

Healthwatch Waltham Forest Enter & View Report

# The Spinney Care Home

Care Home Series 2014-2015

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

Alli Anthony  
Patricia Braga  
March 2015

### Visit details

Service address	The Spinney Care Home, 21 Forest View, Chingford, London E4 7AU
Service Provider	Carebase
Service description	The Spinney is a residential and dementia care home in Chingford, London with 48 en suite bedrooms and 45 residents when full.
Number of residents	The home is registered for 48 residents but as a number of the shared rooms are now used for single occupancy the full home takes 45.
Reason for visit	This is one of a series of visits to older people living in care homes in Waltham Forest. The programme is to introduce our Enter & View representatives and help develop their role. We wanted to talk with older people about their experience of living in care homes, looking at 4 areas - meals, activities, staff responses and complaints
Status of visit	Announced
Date of visit	Thursday 12th March 11am
Authorised Reps	Alli Anthony and Patricia Braga
Declarations of interest	Patricia's mother was a resident at the Spinney ten years ago (it now has new owners)

### Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Waltham Forest would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their co-operation and hospitality in hosting this visit. We welcome all contributions to this Enter and View programme.

### Enter & View

Enter & View is a statutory power conferred upon Healthwatch by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It gives Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch Waltham Forest the right to enter and observe publically funded health and social care services in the borough. Enter & View visits are visits and not inspections. Enter & View visits are used to get a lay perspective on the service concerned and are an opportunity for service users to talk about their experiences with the service. This takes place in the communal areas of the home, as our visits preclude talking to people on their own in their private rooms. A report of each visit is produced that includes any recommendations for improvement arising from the visit. This is shared with the service prior to publication. All Healthwatch Waltham Forest Authorised Representatives undergo training and background checks before joining the Enter & View programme.

**Disclaimer:** This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the service users, visitors and staff who contributed to the report on that date.

## Summary of the visit

Alli Anthony and Patricia Braga, Enter & View representatives, visited and we looked at 4 areas:

- *catering, activities, staff responsiveness and complaints*

## Description of facility and overview of findings

The Spinney is a residential and dementia care home in Chingford in a large purpose built building over three floors.

The entrance hall is welcoming, spacious, with fresh flowers, has homely china cabinets and four photo albums showing events with past residents at the home. Healthwatch information is in the hall. There is car parking in front. The home overlooks Chingford golf course and there is a purpose-made private bus stop for residents for when they go on outings. They are situated in a quiet residential street. The door had a key pad exit and a visitor sign in book.

There is a sweet dispenser in the hall with old fashioned sweets, book case for residents to use.

We were greeted by Kim Murphy who is acting manager and has been deputy manager at the home for many years.

There is an attractive garden to the back of the home and plenty of car parking for visitors.

Healthwatch representatives visited the secured top floor (for residents with end stage dementia) the middle floor and ground floors (for people with a variety of needs including mild to moderate dementia). In total we spoke to 6 residents and 6 staff.

The top floor has a small lounge with a kitchenette with an additional smaller lounge where residents could “have a hand massage with aqueas cream”. We also saw the laundry and special bathroom which was very charmingly decorated with a beach theme (beach/memory hats and lots of interesting accessories lined the walls). There was also a small sitting area with a beach scene mural full of interesting detail and supporting props.

The smaller lounge had a lot of support staff. Most were long term and very engaging with the 5 residents who all appeared quite alert and happy. Classical music was playing.

Residents are able to sit at the larger table for help with eating or at a smaller table. One or two residents were in wheelchairs and one resident was dancing with the staff and there were teddy bears here and there.

All rooms identified with the resident’s individual pictures (updated yearly) and information about the resident. Little photo memories and memorabilia are arranged very artistically. All rooms which were open, light and airy.

Regular laundry/ironing and all garments are individually labelled so staff can keep track of a person’s clothes.

On the middle floor the layout is the same. We observed two ladies snoozing in the lounge. On this floor there is a dining room which was light and airy with interesting

pictures. The sitting room on this floor had french windows which looked out over the golf course.

## Observations

### Catering

Breakfast is the most flexibly-timed meal of the day and takes place between 8 and 9.30 allowing residents to get up at different times. Lunch is at 1.15 (and it looked delicious). Choices are available and most diets can be catered for (diabetic, coeliac and vegetarian diets are currently required). In the upstairs unit for people with dementia, all mealtimes are more flexible for people who may get up later or have perhaps lost their sense of time. Snacks and sandwiches are available 24 hours. High tea is served at 5.15 with milky drinks and snacks later in the evening.

The cook has been at the home for 26 years (according to a resident) and was clearly a very popular person with residents. She knew each resident well and was knowledgeable about personal choices. Two residents described the delicious birthday cakes which she makes for each birthday (and extra special ones for 100th birthdays) that are served with wine and sherry. The next 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party is planned for May and a resident explained how the whole floor will be attending. Additionally supper evenings are offered in the smaller lounge for small groups of residents who would like to try international food. The home has lots of china crockery for serving cream teas which are popular with current residents and there are BBQs in summer.

During my visit residents were offered sweets by the activity coordinator from two bowls and one resident was bringing a box of chocolates to share.

A resident reported that people tend to sit with friends, some people prefer to stay in their rooms and others might have relatives come for lunch in which case they tend to use the smaller sitting room especially for family parties.

Each floor has a kitchen area for breakfast and snack preparation which residents are welcome to help with.

### Activities

The home was undergoing some refurbishment to the kitchen during our visit and a resident was clearly kept up to date with the progress to all the building works.

Six ladies at a table were busy flower arranging when we arrived the flowers being visible later on around the home (very attractive results). They were being helped by a friendly activity co-ordinator. The clearly-displayed activity board showed 3 or 4 activities every day that included one to one sessions.

The home offers outings twice a week (Wednesday and Friday) with its own minibus. A resident described a trip to the doll museum as well as scenic drives

which she greatly enjoyed. Another resident was describing her appreciation of singers who had been in the home that week and said that she also enjoyed the fortnightly church service held in the home.

There was a TV in the sitting room which was off while the residents were involved in flower arranging, and musical hall songs were playing. TVs are provided in rooms for those who do not come in with one, though staff pointed out that not every resident wants a TV while some prefer radio.

In the smaller sitting room there is a piano which residents can play. The manager informed us of how one resident is an opera singer and that she has a keyboard accompanist that visits her. Other residents had overheard the singing and this has since become an opportunity for people to listen to music and join in with musical hall style songs.

Some residents pay to have newspapers delivered.

One resident was enjoying a cigarette in the garden and another has a smoking shelter outside her bedroom door.

The garden has a few raised beds for residents. One lady said how she prefers to watch the gardener rather than to do it herself!

Residents enjoy it when staff bring their own children in to visit.

A hairdresser visits twice a week, the home has its own chiropodist and a small library is being added as part of the refurbishment.

The home has a cat which sleeps on residents' beds (only those who like this) and until recently a greyhound and owner visited weekly.

### **Staff responsiveness**

Staff were observed being responsive, friendly and courteous to residents. One of the residents needed hoisting from an armchair into a wheelchair during our visit. This was done with care, patience and efficiency. All the staff we spoke to were friendly and polite to us, (as were the builders when one of the Healthwatch visitors needed directing to the office). The handyman is on site most of the day and was equally friendly. The activity co-ordinator was observed sitting with residents engaging in one to one conversation and helping those who needed it. Staff of all ages showed respect and care towards the residents.

One staff member felt it was a good team who are willing to help each other.

The manager explained the home does not use agency staff but prefers to have bank staff for covering unavoidable staff absences. She reported that they work well as a team helping each other for the benefit of residents as did two other staff we spoke to.

A resident reported that they are a very nice bunch of people” and another said “we can’t fault the staff at all, all friendly, jolly and help keep you going”. A third comment was “everything they do is what you want”.

The home has two volunteers who visit regularly to help new residents settle and talk to people on a one to one basis.

### **Complaints**

Two residents described how if they have concerns they would raise them with Kim or her deputy and felt comfortable and confident that any issue would be resolved.

A volunteer has set up a relatives group and had a couple of meetings so families can get support or raise any issues they may have.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

We thank the Spinney staff and residents for being so accommodating and talking to us so freely. We enjoyed our visit to this welcoming home. During our conversations staff described how supportive the local services were, including: district nursing, rapid response and the main GP. They felt the home could benefit from more one to one support from the community mental health team in helping with particular issues for individual residents, especially for those with more advanced dementia who may have behaviours that challenge, with individuals who no longer wish to take medication or those with long term complex mental health conditions.

### **Recommendation**

It is suggested that, as a matter of service development, the Home looks at what support might be offered from CMHT via specialist staff at Red Oak Lodge.

### **Service provider response**

Thank you very much for your report. I have read it and I'd like to thank both representatives for their lovely comments on our home, they were both very easy to talk to and we all enjoyed their visit, thank you also for your recommendation, I look forward to seeing you again in the future.

Kind Regards

Kim Murphy

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.

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