

# healthwatch Lewisham

## Enter and View - Beechcroft Care Home

Tuesday, 17th July 2018



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## Introduction

What is Healthwatch Lewisham?

Healthwatch Lewisham is one of 152 local Healthwatch organisations that were established throughout England in 2013, under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The dual role of local Healthwatch is to champion the rights of users of health and social care services and to hold the system to account for how well it engages with the public.

The remit of Healthwatch Lewisham as an independent health and social care watchdog is to be the voice of local people and ensure that health and social care services are safe, effective and designed to meet the needs of patients, social care users and carers.

Healthwatch Lewisham gives children, young people and adults in Lewisham a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are purchased, provided and reviewed within the borough.

Healthwatch Lewisham's core functions are:

1. Gathering the views and experiences of service users, carers, and the wider community,
2. Making people's views known,
3. Involving locals in the commissioning process for health and social care services, and process for their continual scrutiny,
4. Referring providers of concern to Healthwatch England, or the CQC, to investigate,
5. Providing information about which services are available to access and signposting,
6. Collecting views and experiences and communicating them to Healthwatch England,
7. Working with the Health and Wellbeing board in Lewisham on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy (which will influence the commissioning process).

## Strategic Drivers

Our role is to support the voices and views of the local community and to ensure their opinions are taken into account when services are commissioned.

Part of our statutory responsibilities include carrying out 'Enter and View' visits to publicly funded health and social care services for adults, to hear the views of service users and workers. Our visit reports are published on our website and shared with the Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group, the Council's Scrutiny Committee, the CQC and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Beechcroft Care Home was inspected by the CQC last year and was rated "Requires Improvement". Therefore, we decided to carry out an Enter and View there to gather the views of the residents and staff members. Beechcroft was also flagged up at the Lewisham Safeguarding Adults Board.

This report presents the findings from our Enter and View visit to Beechcroft Care Home located on Brownhill Road, Catford, SE6 1AL. Beechcroft is part of the Akiri Care group and provides accommodation and care for people who require nursing or personal care. Examples of residents' conditions are: Dementia, Physical disabilities, disorder and injury.

## Methodology

A member of staff and one trained Healthwatch Enter and View Authorised Representative (AR) were involved in the Enter and View. The visit was carried out on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018 and began at 2pm. Beechcroft had been notified of the visit and had given their consent. However on arrival, the manager claimed that they were unaware of our visit and asked us to return on another date. The member of staff who originally agreed to the visit was located and confirmed that he had given consent. The visit then went ahead.

In total we heard the experiences of 5 members of staff and 8 residents.

## Findings

### Observations

Beechcroft House is a large Victorian property, arranged over two floors. It is situated in a mostly residential area, facing the main South Circular on the corner of Wellmeadow road.

The entrance consists of a small lobby with a table which displays menus and a visitor sign-in book. There was a larger reception which appeared to be used as an activity area and a base for staff. There was also a small separate office with a window for the manager. Following our initial meeting, we did not have any more contact during our three hour visit.

The décor at Beechcroft House was overall rather tired. Most areas appeared clean, but the carpet in the main lounge was stained, table cloths had holes in them and walls were scratched and marked. However, a member of staff did alert us to the fact that a refurbishment programme is planned. There was a strong smell of urine, this was most strong in the lounge area. Staff explained this was due to urine that had seeped into the carpet and that the problem would be addressed by new laminate flooring as part of the refurbishment programme as previously mentioned. The staff members that we spoke to, did not appear to know when the refurbishment would be taking place and we suggested that it was important for them to be made aware so that they can be involved in the planning to ensure minimum disruption to the residents.

The temperature at Beechcroft was acceptable. There were sliding doors opening into the garden to enable fresh air. Communal lounge areas had good lighting, but some corridor areas appeared slightly dark.

The noise level was satisfactory. The television was on in the main lounge and on occasion, the staff did not appear to hear residents who were trying to attract their attention. There were a few wires dangling near the television, which could be seen as a potential hazard. There was also a smaller lounge which was used as a quiet area.

As well as food menus being displayed, the activity rota was present, as was required notices by the CQC, a board that showed the weather and photos of the residents. Items that the residents had made during craft class were on display. Additionally, each resident had their name and picture displayed on their bedroom door.

During our visit to Beechcroft, we observed that staff were friendly and responsive to us. However, we noticed that staff did not always appear to notice things and were not always responsive to the needs and preferences of individual residents in a proactive way. Some examples include:

- One resident who had had a stroke, was leaning out of her wheelchair.

- Another resident who we interviewed was lying back and frequently pulling herself up as she was in discomfort. Once we alerted staff, they did attempt to make her more comfortable.
- We spoke to a resident who was upstairs, bed bound and unable to move independently. We noticed that his call bell was out of reach. When we asked him how he alerted staff to his needs, he said he would just call out until somebody came.

## 🎤 Patient Interviews

### Living at Beechcroft

The majority of the eight residents said that they enjoyed living at Beechcroft.

*"I'm comfortable here."*

*"You have to live here to know."*

*"Fine been here two years. I was glad to come. Excellent food, very good."*

### Living environment

Most of the residents agreed that Beechcroft was comfortable and secure. One lady spoke of an incident where a member of staff had held onto her face inappropriately, causing injury. When asked what had happened to this member of staff, the resident said that they had been sacked, she had never seen them again and was satisfied with how the matter had been dealt with.

Other residents were quoted as saying:

*"Comfy and safe."*

*"Yes but it's not your own home."*

*"Not comfortable but liveable. I've never lived in this sort of environment before, it takes a bit of getting used to"*

*"Not bad, comfy bedrooms."*

### Socialising

During our visit to Beechcroft, we observed some residents interacting with one another and a few residents that we spoke to confirmed that they do chat with their fellow residents. However, we also observed some residents who appeared to have difficult relationships and directed negative comments towards one another. This was also evident during the patient interviews, where one resident said that other people's behaviour made it difficult to socialise.

When asked about opportunities to go out, comments were mixed. Some residents said that their family or friends sometimes took them out, mainly to church, with other residents saying that they didn't get out at all. There was lots of talk about a recent trip to the seaside, but one resident claimed that he didn't know anything about the planned trip.

Whilst we were visiting Beechcroft, we did not observe any visitors. Furthermore, although there were crafts displayed, we did not see any activities during our three hour visit. The residents also seemed confused when asked what activities they took part in and only seemed to remember big trips out (like the seaside trip that had happened recently.)

### Staff

There were mixed feelings towards the staff at Beechcroft.

*"I think they are very good."*

*"They bang doors and everything. Patients don't want to fall out with the nurses or they'll be the next ones."*

*"Very good, excellent. - there is one member of staff that I do not like."*

*"Sometimes they are a bit rough, some don't make coffee the way I like it, so I prefer not to have it."*

*"They are alright but could be quicker."*

Residents confirmed that staff helped out with their personal care, for example toileting and washing and most seemed happy with the care provided.

### Staff Interviews

During our visit to Beechcroft, we managed to speak to five members of staff. The majority of them were Health Care Assistants, who described their main duties as taking care of the residents including feeding and washing them. Their time working at Beechcroft ranged from 18 years to 3 weeks. We were also shown around by one of the team leaders who was happy to answer any questions we had.

### Working with the Residents

All members of staff that we spoke to said that they enjoyed working at Beechcroft.

*"I like the residents. The people are lovely."*

*"I enjoy making a difference, which is what it is all about."*

*“It’s rewarding to know that you have done something for somebody.”*

The staff believed that they knew the residents well and their likes and dislikes. They also listed a number of training courses that they had undertaken, including:

- Nutrition
- Safeguarding
- Mental health
- Health and Safety
- Manual Handling
- Food and Hygiene
- Dementia Awareness

### Services and Activities

All of the staff were happy with the administration that Beechcroft provides. It was felt that management and admin are good and co-ordinated. Staff explained that they try and give the residents a say in their care, but sometimes it is not possible, for example if the resident has dementia, they may not have the ability.

One staff member explained that residents will always have a choice in the food that they have. Another staff member shared that residents have different

- faiths
- music tastes

and that they are all catered for.

Although, as previously mentioned, the residents did not appear to remember of any activities that happened at Beechcroft, staff assured us that there is an activities coordinator and listed the following activities that take place.

- Arts and crafts
- Singing
- Quizzes
- Garden parties
- Dominoes

Staff were asked what other services work with the residents of Beechcroft. We were told that a number of local healthcare providers come in regularly including the GP, chiroprapist, mental health team, dentist and optician.

All staff that we spoke to said that they would recommend Beechcroft to their own friends and family.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

The staff that we spoke to at Beechcroft House all appeared happy with their roles and the way the care home was run.

During our visit, we were unable to get a positive sense of how feedback from residents, relatives and friends or others helps influence the work of the home.

Some of the people that we spoke to said they were happy about the service they received - "I'm comfortable here"; others said it was "OK" with one describing it as "not comfortable but liveable"; but there was also a sense that some people were less happy - "would you want to live here?" or "you have to live here to know" - or were reluctant to speak up at all - "I don't like to interfere" or "Patients don't want to fall out with nurses or they'll be the next ones". Where we were told about concerns, residents didn't want us to raise them with the manager as they were either satisfied that the matter had been dealt with or were not sure that it would make a difference.

With this in mind and considering the other points that we raised during this report, we recommend the following:

1. Deal with odour and cleanliness issue which had a negative impact upon the environment for care. If, as suggested by staff member, this is caused by urine soaked into the lounge carpet we recommend:
  - a. Progress the refurbishment programme ASAP (This was identified in CQC inspection August/ September 2017), ensuring staff are fully briefed to minimise disruption to residents;
  - b. Review continence management programme in the home
2. Encourage staff to be observant and responsive to the day to day needs and preferences of individual residents. This includes
  - a. enable them to engage in meaningful activities - having quiet time if they wish as well as to socialise with others;
  - b. Be responsive to changing health and related needs - teeth/ dentures; hearing; exercise;
  - c. Ensure the residents are able to alert staff immediately if they need help.
3. Review and actively promote all the ways that Beechcroft Care Home listens to residents, family and others and takes account of their views in improving the service so that everyone can be confident that their views are heard.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the staff and residents from Beechcroft Care Home who took part in the interviews. We would also like to thank our volunteer and authorised Enter and View volunteer Carolyn Denne, who helped to carry out the Enter and View visit.

Beechcroft Care home declined to comment on this report.

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