

# FIELDSIDE RESIDENTAL CARE HOME



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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.

# **OUR KEY FUNCTIONS**

- 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. This report presents the findings from our Enter and View visit to Fieldside Residential Care Home, located at 9 Canadian Avenue, Catford, SE6 3AU. Fieldside provides accommodation for persons who require nursing or personal care, caring for adults over 65 years. It has a maximum capacity of 34 residents. At the time of the visit, the care home was at maximum capacity and many residents had dementia. This report will highlight areas where Fieldside is succeeding, and areas that may need improvement.

The purpose of our visit to Fieldside was twofold. First, one of our priorities for 2018/19 is to hear the views of disadvantaged groups, including older people. The Enter and View visit allowed the opportunity to engage with a seldom heard group. Second, we recognize that Fieldside received a "Requires Improvement" rating in July 2018 from the CQC and we wanted to hear from people what progress the home was making.

# **METHODOLOGY**

Three permanent staff members and one trained Healthwatch Enter and View Authorised Representative (AR) took part in the Enter and View visit at Fieldside. The visit was carried out on Wednesday 6th March 2019 and began at 10am. Fieldside had been notified of the visit and had given their consent. They were also given leaflets in advance to distribute to residents, staff and family members about the visit and to provide further information about Healthwatch Lewisham.

In total we heard the experiences of eleven residents, eight staff members and one family member.

# **FINDINGS**

#### **Observations**

## Location

Fieldside Residential Care Home is a large Victorian house located in Catford, south east London. The home has a maximum capacity of 34 residents. It has a garden located at the rear of the property, and a car park located at the front.

Fieldside is very close to the South Circular Road and there are excellent public transport links. There are two train stations a few minutes away (Catford and Catford Bridge) and a bus stop directly outside Fieldside. One road over, outside Lewisham Town Hall, there are many more bus route options available. Fieldside is located on a residential street off a main road, but traffic noise levels are at a minimum.

Fieldside is located close by to the Catford Centre and the busy high street, where there are many shops and pubs available. There are ten dentists, ten GPs, thirteen pharmacies and four opticians located within one mile of Fieldside. There are a variety of faith groups located within the area, including Lewisham Islamic Centre and St Laurence Catford.

#### Inside the home

The door at the entrance to Fieldside was heavy and difficult to maneuver. However, the double locks and heavy door provide extra security. The entrance was narrow and would be hard to access with a wheelchair. The staff member who opened the door was pleasant and welcoming. Once inside, the entrance consisted of a small lobby area that was clean, warm and cosy.

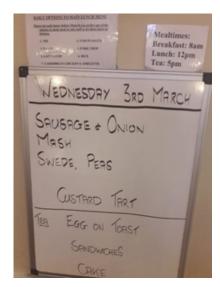
There was lots of information displayed in the lobby, which Healthwatch staff felt was difficult to read.
Whilst much of the information was very useful, for example, regarding complaints and fire procedures, it was dense and hard to absorb.



Information displayed in the lobby

Other information was displayed throughout the home, including:

- At the entrance, there was a sign-in book to welcome visitors, alongside a sign that asked visitors to avoid coming at meal times.
- In the lobby, the door was used to display news and upcoming events. For example, there was a poster for an upcoming party for a resident's 100th birthday. It was noted that this was a thoughtful touch and good use of space. However, because the signs are located on the back of a door leading to the lounges and bathrooms, it may be confusing for residents with dementia.
- In the dining room, the food menu was displayed. It was written in large print, however it may be useful to include images for people with dementia.
- In the large lounge, a full activities schedule was displayed. It was colourful, but not easy to read. Activities listed included a quiz, bingo, board games, dancing and chair exercise. Residents were also able to go on regular trips to the park.
- In the dining room, a small activities schedule
  was on the mantelpiece. The font was small,
  and it was placed with tables and chairs in
  front of it. The distance and size of the font
  made it difficult to read.
- In the hallway, a display board showed staff photos with names printed underneath. The names were in small print and the plastic covering the board made it difficult to read.
- We were also informed there is an electronic newsletter available for families and carers, but did not see it.



Food menu in the dining room



Activities schedule in the large lounge



Daily activity schedule in the dining room

The home was traditional rather than modern, and therefore there are some limitations on adaptations that can made to the property. Some images e.g. the displays of cigarette cards, seemed slightly faded. Other images displayed had religious connotations that might be reassuring for some residents, but less so for others. It may be that some images had been there for some time, rather than to interest or stimulate residents and make the environment more dementia friendly.

The temperature was warm and comfortable throughout the property. There was a slightly stale odour in the home. The door to the garden and windows remained shut preventing fresh air coming in, however, it was cold outside that day. The home was well lit throughout. In all areas observed, the home was exceedingly clean.

The communal spaces included the dining room, a large lounge, a smaller lounge and the garden space. The following observations were made:

- The dining room had music playing, which
  residents seemed to enjoy. There was an option
  of eight alternative meals (including Caribbean)
  if residents did not like the two main choices for
  that day. Residents could choose to eat in the
  dining room or lounge. Soft drinks were available
  in the quiet room and dining room.
- The larger lounge had chairs arranged around the outside of the room. This seemed appropriate as there was an activity taking place (local children from the nursery were visiting). There was also TV in the room.
- The smaller lounger was known as the "quiet" room. It had a big window that let in natural light.
   The television was playing in this room, which we were told by the manager was the preference of the residents. There was also a family member visiting a resident and using FaceTime.



Dining room

The only alternative and truly quiet spaces seemed to be either resident's bedrooms or the garden. It is suggested that it may be useful to have a space available in which there is no television playing, in the event that a resident

with dementia is in distress, or presents challenging behaviour and staff are called upon to deal with this.

 An enclosed patio area/conservatory led to a large garden. Residents were able to go out to the garden to smoke. The garden was plain, with a lack of flowers. Furniture in the garden was slightly damaged and paint was peeling off.

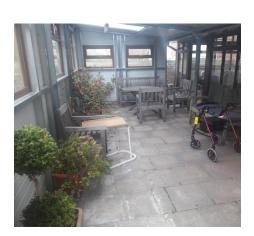




Garden furniture



Garden



Garden furniture

Conservatory

All communal rooms were accessible and had accessible toilets located nearby. Toilets were suitably adapted with fitted handles. There was a working lift for movement between floors. Fire exits were clearly labelled.

#### **Residents' interviews**

Residents varied in their needs, abilities and the ways they communicate. Many were sleeping, some found it difficult to communicate and one resident did not want to engage with us. On the other hand, many were friendly, chatty and smiled or said hello as we walked through the home.

We spoke to eleven residents in total, and observed a further two residents with communication difficulties.

# Living at Fieldside

The majority of residents made very positive comments about living at the home.

'I think it is absolutely lovely. The temperature is good, the food is nice and I can have the TV on when I want in my bedroom.'

'People are involved, things are good and happy. Plenty of activities.'

'It's nice - everyone is very sociable. You can talk to everyone. It's very friendly.'

'Yes, enjoy it 24 hours!'

One resident was particularly negative about living at Fieldside, stating: 'I don't enjoy living here, I find it boring. No activities.' The resident was dissatisfied with the activities available, telling Healthwatch staff there are 'not enough books, I like to read.' Healthwatch staff observed books in the dining room, but no bookcase, indicating limited choice. This was discussed with the manager, who told Healthwatch staff that previously when there had been a range of books in the communal area, they had difficulties with books going missing. This point will be explored further in the recommendations at the end of the report.

Another resident responded that living at Fieldside is 'manageable' but did not expand on their answer when probed.

# Living environment

Likewise, residents had positive comments to make about the living environment at Fieldside.

'I feel safe. It's changed a lot since I've been here. "Got bigger" which has made it cosier.'

'I'm glad for being here but would prefer to be in my own place.'

'It's very welcoming, quiet and peaceful. There is no TV blaring.'

'I feel comfortable. I chat to the residents and get along with them.'

'I feel safe even though I am used to having my family around.'

'The atmosphere here is special. It's fantastic!'

'It's helped me out quite a bit.'

# Socialising and activities

During our visit to Fieldside, children from the local nursery had come to visit. Most residents seemed interested and engaged, with some asking the children questions, clapping to songs and singing. Other residents were dozing. Healthwatch staff felt there could have been more done to increase interaction between residents and the children e.g. providing residents with toys. However, the manager informed us that the staff member from the nursery that was particularly good at facilitating interaction was absent that day.

Once the morning activity was finished, the atmosphere in the lounge was less animated. Residents were observed having conversations with one another.

Healthwatch staff heard mixed responses from residents about socializing, opportunities to go out and whether residents felt they could suggest a new activity. The following comments were made by residents about activities and socializing at Fieldside:

'I do socialise, not with everyone, but I like people. Everyone knows me and I get to chat. Plenty of activities.'

'There isn't a lot of socialising. It can be difficult because of the complex needs of residents. I am hard of hearing. I talk to a few of the residents.'

'We can sing and dance here. Always music playing. Everyone loves dancing with the children.'

'We go out occasionally. I am very happy with the activities such as the quiz night.'

Furthermore, Healthwatch staff were informed many residents suffered from some form of dementia or memory loss. However, we did not observe residents involved in any specific or personalized activity. One member of domestic staff informed us that their role involved promoting reminiscence amongst residents, but was not specific about how that was part of a meaningful personcentred activity programme, asides from social interaction. It may be helpful for some staff to undertake training around reminiscence arts based activity, which would help bring in and stimulate new ideas. This would be particularly useful for residents that do not/cannot engage in the current activities on offer. For example, one resident told Healthwatch staff they felt like the other residents did not have much in common with them. This point will be revisited in the recommendations.

On the subject of trips out, the residents made the following comments:

'I go out often and the people are nice.'

'I have been out a few times on Fieldside's bus on trips to the countryside. I went to Whitstable.'

'I am able to go out when I want. I go out on trips.'

'There are one or two that I talk to more but we all go out.'

'We can go out to the park.'

Two residents told staff they did not feel like they have many opportunities to go out. When asked whether they felt they had the opportunity to change daily living or activities at Fieldside, residents made the following comments:



'I daren't suggest a new activity in case it gets rejected.'

'I'm happy with what we've got. Not aware of any meetings.'

'Now they've got used to me they'll change things if I ask.'

'Not sure.'

'I feel like I could suggest a new activity.'



Healthwatch staff did not observe a residents committee. Staff told us sometimes meetings are held with residents to collect ideas. In the lobby, a "Review Us" box was fixed to the wall. However, the feedback box was empty of forms, preventing people leaving their feedback through this medium. Residents' ability to leave feedback will be explored further in the recommendations at the end of the report.

#### Staff

Staff generally seemed friendly, caring and positive about working with people. Healthwatch staff did not observe any disrespectful attitudes or any practice where people were not treated with dignity. The following interactions between staff and residents were observed by Healthwatch staff:

- Staff were observed supporting residents appropriately with meals, for example, helping one resident drink juice comfortably.
- Staff members at times demonstrated appropriate, positive and meaningful relationships with residents. For example, one staff member put his arm round a resident who asked for coffee.
- Staff encouraged independence from residents. For example, one staff member asked a resident to sit themselves down, move back in their seat, feed themselves and drink their tea.
- Staff noticed and responded to spillages relatively quickly.

The following comments were made by residents about the staff:



'I like all the staff.'

'The staff are fair and make you very comfortable.'

'Approachable - well most are; some can be a bit grumpy. Some staff will get me to go to bed by 10pm; others don't mind if I stay up later and get myself to bed. I was asked about needs and preferences when I came in but some staff didn't know until they got to know me.'

'Yes people are friendly, we all talk to each other and have fun together. Staff are kind.'

'Nice, always a smile!'





'They are fair and make you very comfortable.'



# Access to appointments for health and care

Overall, the majority of residents had a good standard of appearance and physical wellbeing. Healthwatch staff were informed that the home has a resident GP and access to a hairdresser, who was at the home during the visit. Some residents also told us they continued to use their local GP, indicating residents can make a choice of which GP services they use. Also, we were informed a mental health team comes in when needed. One resident told us: 'the doctor comes in and is lovely.'

Residents were also asked if they had access to a nurse, pharmacy, occupational therapy and dentist. The majority responded that they were not sure, or did not know. One resident told Healthwatch staff that they could sort appointments in the office and another stated they could just ask if they needed something. This point will be explored further in the recommendations.

#### Staff interviews

In total, we spoke to eight staff members during our visit. Their roles included Manager, Deputy Manager, Domestic Cleaner, a work experience student, Care Assistant, Barber/"Domestic Reminiscent", Handyman and Hairdresser. Staff had worked at Fieldside from a range of six months to 23 years. We were told that many staff members, including the Manager, were longstanding employees. All staff were welcoming and friendly to Healthwatch staff and Authorised Enter and View volunteers.

Healthwatch staff were welcomed by the Manager on arrival, who was warm, friendly and open to all of our questions. The Manager explained to Healthwatch staff the circumstances leading up to the latest Care Quality Commission inspection. She told us she realises that she has to be realistic in ensuring that she can meet people's physical care needs and balancing rights and risks in a residential environment that does not provide nursing care, even if sometimes it means saying "no" to new residents.

# Working with the residents

"I've been here for 23 years, I love it. Some of the other staff have been here for as long as I have. We have become like a family."

'I've always enjoyed interacting and chatting with people. I enjoy meeting people and their family and friends.'

'Most of the people, they love me. I chat with them and know most of them.'

'They are like my family. When I'm on holiday I miss them and like to catch up on what's been happening when I get back.'

The staff felt they knew the residents very well, in particular those who had worked at Fieldside for many years. They also told us they feel supported in their work at Fieldside and that the service is well run.

# Training and service provided

Staff told us they had received lots of training and gave the following specific examples:

- Safeguarding
- Infection Control
- Fire awareness
- · Management training

Two staff members told us they had not had specific dementia awareness training in their roles (Domestic Cleaner and a work experience student).

On the subject of the service provided at Fieldside, staff made the following comments:



'If I compare Fieldside to other care homes I visit, I can easily say it rates highly. The care is a lot better, the food is a lot better. Residents are always clean and fed well. I do think there is a lack of staff available - the shortage of staff is due to funding.'

'I get on well with other staff, and have a close relationship with residents. It's all fun natured...The most important thing is that the residents are happy. I think we do that here.'

Also, staff were observed using a person-centred software on mobile devices. The system has been in place since last September, and is used for family meetings and initial assessments of residents. Each person has a record (including likes, dislikes and medical histories), which links their care plan to daily activities. Every member of care staff has a smart phone to do live updates. Photographs can be taken which can be added as additional detail to records. For example, if a resident has a bruise, a picture of the bruise can be uploaded as and when needed. Families are able to read the records and give their input. The Manager and Deputy Manager told Healthwatch staff that Fieldside's staff were still getting used to the system, but said that it had improved their service. They would recommend other care homes to use the system.

All staff but one stated they would recommend Fieldside to their friends and family. This staff member did not like the idea of care homes, but feels the residents are treated well at Fieldside. Staff made the following comments in response to this question:



'The manager is great. She takes care of the residents and assists too.' The staff member said that managers will step in, clean and feed the residents to ensure things are done properly and with due care.

'100%. Fieldside is a nice, friendly care home which provides great support for its residents.'



'Definitely, I looked at this home to put my mother in - sadly no vacancies at the time. I find this care home is better than most. Service is organized, never had any issues around communication or my visits.'

'If I was asked to put one of my parents here, I would definitely do. It is very friendly. There's a lot of care and love. You care as you would your parents.' This comment was made without prompt.

'Most definitely - if you want a friendly atmosphere - but it's not a nursing home so there are limitations if people need nursing care or have profound physical needs.'

# Working with the residents

Staff were asked to share their thoughts about the activities available at Fieldside:

- One staff member said that they are trying to provide meaningful activities, however, residents' needs can make this difficult, because some cannot walk or need to be lifted.
- One staff member praised the visit from the nursery. They told us that residents enjoy it and that there should be more activities to get people lively.
- 'Quite good. We recognise there are residents that aren't interested.
   We have tried talking to them and offering different activities, but they don't engage with those either. Generally, I think we provide a wide variety of different things for residents to get involved with.
   There's exercise classes, movie afternoons and parties.'
- 'When I'm here, residents always seem to be engaged in activities. Residents and staff interact well and seem to get on.'
- 'I think there is a lot of different activities for them to do. They are always singing and dancing, an opera singer comes in every few weeks.'
- 'I am able to suggest things if I want. Sometimes John holds residents'
  meetings and asks people to feedback with ideas about how things
  can improve.'

# **Family interviews**

We spoke to one family member during our visit, who was very positive about Fieldside. The family member visited their Nan three times a week. In particular, the family member made positive comments about the activities:



'I think the activities are brilliant. There are BBQs, Christmas parties and I can bring my dog in the summer. The manager told me "It's your garden as well".

The family member also remembered an enjoyable day out for Remembrance Day at Catford Broadway. There were workshops, dancing and school children attended. Staff at Fieldside had asked for family to volunteer on the day. The family member volunteered and Fieldside paid for their ticket and their son's ticket to the event.

The family member stated the routine at Fieldside had improved their Nan's quality of life, particularly in relation to dementia:



'She's living rather than just existing now.'



The family member was also complimentary of the staff. They felt that if they had a concern, it would be acted on straight away. For example, when their Nan arrived at Fieldside, she had a bedroom on the top floor, which they were unhappy with. They spoke to staff and their Nan was moved within two days.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, Healthwatch Lewisham staff and the Enter and View AR were impressed with the service provided at Fieldside Residential Care Home. The home was cosy, pleasantly decorated and extremely clean. Residents benefitted from a longstanding and caring staff team. There was a wide variety of meals available and activities on offer. Fieldside staff acknowledged that some improvements could be made to the activities provided and this will be explored in the recommendations. Through observation and interview, Healthwatch staff feel improvements could also be made to information displayed, dementia awareness amongst staff, the availability of a quiet space and the ways in which feedback is collected from residents.

#### Recommendations



# Information, signage and images

Communal information displayed and on offer at Fieldside ought to be made more accessible. Much of the information on display is in detailed narrative that could be simplified. Frequently, information is in small font that is difficult to read and lacks colour. Useful information such as the activities timetable was blocked off by furniture and made it difficult to read.

# Where possible, all communal information should be written in large fonts, use colour, images and be easily accessed. It should also be simplified.

Also, clear signage and/or information in the service guide regarding how to access health appointments would be useful for residents. This information is already present in the service user guide, however, it lack colour and does not use images. If it is not already in place, it may also be useful to have an easy-read guide widely available in the home.

Also, images of religious icons on the walls of the home may not be culturally appropriate for all residents at Fieldside.



# Dementia awareness

Improvements could be made to the environment in Fieldside to ensure it is responsive to people living with dementia.

Whilst many residents have been living at Fieldside for some time and therefore may be familiar with the building, the environment could be used to help residents navigate and also stimulate them as their condition progresses. This would also be helpful for new residents.

Staff may benefit from refresher training around dementia awareness.

The following links may be helpful for information about dementia friendly environments. There is also a link to the local Dementia Action Alliance which may be of interest:

- https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/assets/0000/4334/dementia\_friendly\_e
   nvironments checklist.pdf
- https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/supporting-people-withdementia/dementia-friendly-environments/video-environment-carehome.asp
- https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/
- https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/local\_alliances/9220\_lewisham\_dementiaaction\_alliance



Healthwatch staff welcomed the range of activities in place at Fieldside, and that the residents were able to go out on trips on the bus. The following suggestions are made to improve the activities on offer:

#### a. Person-centred activities

Training/refresher training around reminiscence arts based activity would be beneficial to staff. This may help Fieldside provide more person-centred activities for residents, with more meaning to individuals. This will help ensure that the home is responsive to all individual needs, preferences and interests. The following links may be of use, and Fieldside may consider contacting organisations for more information:

- https://www.age-exchange.org.uk/who-we-are/what-is-reminiscence-arts/
- https://www.scie.org.uk/dementia/living-with-dementia/keepingactive/creative-arts.asp
- https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia/activities/

#### b. Books on offer

Residents expressed that they wish more books and newspapers were on offer in the home. The manager informed Healthwatch staff that previous issues have arisen due to books going missing. It is suggested that trips to the library would allow residents to take ownership of and responsibility for the books and more choice.

# c. Garden improvement

It was observed that the garden at Fieldside is a great asset to the home, but could use some improvements. For example, more flowers and shrubbery could be planted, and the furniture could be renovated. This may be an activity for the summer that more able residents can become involved in.

#### d. Meal Times

During our visit, we observed a sign requesting that visitors do not come during meal times. Whilst we appreciate that for ease of procedure this may be requested, meals are often an important part of family life and in some cultures key social activity. We feel that some family members may wish to share this activity and if it is not already, ought to be discussed during the initial assessments of residents.



## **Quiet Space**

In all of the communal spaces observed, television or music was present. The only quiet spaces were bedrooms and the garden. Whilst Healthwatch staff were informed that this was the preference of the residents, we feel it is important that a truly quiet space is available to residents, especially if they are experiencing distress.



# Feedback

Many residents stated they would be comfortable giving staff verbal feedback regarding daily living and activities. However, this was not the case for all residents. We were informed that occasional meetings were held with residents, but there was no evidence that a resident's committee existed and the feedback box in the reception was empty. It is suggested that the feedback box ought to be regularly stocked and an alternative medium for giving feedback, asides from verbal, should be in place.

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to thank the residents, staff and family members at Fieldside Residential Care Home who took part in the interviews. We would also like to thank our volunteer and Authorised Enter and View Representative, Carolyn Denne, who helped to plan and carry out the Enter and View visit.

# **RESPONSE FROM PROVIDER**