

Wandsworth LINK

Older People's Enter and View report following our visit to a service, including our observations and pulling together the comments made to us in interviews with patients/residents, their family and friends and with staff

Hospital ward/care home visited : Heritage Care Home

Date of visit(s): 30 November 2011

Interviewer(s) : Alison Tomlin, Jenny Purkis, Peter West

Summary - What we found that residents think of the service :

Many of the 15 residents we spoke to had dementia so it was not always easy to interpret how they viewed the services provided.

We assessed, however, that residents when it was possible to elicit their preferences, were given choice and control over aspects of their care such as clothing, where to sit, what to eat, and how to spend their time. Where they could, they felt free to be critical and give their opinions and felt that they had been listened to. We noted very individualised and sensitive care being given and were impressed by attempts to promote their individuality through the use of memory books, involving relatives and friends, and the placing of photographs on residents' room doors with a brief description of their background.

Some of the residents, who were able to, expressed very positive views about the care they received; others were more negative but usually more because of the limitations that their own condition was felt to impose on them.

We heard and saw how residents had been supported in making their rooms their own territory where they took meals when they wanted to or where they could pursue their interests such as listening to classical music. A lot of effort had been made to identify individual activities for some residents such as walking outside on the common, daily newspaper. However, there were still some more able residents that did not have any activities they wanted to participate in.

Summary -What we found that friends/family think of the service :

We spoke to the relatives of 7 of the residents we had interviewed and got very good feedback about the care being provided. They were very positive about the skills and quality of staff and the manager and the close communication they had with them.

They appreciated being welcomed to the Home and the regular social events which involved all the family.

Many noted the high standard of physical care for some very dependent residents. They reported one resident had gained weight when this had been appropriate another had lost weight where this too had been appropriate. Also mentioned were good monitoring of changes in behaviour with referral for further opinion, and confidence in staff to avoid bedsores, and supervise wandering and defuse aggressive behaviour.

Relatives felt very involved in care planning and appreciated the way any change was reported to them promptly. Some wished that staff would encourage residents more into taking part into activities but realised that residents often chose not to participate and there was a small grumble about the over -vigorouslyness of personal clothes washing.

Summary - What we found that staff think of the service :

We talked to 9 members of staff who were very positive about working at Heritage. They had high job satisfaction and had been able to learn a lot on the job which had helped them to progress.

Staff working on activities felt hard pressed but were attempting to cover group activities organisation and responding to individual preferences for things to do.

Staff felt that they worked well as a team and had easy access to good responsive management.

They were proud of their approach to responding to the different needs of residents, for example coaxing those who refused essential care such as bathing.

Summary of our general observations :

We made observations at lunchtime and found mostly very positive examples of care as follows:

+ve: There was a very nice atmosphere at lunchtime– it was personal, pleasant and homely. Tables were carefully laid. There was flexibility around eating arrangements, with some residents taking meals at the table in the lounge area or in their own rooms.

+ve: Staff serving food showed considerable sensitivity and patience in responding to individual dietary and other needs, comforting some residents, encouraging others to make choices, patiently feeding some and prompting others to eat by themselves. Residents and their relatives were clearly appreciative of the way staff helped them if needed.

-ve: In one lounge the television was kept on and this was distracting as most residents could not watch it in any event.

-ve: Residents could not always understand the accent of staff who were serving food, but this was overcome– e.g. by staff bringing them both puddings to choose between.