Healthwatch Cheshire East
Enter and View Report

Enter and View Visit to	**New Milton House** **Station Road** **Alsager** **Stoke-on-Trent**
Date and Time	**14th August 2017**
Authorised Representatives	**Neil Garbett and Janet Lomas**
Staff Present	**Jaqueline Walker - Manager**

Background

Healthwatch Cheshire is the consumer champion for health and care services. It works as an umbrella organisation for both Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West and Chester. We gather the views of local people and look at information about how well local services are performing. We then use that information to assist residents and communities to be listened to by the organisations that provide, fund and monitor services.

What is Enter & View?
Enter and View is part of the local Healthwatch Cheshire programme. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) grants local Healthwatch representatives powers of entry, allowing them to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, dental surgeries and GP practices.

Purpose of the visit

As part of the work plan agenda for this year Healthwatch Cheshire continue to work in monitoring Nursing and Care provision across the area.

This work has the full support of health and local authority commissioners.

With this in mind, throughout the year, we visit a number of establishments with the intention of monitoring standards and continuity. This report is based on observations at the above service.

Highlights from the Visit

- Welcoming staff and residents
- A clean tidy, comfortable environment with a homely atmosphere
- Evidence of activities and events and community involvement
- Positive feedback from relatives
- The boxed profiles about residents (dementia unit) are excellent. Individual appropriate and demonstrate knowledge of residents.

General Information

New Milton House is located within walking distance of Alsager town centre, in an area of residential properties backing on to the town park (Milton Park). The home has been purpose built for residential care.
Formerly owned by Belong/CLS, the home was taken over by Minster Care Group in Late 2016. Although the takeover resulted in some staff changes the majority of staff has stayed on to work at the home under TUPE arrangements.
It provides 39 single rooms (none en-suite) and at the time of our visit had 38 residents.
New Milton House is registered to care for people with dementia, old age, physical disability and provides respite as well as full time residential care.
The home is split into two sections – Residential and Specialist Dementia although there is interaction between the two parts.

In its last CQC inspection, May 2015 (completed under previous ownership) the home was rated as good in four areas (Safe, Caring, Responsive and Well Led) and Requiring Improvement in one area (Effectiveness).

Representatives arrived at 9.40 a.m. and were welcomed by manager Jacqueline Walker who introduced us to the home and told Representatives about recent activity, including the change of ownership which took place prior to her appointment. She told us about a recent Summer Fair that had raised a considerable ammount for the residents comfort fund.

Throughout the visit we spoke to other members of staff who all appeared open and honest and showed a willingness to be helpful in showing us things and answering our questions.

Environment

The home was purpose built for residential care with a car park at the front of the property. Signage is appropriate and the reception was easy to locate. The entrance was accessed by a buzzer and keypad with a member of staff letting the Representatives in. In the entrance hall itself there was a signing in book and statutory notices displayed along with a current newsletter.

We felt that it was a welcoming entrance area. The office areas and entrance hall were clean and tidy.

A main lounge downstairs was furnished with various types of seating in good condition. We felt that this was a bright, airy area – part of which was a conservatory and

overlooking a neat garden to the rear of the property. The lounge was clean, tidy and nicely decorated with a selection of artwork displayed. There were no unpleasant smells. All residents spoken to said they were happy with the facilities and environment.
The dining room had a laminated floor and several tables set in fours. We were told that residents had the freedom to eat here or in their own rooms. The dining room had a separate "movie area" with comfortable seating in front of a wide screen television. Also off from the dining area was a computer set up for residents to use although we were told that there is currently little take up of this opportunity.

The dementia unit is situated next to a garden which has seating and a water feature and other sensory plants such as lavender, heuchena and lambs leaf plants and character attractions – plastic and stone flowers and ornaments. This area overlooks the town park. There was evidence of residents being involved in planting – growing sweet peas. Representatives feel that more could be done to enhance this valuable outside space with additional seating, raised beds, baskets and tubs.
In another courtyard area there is an established greenhouse with plants and tomatoes growing. We were told by staff that residents are encouraged to be involved in this gardening activity and equipment is available for them to use.

'Days gone by' – The dementia unit has one lounge room decorated and furnished in a 'Days gone by style.'

There was no one using this room at the time of the visit but we were told that one resident thinks this is her own lounge and does like to visit and sit in the room.

Additional Observations –

- Bathrooms and toilets seen by Representatives appeared clean tidy and clutter free.
- Representatives felt that the signage on lift controls could be updated to be made more user-friendly.
- Representatives noted that hoists and equipment were stored appropriately and that the home was free of clutter.

Health and Wellbeing

Representatives were told that access to the doctors, chiropodists, dentists and opticians was not an issue. There are two GP surgeries that are accessed and we were told that the doctors who visited were, ***"Brilliant."***

The home is participating in the 'Herbert Protocol' (Useful information on a vulnerable person going missing) and the End of Life Partnership (established to meet specific outcomes which support staff and organisations to achieve their purpose in relation to quality, effectiveness, equality and efficiency in palliative and end of life care).

One lady resident said that she felt well looked after but felt that, ***"There wasn't enough staff sometimes."*** She commented that she had pressed the call buzzer previously as she wanted to go to the toilet but said, ***"Staff can't always get to you in time."*** She said that these were, ***"Little niggles,"*** but that, ***"Staff do all they can!"***

Food / Meals - Representatives spent some time with the chef and an assistant. There was evidence of homemade scones being made was mouth-watering. We were told that mid-morning and mid-afternoon drinks were often accompanied with homemade cakes and cookies. We understand that sherry was on offer in an evening if the residents wished.
The chef spoke about providing menus for people with diabetes, coeliac disease, gluten free allergies and individual preferences for food items. A meal plan is available for the residents but it wasn't yet filled in on the morning of our visit.
We were told that periodically the home organises 'themed' meals – these included Mexican, Egyptian and a Chinese theme and plans are underway for a Hawaiian night. We were told that a BBQ and summer fair had been held earlier in the summer.

Additionally we were told that alternative choices from the main menu are available e.g. jacket potatoes, soup and sandwiches etc. and that visitors may stay for a meal with their relative if this is planned.

Activities – There are activities and events planned by the two activity co-ordinators for the residents to access. We were told that the two units in the home interface with each other with some residents from the dementia section guided to the main lounge for singing.
There is a written plan for activities on the notiecboard in the hallway and we were informed of trips outside of the home to theatre shows and village community events.

One resident told us, ***"I would like to go out more often."*** Another said to us that she goes out once a month with her son and when she does a member of staff goes with them.

Featured on the activities programme are quizzes, puzzles, cookery, crafts, art, singing, gardening, cinema corner, computer corner, sewing club and cheese and wine tasting evenings. A church service is also available.

We were told that there is some input from the local community to the home – Beaver Scouts and pupils from the local school visit voluntarily helping with quizzes, gardening and karaoke.

The home has good links with local churches with clergy visiting on a regular basis.

Representatives understand that a Blackpool illuminations visit is planned for the Autumn.

While we were at the home we viewed a singing session led by the activities co-ordinator and in the dementia unit we observed residents being encouraged to complete a jig-saw puzzle.

We were told that a hairdresser visits once a week.

Feedback

Representatives spoke to family members of one resident who were keen to talk to us about the care their loved one was receiving. They had experience of a number of local care homes previously and thought Milton House was fantastic by comparison. They felt that their relative received excellent care and were really pleased.

"There is always something going on here."
"At first mum told us that all she wanted to do, was to go back to her home and we were really worried. Then everything changed after a couple of days and now all she wants to do is be here." They commented that they felt all the staff, ***"Were excellent, caring and committed to residents needs."***
"We visit regularly, here maybe three times a week. We always come to the events here particularly when they have a singer in. The cook and other staff work really hard to put things on like special nights. In a few weeks I believe there is going to be a Hawaiian evening and we shall definitely be coming to that. A lot of the staff give of their own time to do the best they can for the residents."

One of the relatives had taken photographs of a previous "singer" event and was able to share with Representatives. They further commented, ***"Other trips out had been organised - to the theatre to see Grease and Mamma Mia."***

When asked about any problems they had encountered regarding their relatives care they commented that any issues (and they had only been minor ones), ***"Had been dealt with promptly and well."***
One lady commented ***"I am very happy here - as long as I get my daily paper and the odd cuppa I'm satisfied."***

A member of staff in the dementia unit commented that she enjoyed the work looking after residents and keeping them active. She had arranged some jigsaw activities for that morning. Another member of staff also commented on her training and was proud that she had now achieved her NVQ level 2 – she said that she would like to take this further.
In the main lounge a representative spoke to a lady who was visiting her old neighbour – now a resident in the home. She commented that she came regularly at least once every two weeks. She always found the environment, ***"lovely"*** and felt the staff were very good. She said, ***"I would be happy to be here if I needed care. All the residents are always well dressed and well looked after."***

A resident spoken to said she enjoyed mealtimes when everyone was together. A group of ladies said that they enjoyed having a glass of sherry and that staff, ***"Looked after us well."***

Additional Comments

Representatives would like to thank Jaqui and her staff for welcoming us to the service and taking time to answer our questions.

Suggestions for improvement

- Greater range of memorabilia artwork displays – Movie posters, Album sleeves, Pictures of old Alsager, Crewe, Congleton
- Better use of existing display areas re information boards
- Improved structure to activities- including use of pictures, photographs of weekly/monthly activity programme to let people know what is planned.

- Further development of the sensory garden. Consider use of volunteers who like gardening e.g. – students from Reasheath College.
- Develop activities and interactions using IT including use of ipads again this activity could be enhanced with input from volunteers and students but would enable residents to access the raft of information online.

Feedback from Provider of Service
Neil and Janet were both very professional throughout their visit. Residents and relatives fed back that they were very friendly and approachable. ***They provided information as to the background and need for Health Watch visits.*** ***Recommendations from the report will be followed:*** • ***Activity co-ordinators will look at better displays for activities and make better use of information boards.*** • ***Signage in lift will be made much clearer for residents to understand.*** • ***Further plans are being developed for the sensory garden.*** ***JACKIE WALKER - HOME MANAGER - 13TH SEPTEMBER 2017***