

The Lodge Care Home: Enter and View visit

March / April 2024

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About Healthwatch South Tyneside

Healthwatch South Tyneside is your dedicated consumer champion, working with users of local NHS and social care services to hear about your experiences, identify any issues or problems and help generate improvements.

We also assist commissioners and providers of healthcare services by conducting patient surveys, visiting healthcare venues, and attending meetings with user groups and feeding back our findings in regular reports.

Healthwatch South Tyneside:

- Has the power to enter and view services.
- Influences how services are set up and commissioned by having a seat on the local health and wellbeing board.
- Produces reports which influence the way services are designed and delivered.
- Provides information, advice, and support about local services.
- Passes information and recommendations to Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission.

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch South Tyneside has a legal power to visit health and social care services and see them in action, allowing us to identify what is working well with services and where they could be improved.

During a care home Enter and View visit we can gather the views of residents and their families, and report what we see and hear to help improve the quality of the services residents receive.

South Tyneside Council asked Healthwatch South Tyneside to undertake an Enter and View visit at The Lodge Care Home to observe how the facility operates and provides its services, and collect views from residents, family and friends, and staff on services. The purpose of the visit was to identify good practice and highlight any areas of concern.

Methodology

Our team of Authorised Representatives visited The Lodge Residential Care Home, Farnham Road, South Shields on 13th March and 5th April 2024.

The Lodge is a purpose-built two-storey residential care home offering residential care, dementia residential care and long and short-term respite care. It has a dedicated activities coordinator.

The provider of the service is Marton Care Homes Ltd, which owns and runs 14 care homes in the North of England. Their website can be found at

<https://www.martoncarehomes.co.uk/our-care-homes/>

You can access the latest CQC inspection report here:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-10771348285>

Our Authorised Representatives are trained to effectively capture the residents' experience. The Authorised Representatives who undertook the visit are:

- Arthur McKean, Vice Chair.
- Sheila Scott, Operations Manager.
- Bev Cook, Business Support and Engagement Officer.
- Barbara Tennet, Board Member.
- Tracey Grainger, Board Member.

The Enter and View visit was undertaken at the request of South Tyneside Council and was an unannounced visit (that is the home did not have any knowledge of our visit until we arrived on 13th March and 5th April). The areas we were asked to focus upon were:

- Personal care
- Choices
- Enough staff
- Response times.

At the visit residents were asked a range of questions (see appendix 1) based upon the request of South Tyneside Council and designed to reflect the objectives of the visit.

21 residents took part on the two visit days.

13 family members took part, ten of those were by telephone, and three on the visit days in the home.

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific dates 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.

After the visits took place a safeguarding referral was made to South Tyneside Safeguarding Team regarding concerns around one resident.

Summary of findings

Please note these findings represent a portrayal of what we observed and heard about the experiences of the service users on the days that we visited.

Personal care: Resident needs being met and quality of life.

90% of residents responded positively to this question. The two negative responses related to a perceived shortage of staff being the reason staff didn't come to help them when needed. Family member responses were more mixed, with 54% responding positively. The negative responses included: no facilities to take residents out of the home; personal hygiene with residents not always appearing clean; unkempt hair; deterioration in teeth with no dental checks; personal items going missing and poor room hygiene.

Choices: Enough choice around food and activities

Food: Those residents who responded about food were mainly positive, saying they looked forward to meals, it was good food and there was plenty of it. Only one resident said that the food choice was not good and although staff had been told about their personal preferences they were not always adhered to. Of the family members who responded to our question about food, 60% told us they were happy about the choice of food for residents with the other 40% telling us they did not think there was sufficient choice, especially for those on a special diet.

One commented "food like school dinners – not very appealing".

Activities: Resident responses to activities were mixed. Two thirds of those who answered were positive saying there was quite a lot going on and mentioned crosswords, regular quiz, dancing, baking and bingo. One third was less positive with reasons being not enough choice of activities, and others saying they were not encouraged to join in activities. Of the family members who commented on the choice of activities for residents, 63% were happy, and the others said their loved ones were not able to take part in activities and it was not clear how these residents were encouraged to take part.

Enough staff to meet residents' needs

Mainly positive from residents and family members, with some mixed responses where responses included 'mostly' or 'at times' with one resident commenting "there are a lot of agency staff. Not many staff on at a night time".

Residents feeling they are treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.

All 16 residents who responded to this question said yes. All ten family members who responded to this question said yes.

Response times: Do residents have to wait a long time for staff to see what they needed.

Of residents who responded, half said there were no issues, and someone came when needed, the other half said that sometimes they did and sometimes they had to wait of staff to attend to them.

Of the family members who responded, 75% said they had no concerns and staff responded in a timely manner, 25% had concerns around wait times as a result of being short staffed.

Any other comments on the stay / treatment at The Lodge.

Full details can be found in the detailed findings section below.

Residents' responses in the main were to state they were happy with the home and the staff – a couple highlighted that some staff were more attentive than others. They also took the opportunity to raise that there were no facilities to go for a day out unless they had family members who could take them.

Family member comments were more focused on their concerns such as staff not ensuring residents attend meal times, not managing incontinence in a timely manner, medical needs not being addressed as they should, bed bars not being engaged, lack of documentation and communication, concerns not being listened to, bedding not changed frequently enough, untrained staff, no opportunity for visits outside the home, personal possessions going missing, lack of dental support, clothes not being changed for several days.

Detailed findings

We spoke to 21 residents and 13 of their loved ones.

Our first question was around personal care. We asked if residents' needs were being met and they thought they had a good quality of life.

Resident responses

19 residents responded positively. Comments included:

"Can't fault the care."

"Carers are there if I want them."

"Feel cared for."

2 residents responded negatively and told us that staff didn't come to help them when needed and they thought the home needed more staff. One said there "wasn't a lot going on" and they stayed in their room and watched TV.

Family member responses

7 were positive in their response and said they felt their loved one's needs were being met and they had a good quality of life.

6 respondents told us there was room for improvement. Concerns raised were around their loved ones:

- Not being taken out of the home.
- Personal hygiene, not always appearing clean.
- Unkempt hair.
- Teeth deterioration with no dental checks.
- Personal items going missing.
- Room hygiene not good.

Our second question was around choices. We asked if residents had enough choice around food and activities.

Resident responses

10 residents were positive about meals, saying they looked forward to them, it was good food and plenty of it

1 resident said that the food choice was not good and although staff had been told about their personal preferences they were not always adhered to.

10 residents said there were regular activities and quite a lot going on and mentioned crosswords, regular quiz, dancing, baking and bingo.

6 residents were less positive with reasons being:

- Aware of activities from the poster on the wall but “couldn’t be bothered” to join in.
- Not enough choice of activities.
- Preferred to watch TV in their room.
- Three said they were not encouraged or helped to join in activities.

Family member responses

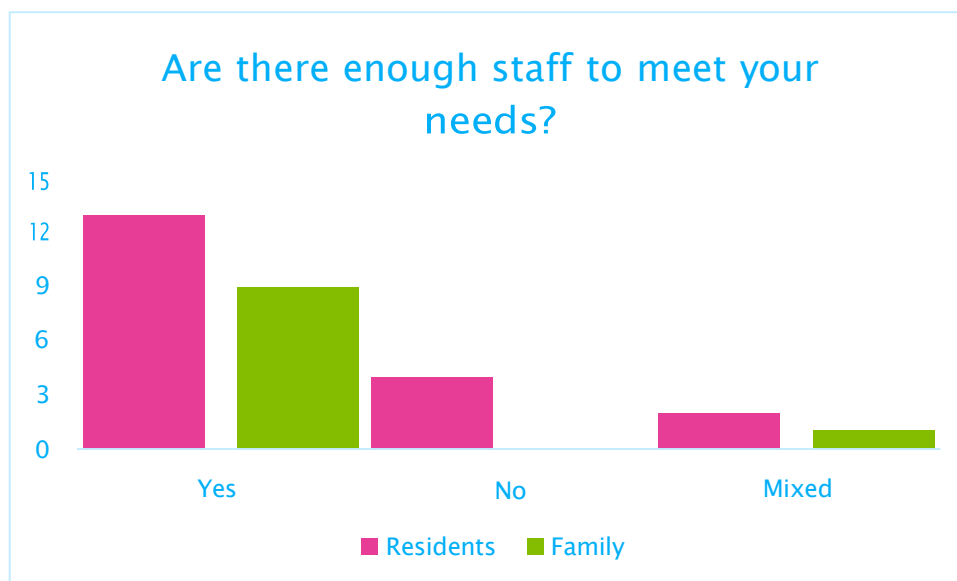
7 told us they were happy about the choice of food for residents.

5 said they did not think there was sufficient choice, especially for those on a special diet. One commented “food like school dinners – not very appealing”.

5 family members were happy with the choice of activities for residents.

3 family members said their loved ones were not able to take part in activities and it was not clear how these residents were encouraged to take part.

We then asked if there were enough staff to meet residents’ needs



Mixed responses were where responses included ‘mostly’ or ‘at times’ with one resident commenting: “There are a lot of agency staff. Not many staff on at a night time.”

We asked if residents felt they were treated with kindness, dignity, and respect.

16 residents responded to this question and all of them said yes.

10 family members responded to this question and all of them said yes, with one clarifying that there was just one member of staff they “weren’t fussed on”.

Our next question was about response times. We asked if residents had to wait a long time for staff to see what they needed.

Resident responses

7 residents said there were no issues, and someone came when needed.

6 residents said that sometimes they did and sometimes they had to wait for staff to attend to them.

1 said that staff don't spend time with the residents.

Family member responses

6 said they had no concerns and staff responded in a timely manner, with one family member commenting: "They couldn't be treated any better. Every person at The Lodge is friendly, fantastic, helpful".

2 responded with concerns around wait times and being short staffed, one mentioning assistance to support a resident to go to the toilet was not quick.

We asked participants to share any other comments on the stay / treatment at The Lodge.

Resident responses

"Always someone to talk to if you need someone."

"If I'm not happy I will tell staff. Very settled, family visit every day."

"Staff sit and chat."

"Only get out when family take me in the car – carers don't take anyone out."

"One of the best homes."

"If everyone in here is as happy as me, they will be alright."

"If I have a problem staff sort it. Family take me out. Very happy."

"It's lovely."

"If you ask them to put the bed right, they go ""no, that's keeping your independence".

"Very good and organised with activities."

"Quite happy. We have a good time here really. There are two people you have to be careful with."

"Some staff treat nicely, some don't. Don't like room – come out of it when I can."

"Sometimes there are loads of them. Other times there are none."

Family member responses

"Really good. Everyone looks after each other, nicely run and very clean."

"Constant battle. When I thought (resident) had an infection, nothing was documented. I requested to be informed of visits from GP or healthcare professional but not happening."

"(Resident) loves staff here – loves their cuddles."

"If (resident) needs any help or advice, the manager is extremely helpful."

"Home in need of a good shake up."

Concerns raised:

- Not getting residents out of bed in time for breakfast, resulting in a missed meal for the resident.
- Incontinence not being managed resulting in an unpleasant odour.
- Concerns about medical needs not being addressed as they should such as dressings for infections not being attended to in a timely manner, residents not being moved sufficiently often to prevent bed sores, residents lying flat rather than supported, need for antibiotics not being followed up.
- Bed bars not being engaged, and no alarm going off.
- Incontinence pads used leaking and not being fit for purpose.
- Lack of documentation.
- Lack of communication.
- Family members not feeling concerns are being listened to.
- Medical needs, such as pain management, not discussed with family.
- Stains on bedding indicating they are not changed frequently enough.
- Staff not being trained.
- No opportunity for visits outside the home unless the resident has a family member who is able to take them out, which limits the quality of life for those who are unable to leave the home.
- Concerns about personal possessions going missing, including clothing, toiletries, and personal items in their room such as photos.
- Concerns about a lack of dental support, causing problems at mealtimes.
- Nightwear not being changed for several days.

We were also told about an incident where a family member felt their loved one was not being treated with respect, and that the manager "sorted it straight away".

Whilst talking to some residents, our Authorised Representatives noted that their clothing was not always clean and felt that some stains were longstanding.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been developed, considering the findings outlined above. Healthwatch South Tyneside acknowledges these are not simple quick fixes, but from our observations are the areas where positive actions will improve the quality of life for residents and the interactions of the care home staff with family members.

- 1. Communication:** To minimise the chance of family members being unaware of medications prescribed, and actions taken where medical support is needed, there is a need for communication pathways to be established between the care home and family members so that both parties understand their role.
We recommend The Lodge develop an agreed process with family members to ensure they are kept up to date in future.
- 2. Staff and training:** Our findings clearly highlight the need for continuity of trained staff to understand and attend to the needs of the residents. Our observations as well as feedback from family members highlighted areas such as clean and tidy bedding and clothing, and appropriate medical checks aren't being carried out in a timely fashion.
We recommend The Lodge approach South Tyneside Care Academy which provides support and development in helping care homes create a well-led, skilled, and valued workforce, for advice and support.
- 3. Activities:** Some of the residents with more complex needs appeared to be missing out on activities and potentially not having the best experience in terms of care.
We recommend the Activities Coordinator and the staff team consider their needs and how they may be included in the activities held.

Next steps

Healthwatch South Tyneside will revisit The Lodge care home in six months' time from the date of this report.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch South Tyneside would like to thank the residents, family members and staff at The Lodge Care Home in South Tyneside who took time out of their day to support and contribute to our Enter and View visit.

Appendix 1

Survey questions provided by South Tyneside Council.

1. Personal care: Are your needs met? Do you have a good quality of life?
2. Choices: Do you have enough choice i.e. food, activities?
3. Are there enough staff to meet your needs?
4. Are you treated with:
 - a. Kindness
 - b. Dignity
 - c. Respect?
5. Response times: Do you have to wait a long time for staff to see what you need?
6. Any other comments on your stay / treatment at The Lodge?

Response from provider

In response to our report, the manager of The Lodge Care Home has made the following comments.

Communication:

“This process has been highlighted as not always being as effective as it should be following my own discussions with family members and apologies are to be given. We are currently arranging care reviews with residents and relatives so that this can clearly be identified within your plan of care as highlighted to ensure that we have a clear pathway recorded of how we are best to communicate with yourselves.

“We also discuss day to day within the team daily meeting any concerns in which we may have as well as the importance of ensuring that the resident and relatives have been made aware as agreed with any updates that have been given.”

Staff and training

“We continue to strive to ensure that our workforce is trained to the highest standard and following a team meeting the staff have requested the following training to be sourced:

- Catheter care training
- Oral Health Care training
- Continence Care training
- Skin care and wound care training
- Focus Under Nutrition training
- NVQ level 2 and 3 in Health and Social Care

“I have also contacted South Tyneside Care Academy to support with additional training. We now have a full Senior Care Team who have attended or will be attending the Marton Care Homes Senior Academy to support them within their role as a Senior Care Assistant as well as mentoring and coaching from myself and the Deputy Manager.”

Activities

“I will be holding bi-weekly meetings with the Activity Coordinator in relation to how we can best support our residents that are not always able to attend face to face activities, and how a more holistic approach can be adopted in supporting them in having meaningful engagement from our team.

“Alison, the Activity Coordinator, is new to the team and is currently finding her way around what community services she can link in to for the residents, any suggestions or support would be very much appreciated in supporting her in making good community links for our residents.

“We continue to support with daily activities and now that the weather is slightly improving we have been working with the residents in enhancing our outdoor areas for everyone to enjoy. I know that Alison and the team at The Lodge strive to ensure that all our residents are included but do appreciate that this is not always possible with some of our residents.”



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