

Healthwatch Kent Report: Care Home Series

The Island Residential Care Home, Sheppey

May 2018

Foreword

Across the country, Independent Age has been working with Healthwatch to explore what people are looking for when choosing a care home.

They have identified 10 key indicators that they feel make a good Care Home, for example, they highlight important areas of dignity and choice such as residents being able to continue their hobbies and have an input into the running of the home.

Many Healthwatches already use the Independent Age indicators when visiting Care Homes and we have decided to adopt this approach here in Kent.

We have visited 24 Care Homes in total in recent months, two per District. It was important to us that we visited a range of homes from every area in Kent. Although we selected them at random we did check with the Care Quality Commission, Kent County Council and the seven Kent Clinical Commissioning Groups to ensure we didn't clash with any visits they already had planned.

This report details the findings from our visit to The Island residential care home. We will also be publishing a report which summarises the findings from all our visits. We have of course shared our findings with the Care Home but also the Care Quality Commission, Kent County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Groups as each of them have a role to play in inspecting and commissioning care homes in Kent.

We will be following up with each home to check their progress against our recommendations and will publish an Impact report within six months' time.

If you have an experience of a Care Home in Kent that you wish to share with us (good or bad) do get in touch. Call our freephone Helpline on 0808 801 0102 or complete a feedback form on our website www.healthwatchkent.co.uk

Steve Inett

Chief Executive, Healthwatch Kent

What were we trying to achieve?

Using the 10 key indicators, as set out by Independent Age, we wanted to talk to Care Home residents, family and staff about their experiences of living and working in the home.

How did we go about it?

We visited The Island Residential Home on 13th January 2018. **Our trained Enter & View Authorised Visitors were Lyn and John Gallimore.** During our visit we spoke to the manager, 2 team leaders, 3 members of staff, 6 residents and received 2 questionnaires from families.

We were seeking to answer the following indicators.

A good care home should.....

1. Have a registered manager in post.
2. Have a stable workforce
3. Have staff who have the right skills to do their jobs.
4. Have enough staff on duty during the day and night
5. Be clear about how they will be able to meet residents' needs both now and, in the future,
6. Offer meaningful activity and enjoyment to suit all tastes
7. Enable residents to see a GP or other health professionals like a dentist, optician or chiropodist, whenever they need to
8. Accommodate your cultural and lifestyle needs
9. Show that they're always looking to improve
10. Provide nutritious food, plenty of fluids and a pleasant environment for meals

Overview: What did we find?

The home:

- is situated in Leysdown on the Isle of Sheppey
- is close to the beach, local shops and amenities
- is privately run by The Island Residential Home Limited
- currently has 34 residents.
- has two floors, one for the physically disabled (18 to 65 years) and one for people over 65
- welcomes residents for both long and short-term convalescence and holiday stays.
- is spacious and well laid out with a large garden which residents can help to maintain with a pond, aviary and patio

The latest CQC inspection took place on 6th February 2018 and was rated overall as 'Requires Improvement' in the areas of being safe and well led and 'Good' for effective, caring and responsive. The latest CQC report can be found on the link below.

<http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-2297024576>

A good care home should...

1. **Have a registered manager in post.** The registered manager is the most important staff member in a care home - and the one responsible for ensuring quality standards and residents' needs are met. They should be visible within the care home, provide good leadership to staff, have relevant experience of the health and care system and qualifications to help them do their job.

The current **Manager** has been in post since April 2017.

Staff appear to respect the manager and the work he has done to improve the home since he was appointed. They told us he has been responsible for staff changes when necessary and for maintaining high levels of care.

Two team leaders were the managers for the day during our visit.

One staff member said that they had little support from the manager, and although it was easy to talk to him, communication could be improved.

The residents we spoke to were confused between the manager and the owner, who is on the premises daily and makes herself freely available to staff and residents.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with some minor reservations.

- 2. Have a stable workforce.** Care homes with knowledgeable, experienced staff who get to know residents can make the difference between an institution and a home. Where turnover of staff is very high, these qualities can be lost. It may also be a sign that staff are not happy working in the home.

We were told there is very little staff turnover and most staff live on the Island. They told us they readily cover for each other to avoid as little reliance on agency staff as possible. All the staff we saw were cheerful, enjoying friendly banter with each other and with residents. There was a genuine relaxed atmosphere throughout the visit.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 3. Have staff who have the right skills to do their jobs.** Well-informed, skilled staff who are valued and developed as employees are vital to a smooth-running care home. All care homes should have a clear, comprehensive training scheme to ensure staff have the knowledge they need.

The home has a training programme and the **manager** encourages staff to move along a career pathway based on a clinical model or NVQ level 2 upwards. When new residents are expected, the manager told us she visits each one in their current place of residence and acquires as much information about the expected person as possible which is then transmitted to all staff so that they are fully aware of the new resident's needs. Care workers also supply information from Kent County Council.

Staff told us they were non-judgemental and are supportive of residents' wishes. We saw one resident who didn't want to eat his dinner and the staff accepted his decision. There is a calm atmosphere throughout the home during our visit.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 4. Have enough staff on duty during the day and night.** Many homes have a lower proportion of staff on during the night, but if the ratio falls too low - at any time of day - response times can be too slow.

The **staff** on duty during our morning visit had started their shift at 6.40am with a handover meeting. We were told that five staff are on duty during the day and three overnight. There are three shifts: day, afternoon, and night. One **staff** member told us they thought that there were not enough staff to care for the residents.



Based on what you have heard, the home meets the indicator with some minor reservations.

- 5. Be clear about how they will be able to meet residents' needs both now and in the future.** Many residents will develop more care needs as they get older - particularly if they have a condition like dementia. It is vital that homes can spot changes to their health and respond appropriately - consulting other health professionals where necessary - in order to provide the right level of care and prevent residents from having to move again.

Staff talk to residents about how they are feeling and are sensitive to changes in people's demeanour. We saw evidence of this when the team leader reported that one resident was not her usual self because she had stayed in bed longer than usual. This resulted in that person saying she had a headache and the clinician was able to give a pain killer.

Another **resident** was waiting for a visit from her father who had not arrived, the staff knew exactly how she was going to behave and advised us not to talk to her, but staff tried to engage her in an activity. We saw staff talk openly to the residents about how they are feeling and acted accordingly. All staff were fully aware of medical and social needs of their residents.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 6. Offer meaningful activity and enjoyment to suit all tastes.** Care homes should not be boring places - they should offer an interesting range of activities and entertainment that match the tastes and preferences of their residents, including

individual activities. Homes should take steps to stop residents from becoming isolated or lonely while respecting their privacy and choice.

Numerous activities are planned by a dedicated Activities Manager both on and off site.

We were told about a weekly shopping trip to a local town and **residents** can also walk to the village shops if accompanied by a member of **staff**. As it is a holiday resort much of their time in the summer is spent on the beach, supervised, for anyone who enjoys it. In-house activities for the month of our visit included board games, bingo, a reminiscing evening, craft afternoon, music and word search, cheese and crackers afternoon, pamper evening, games day, art and craft day, movies and TV day, as well as the regular activity calendar which covers tea and char, music, one to one room visits, jigsaws, target games e.g. darts, singalong, art, quizzes and crosswords and card games.

Excursions for January included a trip to Tesco, Neats Court Shopping area, Rochester Cinema Trip, Suncatcher Craft, Sea Life Centre and Hobby Craft. A hairdresser visits regularly. One or two residents chose to go to the local Age UK (Sittingbourne and Sheerness). In addition to the organised activities, we were told that residents can follow a hobby of their choice, for example, some played musical instruments in their room whilst others did art work in one of lounges.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations.

- 7. Enable residents to see a GP or other health professionals like a dentist, optician or chiropodist, whenever they need to.** Residents should have the same expectation to be able to promptly see a health professional as they would have when living in their own home. Care homes should be able to explain the relationship they have with their local NHS services - does a GP visit regularly? Can they call a GP out in an emergency? How easy is it for residents to see a dentist, optician, chiropodist or physiotherapist, either for a check-up or in an emergency?

All the **residents** have their own GP locally we were told. If they lived in the area before moving into the home, they have kept their GP if it is within the travelling distance allowed. There is no dedicated GP for the home. Diabetics see the diabetic nurse for regular reviews and there is a good working relationship with the district nurses. Residents can see a chiropodist or physiotherapist if needed. One resident is on end of life care.



Based on what you have heard, the home meets the indicator with some minor reservations.

- 8. Accommodate your cultural and lifestyle needs.** Care homes should be set up to meet your cultural and lifestyle needs as well as your care needs and shouldn't make you feel uncomfortable if you do things differently to other residents. They should also be proactive in finding out what your needs are, so that they can accommodate them.

None of the **residents** responded to our question of needing to see a faith representative or expressed the need to visit a place of worship. A member of **staff** told us that there was no provision. As previously mentioned, residents are free to follow their own hobbies. Smoking is not encouraged but it is recognised that some residents and staff need to smoke, so a dedicated space outdoors has been created which has seating and is heated.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with some minor reservations.

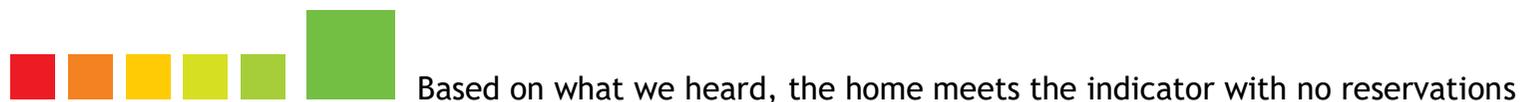
- 9. Show that they're always looking to improve.** You should be able to find out what current residents, their families and friends think about the home. The care home should be happy to help you do this - for example, by putting you in touch

with a residents and relatives group or allowing you to speak to residents and visitors in private. They should also have support in place for people who wish to make a complaint any time, and there should be a healthy culture of challenge and feedback between residents, relatives and staff.

There are fortnightly meetings to enable **residents** to contribute to the improvement of the home, and there is a suggestion box at the door for ideas from **visitors** and **relatives**. We were told residents are encouraged to live by the basic principles of the home which focus on the individual and improving self.

At the time of the visit, no **families** were available to speak to us, but questionnaires were left to be handed out to willing respondents. Some families visit regularly and are involved in any changes to improve life for the residents. However, from photographic evidence and noticeboards it was obvious that the home is open to regular visits from members of the local community.

In the summer a garden party was held and local residents and holiday makers were invited. They also host a McMillan Coffee Morning, and similar events throughout the year, including an open day. The **residents** take part in village activities such as an over 60s party in the village hall and the Parish Council Christmas meal. A pantomime was held in the home prior to Christmas and the church choir gives an occasional concert.



10. **Provide nutritious food, plenty of fluids and a pleasant environment for meals**

We were told that the food is well presented and cooked on the premises and there is a choice at each meal.



Based on what we heard, the home meets the indicator with no reservations

What have we recommended?

- Source a local optician to offer annual eye tests to residents
- Build relationships with faith organisations to provide faith based activities for residents
- Develop relationships with local groups and schools to encourage visits and activities for residents
- Continue with the planned programme of refurbishment to enhance the quality of décor.

Disclaimer

Please note this report relates to the findings on the day stated at the beginning of this report. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all staff, residents, family and friends only, and account of what was contributed and observed during our visit on that day.

Healthwatch Kent

Healthwatch Kent is the independent voice for local people in Kent.

We gather and represent people's views about any health and social care service in Kent.

Our role is to understand what matters most to people and to use that information to influence providers and commissioners to change the way services are designed and developed.

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