

Enter & View Visit Report

Ebony House Care Home, 27th February 2018



Joyce Osei
Frances Martineau

“We observed meaningful conversations between staff and people using the service.

Activities and self-development for residents were well planned, thorough and were designed co-productively with the resident and their relatives.”

Observation by Authorised Rep

Visit Details	
Service address	Ebony House Care Home, 102-106 James Lane, London, E10 6HL
Service Provider	Connifers Care Ltd
Service description	<p>Ebony House is a small residential care home which provides longer stay support and care for adults with learning disabilities.</p> <p>The service offers support to a maximum of 9 people. At the time of our visit there were three residents in the unit, the other residents were at the Pavillion day center. There were 3 staff members in the home at the time we visited. The age range of those who live at Ebony House is 20 - 65 years of age.</p>
<i>Date and Time</i>	Tuesday 27th February 2018, 11:30-14:25
<i>Status of visit</i>	Announced
<i>Authorised Representatives</i>	<p>Joyce Osei - Lead Representative - Enter & View Coordinator - Healthwatch Waltham Forest</p> <p>Frances Martineau - Authorised Representative - Healthwatch Waltham Forest</p>
<i>Contact details</i>	<p>Healthwatch Waltham Forest Waltham Forest Resource Hub (Central) 1 Russell Road London E10 7ES</p>
<i>Declarations of interest</i>	None

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Waltham Forest would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this Enter and View visit to take place. We would also like to thank our Authorised Enter & View representative (E&V rep) who assisted us in conducting this visit and putting together this report. We welcome all contributions to this Enter and View programme.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services has a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

Purpose of Visit

Healthwatch Waltham Forest (HWWF) conducts Enter & View visits as part of a wider programme of visits to Health and Social Care Services in Waltham Forest with the aim of hearing and seeing how consumer services are delivered.

We created questionnaires for residents and staff to measure quality and delivery of care.

The aim of our Enter & View visit was:

- a) To capture the experiences of residents of the care home and those involved in their care at the point of service delivery.
- b) To observe residents and relatives engaging with the staff within surroundings of the care home.

- c) To share this information with the service provider to help shape service improvement.
- d) To identify examples of good working practice

Methodology

Part of programme; this was one of a series of visits to people living in care homes in Waltham Forest. The purpose of our visit was to capture the experiences of people using the service by talking directly to residents, families and staff about their experiences; observe services in action and advise the service provider about how to improve and highlight any good practice.

This was an announced visit. The Registered manager of the care home was informed in writing by means of email and letter; a proposed visit date was confirmed. In addition, a telephone conversation took place to agree the terms of visit best for the home according to the needs of the residents of the home on the day of our visit as not to cause any disruption to the service. Residents were informed prior to the visit by means of verbal communication, posters and information booklets, which were sent seven days prior to the visit.

We asked service users to give feedback on the above, as well as suggestions for service improvements. This was used by means of a questionnaire. We also sought feedback from staff of the care home by using a questionnaire.

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

The visit was conducted on Tuesday 27th February 2018, between 11:30am-14:25pm. Our visit was themed around the following aspects of care provision;

- Dietary needs
- Complaints
- Staff responsiveness
- Provision of care for people living with dementia
- Complaints

To inform service users of the visit, posters and information booklets were displayed within the prior to the visit. Staff information booklets were also provided.

In order to capture as many views as possible on our visit, we provided a resident questionnaire. This consisted of several questions and an additional monitoring

form which related to our visit and the above-mentioned themed aspects of care provision. Provider questionnaires were used to interview staff. This captured information relating to the care provided to residents.

At the end of our visit we spoke with the registered manager and an opportunity was given to add context to what was observed at the time.

Summary of Findings

We carried out our Enter & View visit to Ebony House and looked at themed aspects of care provision to observe delivery of care; capture the views of patients, family members and carers; identify any areas for improvement, also to identify good practice which other providers could learn and benefit from.

The service delivered care to residents using a person-centred approach which was sensitive to the individual needs of those using the service. We observed meaningful conversations between staff and people using the service. Activities and self-development for residents were well planned, thorough and were designed co-productively with the resident and their relatives.

Residents were involved with decisions made about their care. One resident told us that they liked living at the home, sometimes helping with the cooking and felt supported by staff.

The service had in place a comprehensive and innovative staff training and development system, including mandatory, non-mandatory training and support - including Makaton language programme. There was a structured management leadership and support system in place which enabled staff to work well together, develop their skills, knowledge and experience and best support the people using the service.

The provider offered a comprehensive transition support service for all residents before they moved in; this involved an assessment and personalised support plan designed in advance, taking into consideration the person's needs around their health and well-being, dietary needs, activities access needs, personal care and routines and individual wishes. The service was delivered using a co-productive approach.

We observed good quality individualised care & support for residents, including provision of a self-contained functionable sensory room which was utilized well.

Background

Ebony House is a small residential care home which provides longer stay support and care for adults with learning disabilities.

The home is situated on a busy road and located in a predominantly residential area. There is a bus route running down the road where the home is located. The home has been converted into a double fronted house. Parking is available on the road which is a controlled parking zone. Visitors are offered a residents parking permit if needed. The unit is accessible to wheelchair users and people with reduced mobility.

The service offers support to a maximum of nine people, ages ranged from 20 - 65 years. At the time of our visit there were six residents using the service, three residents were present in the unit and three residents out visiting the provider's day centre - The Pavillion. There were three staff members working in the home at the time of our visit.

Observations

On arrival we were met and brought inside a small porch area by a member of staff and asked to sign into a visitor's book. An Enter & View poster was prominently displayed on the front door as well throughout the home, which had informed residents, families and carers of our visit. Our team experienced the staff team to be welcoming, accommodating and responsive to our Enter & View visit.

We were informed that the front door was always kept locked in order to safeguard all of the residents in the home as they were vulnerable.

We met the registered manager of the home and were offered a guided tour around the home, its gardens and sensory room. The unit was built on two floors and in a bright and clean condition. On the ground floor were two bedrooms for the less mobile residents who both used walking aids to move around. There was a large lounge with TV screen secured to the wall and large sofas for resident's use and a large kitchen/dining area on the ground floor which leads out onto a paved garden area. A detached room at the end of the garden was used as the Sensory room.

We observed large framed photos safely secured on the walls, including residents on their sports day, from a previous holiday to Centre Parcs. A large picture of all the staff with their names clearly displayed was also noted.

Overall the home was spacious and bright and had recently had new flooring and Upstairs there were further bedrooms and a lounge area, all bedrooms were fitted with an ensuite bathroom. There are also additional bathroom facilities for residents to use.

Dietary Needs

We observed the kitchen area to be clean, hazard free and clearly labelled. The registered manager told us that all staff members were responsible for preparing meals for residents and had learnt as a team to cook and cater for the different cultural needs of residents. The service had designed a recipe book based on the needs of those using the service. Residents also had the opportunity to undertake supervised cooking sessions each week.

A designated colour coded food preparation system was used in the kitchen to enable them to further develop, with supervision, their skills and knowledge in food hygiene and cooking. Staff told us that they positively encouraged family members to also bring food into the home for their relatives using the service. The service enabled residents to make food choices by communicating verbally, using Makaton sign language and through picture menu's.

Residents also had the opportunity to undertake supervised cooking sessions each week. Residents had access to the fridge and cupboards, there were also cupboards that were lockable if necessary.

On the day of our visit, we observed a resident being supported to go to a local food shop with a member of staff. We were told that he had made a choice to buy takeaway food to eat as he did not want the food being offered at the home that lunch time.

Residents were offered a varied menu taking into consideration; any special dietary needs, allergies, and cultural needs. At the time of our visit we were told that there were no residents that had any special dietary needs.

Complaints

The service has a structured complaints policy and procedure in place and operates an open-door policy and encourages residents and their families to raise concerns and complaints, they are then dealt with by the management and escalated accordingly as necessary.

We were informed that the service had not received any recent complaints since the current manager has been in post. Parents/relatives were encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the care and support that their family member received. The registered manager told us that all staff were aware of the complaints procedure, how to inform their manager and how to escalate a complaint to the directors should they need to.

On asking staff what they thought residents thought of the current service, we were told that they believed residents were happy judging from their direct feedback - verbally, through physical expressions of happiness and through feedback from their relatives.

Activities

The home has its own mini-van. This enables residents to be transported safely to take part in the activities and use the facilities at the provider's day centre - The Pavilion. The day center offers a comprehensive programme enabling learners to undergo an initial assessment then have a personalised programme of skill-based activities and learning put together for them. Residents were able to take part in arts and craft, access a hydro pool, attend music sessions or have complimentary therapy or beauty sessions. The centre also has a sensory room. Opportunities at the day centre include undertaking an ASDAN course; programmes and qualifications designed for providing an engaging curriculum that empowers students through personalised learning and choice. Courses aim to motivate and enhance learners' confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Learners develop core skills in teamwork, communication, problem solving, research and self-management.

The registered manager informed us that one of the real positives of residents attending the day center is that they were able to meet residents from the other units in the Providers care and that they were able to develop and form many friendships. The Pavillion had also made links with Arsenal Football club; on a regular basis, footballers from the club would visit the centre and engage with residents by training and playing football with them.

In addition to their day center activities, staff told us that residents were supported with other external to places such as the library, bowling and other local services. Internal activities were also available, including activities in the sensory room and console games such as Nintendo and Wii games. The mini-van is also used to transport residents for outings and holiday trips, for example, residents' sports day and holidays to Centre Parcs.

Staff Responsiveness

Residents told us that they were happy in their home. The team observed and noted respectful, compassionate and professional interactions between the staff and residents throughout the period of the visit.

The service held regular meetings for residents enabling them to be involved with decisions about their care and an opportunity to voice any concerns and interact with each other. Staff told us that resident's relatives were encouraged to raise any concerns or complaints which would be managed quickly and thoroughly.

Resident's needs were discussed at the initial assessment stage. Together with their family and staff their needs were discussed to ensure their beliefs, religion, gender, and sexual orientation is reflected in their care plan and management of care whilst staying at the home. Those who choose to practice their religious beliefs were supported to do so. Staff assisted one resident to church on a regular basis.

Staff Responsiveness (continued)

The registered manager informed us that the home uses Pictorials and Makaton sign language as tools to help residents with additional support needs.

The service provided a sensory room which was located at the end of the garden. We observed it to be a comfortable self-contained room furnished with sofa's and bean bags, a large TV secured to the wall and a range of sensory equipment and games for the residents to use. We were shown how some of the sensory equipment worked and also shown an example of a resident's individualised care & support needs whilst using the sensory room. Staff told us that the room was very well used by the residents.

We observed the garden to be a bright, clear space with a paved area. We were shown how a part of the garden had recently been cordoned off so as to provide an outdoor space for a transitioning new resident who was currently undergoing a home assessment with staff from the service visiting her regularly. With each visit, staff would bring back to the home a small personal item of hers. As a result, when she eventually moved, she would have several personal and familiar items in her new home enabling her transition to be a more comfortable experience.

Our team also observed several ways that the service used a person-centred approach in caring for residents using the service. For example, the use of large (safety) mirrors fitted in the home to meet the needs of a resident. It had been identified that the same transitioning new resident liked mirrors. Therefore, the service had put in place ahead of her move, safety mirrors in the hall near her room and in the garden for her use.

The manager also told us that the mentioned resident liked to walk barefoot in the garden and had responded to her need by agreeing with her relatives to making safe adaptations to the garden. This included laying Astro Turf to her section of the garden to ensure that she could walk on the ground safely. An agreement had also been made for the resident's relative together with her daughter plant flowers/vegetable in her part of the garden. We observed this to be a good example of the service's approach to individualised care and support needs. Residents were also encouraged to personalise their rooms.

The home supported residents to meet their spiritual and cultural needs. Staff told us that one resident attended his local church regularly. Families were encouraged to be involved with the home and to bring in culturally appropriate food.

Provision of Care for People living with Dementia

At the time of our visit the service did not have an intake of anyone living with dementia and specialised in caring for people with learning disabilities. The registered manager told us that as a service they continuously explored ways of developing and improving their service to support those using it and therefore always willing to adapt to the needs of the residents.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Our report and recommendations are based upon our observations, information gathered from service users and staff through interviews and questionnaires on the day of our visit.

This was Healthwatch Waltham Forest's first visit to Ebony House care home. Our team found the service offered an exemplary level of care to the people who used the service. This was reflected in the interviews and observations of residents and staff and the existing structures and systems in place. We observed care given to residents using a person-centred approach which enabled them to actively be involved in decisions made about their care and was delivered in a caring and compassionate manner. The service offered a comprehensive programme of activities in which met their needs and wishes of the residents and enabled them to develop skills and confidence in various area.

Recommendations

On the basis of our observations, we would like to recommend the following:

Recommendation 1

We recommend that with your approval, we share with others the good practice that you have shown in the delivery of care for the people that you provide a service to. We will be reporting back to the commissioners and relevant health and social care forums regarding the outcome of our visit to your service.

Recommendation 2

We suggest incorporating Dementia training into the service/s existing training programme so that all staff are prepared and have the necessary training and tools in place to be able to support anyone who may be living with dementia and need to use the service in the future.

Service Provider Response

We acknowledge receiving your report following your Enter & View visit on 27th February 2018.

We want to express our thanks to you and your colleague for taking your time and carrying out a thorough visit at Ebony House. This was our first visit from Healthwatch and I appreciate the report has highlighted the views of service users, staff, management and carers which reflect the ethos of the care we provide at Ebony House.

We appreciate your approach in conducting the visit which was very professional, gentle and caring, making all those involved feel comfortable in sharing their views with you through the interviews.

Recommendation 1

I have received the approval from the senior management team for this report to be shared as good practice to other organisations.

Recommendation 2

Regarding the recommendations stated in the report, I have spoken with the director of training and development who has agreed to commission dementia training in the forthcoming training meeting.

Rest assured that we will continue to deliver a high standard of care to our service users and we will excel in our management approach to ensure that we are a well lead team at Ebony House.

Yours Sincerely,

Derick Boateng, Home Manager

Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the general public, and is shared with our statutory partners - London Borough of Waltham Forest, Waltham Forest Clinical Commissioning Group, Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences of this or any other care home in the borough, please contact us.

About Us

Healthwatch Waltham Forest, Waltham Forest Resource Hub (central), 1 Russell Road, London, E10 7ES. Tel 020 3078 9990 | info@healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk
www.healthwatchwalthamforest.co.uk

Company No 8395175 Registered in England.
Registered Charity Number 1154603

“Residents were involved with decisions made about their care.

One resident told us that they liked living at the home, sometimes helping with the cooking and felt supported by staff.”

Observation by Authorised Rep