bit more often”. Although the residents did not seem to be able to tell us about many activities, the manager said they had visiting owls, visiting clothing retailers every six months and a staff member is trained in armchair aerobics. She also said that the activity coordinator took one or two residents out at a time to the local garden centre, shopping or to a café.

Recommendations

We recommend that The Chestnuts

- prints pictorial menus on the reverse of the written menus in the units where residents might struggle to read whether that be because they live with dementia or sight loss.
- ensures the correct days menu is displayed
- enables visitors to eat or sit with their relatives during mealtimes.
- ensures those who may no longer see well have access to audio / talking books via Bucks library, Calibre audio library or the RNIB
- removes notices asking relatives to visit residents in their rooms to prevent upset to other residents in the lounge
- considers turning TVs off when residents are not in the lounges
- tries to create more groupings of chairs to enable residents to talk to each other in the lounge rather than sitting in two rows
- removes the A4 laminated details about individuals’ diets from public view
- brings the standard of décor in the entrance hallway and lift and corridors leading to the units up to the standard of that in the units themselves
- ensures everyone knocks on doors and waits for consent before entering a room
- looks to create a pictorial activity board for those unable to read the activity whiteboard
- looks to create more opportunities for residents to go out perhaps through recruiting more volunteers

Service Provider Response

I would like to thank you for the attached report highlighting the good care residents living at The Chestnuts are experiencing. Heritage care value your feedback and the opportunity to make improvements within our service. In response to your teams observation I would like to offer the following response to be included within your report.

On the day of your visit not all the dining areas had been set out as we would have wished. We are about to move to a highly regarded alternative provider who are going to supply new visual menus for our residents. A number of our relatives already enjoy meal time experiences with their loved ones, it appears you may not of observed this on the day of your visit. Understandably we also have to take into consideration the wishes of all residents living with us at The Chestnuts and therefore there may be occasions when sharing mealtimes may not be appropriate within the communal dining areas.

Thank you for your suggestion regarding access to talking books etc. it appears you may not of been made aware that a number of our residents already enjoy this facility. Thank you for your suggestion regarding the removal of the request for families to meet their relatives in their rooms, this request is in place due to a number of our residents asking for their privacy to be respected and their lounge area to remain a quiet seating area. I understand you observed a television remained on in a lounge area not being used. While we would not routinely leave the television on however residents will frequently leave the lounge area to use the bathroom or return to their rooms and it is not always practical or desired to turn off the entertainment. I understand you observed the positioning of the chairs in communal areas were not grouped, we do aim to avoid where possible chairs positioned in rows however we also have some residents that move chairs around and prefer A theatre style arrangement for watching films etc.

Thank you for bringing to our attention details of individuals diets, these have now been removed. An on- going redecoration program is in progress, we are pleased you noted the improvements made to the deco on our residents units. All staff are aware of the need for consent to enter residents rooms, staff have however been reminded of this.

Our activities coordinator works very hard to promote activities around the home and a pictorial planner is available. There are frequent opportunities for residents to go on outing and we would encourage you to view our community Facebook page which has some lovely pictures of residents enjoying some of the activities available we also have a number of scrapbooks which evidence activities with residents and I am sorry you did not have the opportunity to view these during your visit. I believe many of the residents you met are living with dementia and may have responded to your questions according to their level of understanding.

Once again, thank you for your observations & suggestions.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank the residents, visitors and staff at The Chestnuts 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.

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