

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

Heritage Care
Holmers Farm Way, Cressex Rd, High Wycombe, HP12 4PZ
25.08.15 – 2pm
Alison Holloway, Diane Kerwood, Joyce Davies, Elizabeth Abbott

Summary of findings



- Some examples of good dignity in care but also some where more thought could be given to person-centred care by certain individuals.

The Visit

Holmers House provides residential care, in 3 units, for those over 65 who are living with dementia. There were no relatives present when we visited, but we talked to the manager, deputy manager, 6 members of staff and observed and/or talked to 20 of the 46 residents.

How people are treated



There was a good rapport between the staff and residents with everyone being addressed by name. Whilst we were not able to converse with one resident, we saw them sensitively helped to express themselves by a care assistant who knew how to enable them to focus. She also knew that they loved chocolate and would prefer a piece of their own chocolate bar to a biscuit. We also observed two ladies get up to hug each other. A different staff member then joined in with this hug.

In one unit, there was a lot of interaction between staff and residents; encouraging individuals to get a drink and general chatting. One resident said “I’m well cared for here”. In another unit though, we observed little engagement and staff stayed in the kitchen most of the time. One staff member did also tend to shout rather than talk. A doll was given to a resident at one point and when the latter asked “where’s she been?” the answer was given as the staff member walked away. However, we also saw patience displayed when one resident shouted as another tried to use the phone.

Another resident wanted to talk to their son on the phone. Whilst they were quite happy to be told they could do this later at the beginning of our visit, they were in tears by the end. A member of staff was seen to talk to them calmly and then take them out of the unit.

None of the staff in one unit were wearing name badges but staff elsewhere were. The manager told us that new badges were on order. Some of the staff were not very tidy in their appearance.

Personal Choice



Our visit coincided with drinks and snacks being served. In one unit, staff offered residents a choice of drinks. Here, we also saw staff encourage those who were able, to help themselves to drinks under supervision. However, in another unit, whilst tea was served in different style cups depending on need, there was no choice of drink given. Sliced apple and banana with a biscuit were also given on a plate to each resident. Again, although residents were free to decline the plate, no one was

Dignity in Care Enter & View visit to Holmers House

asked what they would like. One member of staff said there was no menu although we did subsequently see one on a dining room wall. We were told by a resident that lunch had been “pork or lamb with a nice sweet”.

Just like Being at Home



The deputy manager advised us that those who are able, are encouraged to help set the tables. However, because they live with dementia, they are not encouraged to use the kitchen independently. We viewed an unoccupied bedroom which seemed spacious and individuals can bring their own furniture. Some residents have their photos on their bedroom doors with a few words about themselves. These help the resident and others start up conversations about the individual’s past. One resident was very pleased when we commented on her in her wedding dress. There are pictures on the walls as well which reminisce of days gone by.

However, the home generally appears rather well-worn although comfortable. In one unit there was a strong smell of urine on our initial tour around the home. This had been reduced significantly when we returned later. There were also soiled linen bins prominently placed next to the communal areas.

Privacy



When a resident carrying a used disposable pan accidentally dropped it in the dining room, a member of staff was seen to quickly and discretely clean up the mess. Another lady was observed being taken to her room after she had got up and kept repeating “oh dear, oh dear”.



Quality of Life



There were no activities taking place when we visited and it was raining hard so no one could go outside. We were told that the hairdresser was on holiday and the activities coordinator was absent. However, the large activities board was very pictorial and bright although in the reception area so not easily accessible to residents. Lots of the ladies nails were beautifully painted and a staff member said she tried to do this every Sunday afternoon. “It’s something that even those who can’t speak seem to enjoy – it helps them relax.”

In one unit, a lounge had a TV switched on, in another 1940s music was playing and the third was quiet. Whilst the garden was green and the lawns mowed, there was little other colour.

Recommendations

We recommend that Holmers House

- ensure all staff take time to talk directly to all individuals at eye level
- encourage all staff to interact more on a one to one basis with residents
- ensure all staff have an opportunity to attend dignity in care and person centred training
- repair (eg a damaged garden chair) or replace (a missing ceiling tile exposing wiring) items as soon as possible.

Dignity in Care Enter & View visit to Holmers House

- plant up the empty hanging baskets and look at adding more seasonal colour in the garden. Perhaps the residents could get involved in this activity.
- move soiled linen bins further away from the dining areas



Service Provider Response

We thank the team for visiting our home and meeting with our staff and residents.

We have taken on board their comments and have already shared the draft report with our Person Centred Planning Trainer, who is scheduling some bespoke training for the staff working in this home to address some of the issues raised.

We would have liked more information regarding how the star ratings have been arrived at as the balance between positive observations and areas for improvement are different throughout the report but the rating of three stars is the same throughout the report.

Some of the areas raised were already being addressed prior to the visit. For example we had already started working with a local employer whose staff will be helping us improve our outdoor space. The unfortunate temporary odour of urine was in relation to one resident who was awaiting a move to a more appropriate environment. Staff were aware of his needs in this area and were providing appropriate support for him, but could not completely eliminate the problem as the only way to have done this would have been to confine him to his bedroom, which would have been inappropriate and not in his best interest. This gentleman moved from the home shortly after the Healthwatch visit.

We found some of the references in the report confusing and did request further clarification and examples to help us develop our action plan, but we were not provided with this information, which was disappointing.

We would like to thank you for your report. We welcome comments from people who visit our services and aim to use these to improve our services.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank Holmers House residents 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.
