



Healthwatch Lewisham

Enter and View Report

March 2015

Contents

Introduction	3
Background	3
Methodology	3
Findings - Supported accommodation with registered care	4
• Access for Living	4
• Plus	7
• Aurora	9
Findings - Day Centres	11
• Mulberry Centre	11
• Ladywell Centre	13
• Leemore Centre	15
• Naborhood Centre	17
Conclusion - Day Centres	19
Acknowledgements	20
Contact	20



Introduction

Healthwatch is made up of 152 local Healthwatch organisations that were established throughout England in April 2013, under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The remit of local Healthwatch is to be an independent champion of local people; ensuring local people have a voice on health and social care, and ensuring 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 a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are purchased, provided and reviewed within the borough.

Background

People with learning disabilities should have independence, choice, rights and inclusion.

Healthwatch Lewisham visited residential homes with supported care and day centres for people with learning disabilities to assess if service users were being treated with dignity and respect, if they felt listened to and understood by their service providers and to see if services were person centred.

The visits involved a mixture of talking to residents and observing life in their home and the day centres that they use. A number of relatives and carers were also spoken to for their views during our visits as well as staff members.

Interviews were informal in style and tailored to the service users' capacity to respond.

Methodology

Healthwatch Lewisham spoke with 49 services users as well as family, friends and carers. We also spoke with staff from the services that we visited.

People that we spoke with covered a range of age, level of disability, gender and ethnicity.

Prior to the visits Healthwatch Lewisham created various communication tools to ensure communication with service users was appropriate and engaging, and consulted with Lewisham Speaking Up. When designing communication tools, the 'Guide to making Accessible Information' document, produced by the London

Borough of Lewisham, was taken into consideration as well as feedback from Lewisham Speaking Up.

Three Healthwatch staff members and six trained Enter and View Authorised Representatives carried out the visits to services on the following dates:

- Monday 8th December 2014
- Tuesday 9th December 2014
- Wednesday 10th December 2014
- Monday 12th January 2015
- Monday 26th January 2015
- Wednesday 4th February 2015
- Friday 20th February 2015
- Monday 23rd February 2015
- Wednesday 25th February 2015
- Monday 2nd March 2015

Findings - Supported Accommodation with registered care

Access for Living, Bargery Road

Observations

ARs all agreed that Bargery Road had a very 'homely' and 'welcoming' feel when entering. It was felt that the décor was a little 'tired' however was adequate. ARs were pleased to see photos displayed of residents around the home, however thought it may be nice to display a few more. Bargery Road rated well in terms of entrance, tidiness, lighting, odour, temperature and cleanliness however initially ARs felt that the television was 'fairly loud', ARs picked this up on both visits.

ARs felt that the level of staffing was acceptable however thought that perhaps an additional staff member could have been useful during the second visit.

Residents have a set day where they choose the evening meal which ARs were pleased to see. Each resident knew their set day and gave examples of what they had previously chosen. Meals appeared to be varied and included healthy options. On Sundays, a cooked roast lunch is made that residents help with. Staff told ARs that on Saturdays the residents tended to go out for a meal as a group. All of the residents told ARs that they enjoy their weekly 'Fish and Chip Friday'. ARs were

told by staff and residents that most meals were made 'from scratch' however oven and microwave meals were also available. A Nigerian resident was pleased that he was being supported to cook Nigerian food.

ARs observed breakfasts being served at different times to different residents, for example one resident was having his breakfast at 11:30 am. ARs felt that this gave residents choice of when they wanted their breakfasts, staff told ARs that some residents are early risers however one resident does not like to get up until later and then enjoys his breakfast later in the morning. Again, residents choose when they have their lunch. Evening meals tend to be more of a social occasion which ARs were impressed with. Each resident has a set day where they choose the evening meal, and all residents are encouraged to eat together.

Resident's spoke highly of staff members and thought well of them, describing them as 'very friendly' and 'very nice'. ARs found staff to be 'approachable' and 'kind' during both visits. Staff members appeared to know the residents well and had clearly got to know each of them individually, one AR commented 'she knew the likes and dislikes of the residents and the activities they got involved with'.

Residents showed ARs their rooms, which were described as 'personalised'. The rooms were all reflective of the resident's interests and likes.

ARs spoke with all five residents on two separate occasions; residents were engaged with ARs during both visits and appeared to enjoy the experience of being interviewed.

Interviews

Staff and resident interaction

All five residents communicated that they enjoyed living at Bargery Road and generally got on well with the people they lived with and the staff. Although two particular residents communicated that they have tendencies to fall out with one another. ARs witnessed this and commented that it caused a 'little tension in the house'. Staff were fully aware of this and have robust plans in place to deal with any situations that arise. ARs were informed that recently the residents had an altercation that resulted in one of the residents having to visit a doctor due to a mild head injury.

One resident spoke of a fellow resident 'he looks after me, and everyone here; he is a friend'. Another resident enjoys his own company and enjoys a fixed routine which is respected by all of the residents. One resident told ARs 'that is his chair' in a kind way, referring to the chair that this resident likes to sit in.

Food and drink

All of the residents felt that they were given healthy and varied meal options and enjoyed the food. One resident told ARs that he was a diabetic and a ‘fussy eater’ but was well catered for. He told ARs ‘I like to have bran flakes for breakfast and then a bacon sandwich at lunch...In the evening I like beef stew and Jamaican dumplings’. He told ARs that the Jamaican dumplings were an influence from one of his house mates. The resident commented ‘tonight, I am choosing the meal and I have picked pie, chips and mushy peas’. Further adding, ‘I don’t like peas but I love mushy peas’. This resident also told ARs that he enjoys ‘toad in the hole and potatoes’.

Another resident communicated to ARS that he enjoyed everything, particularly the cooked roasts that the group have together on a Sunday. He also indicated that he enjoyed fruit and vegetables. One resident told ARs that he enjoyed meal times at Bargery Road however ‘Fish and Chip Friday’ was his favourite.

One resident told ARs that he enjoyed Nigerian food however up until recently could not get this at Bargery Road. ARs were pleased that staff had taken this on board and now ensured that this was catered for. This resident did comment that he enjoys fizzy drinks however this was rarely bought at the home, commenting that only water or juice was regularly provided.

The final resident communicated that he likes a milkshake for breakfast with a yogurt and a biscuit, followed by toast and baked beans for lunch. His favourite evening meal is shepherds pie.

Health and Care plans

One resident was aware what a care plan was and told ARs that it was up to date. He told ARs that he had ‘angina and rheumatism’. He told ARs that he had ‘bad legs’ and regularly goes to his doctor and is provided with cream for his legs. He also told ARs that he visits the dentist at Kings College and that Access for Living arrange his transport. This resident felt that he was involved with his care plan.

The other four residents were unsure what there care plan was however did communicate to ARs when they had last had health checks, including visits to their doctor, dentist and optician.

ARs looked at random samples of health and care plans and felt that files were adequate and kept up to date.

Activities

Residents all seemed to enjoy their activities and gave ARs examples of types of activities they attend, including: arts and crafts, music lessons, swimming and bowling. ARs felt that these activities were quite ‘standard’ however were pleased

to hear that one resident had horse riding lessons which ARs thought was 'person centred'. However, ARs were informed by staff that this residents horse riding lessons had been stopped due to him waiting for an assessment with the physiotherapy team to assess his balance. He had been waiting for two months for an assessment and until he had this he was unable to continue with his lessons. Staff told ARs that he very much missed participating in this activity. The gentleman also indicated to ARs that he was sad to be missing his lessons, however still enjoyed watching horses on television.

When residents are not attending activities, they told ARs that they like to watch television in the house. One resident communicated to ARs that he enjoys watching football, and also enjoys reading. Another resident told ARs that in the summer months he enjoys gardening, he also told ARs that he liked the Royal Family and that he enjoys watching DVDs in his room.

ARs found that two of the residents were particularly close, and had formed a band together called 'The Bargery Boys'. They had joint music lessons every other Friday and told ARs that they paid £15 for their lesson.

One resident had a keen interest in music and told ARs that he played at a charity event at The Meeting Place. He showed ARs his CD collection and instruments.

Residents generally felt that they were encouraged to be independent and gave examples of choosing and helping to prepare meals and putting their washing in the machine. One resident told ARs that he worked on a Saturday at a local Salvation Army charity and another said that he often is asked to take part in interviews when Access for Living hire new staff and is paid a small amount for doing so.

One resident with mild learning disability told ARs that he 'really struggled' to adapt to life at Bargery Road after living on his own in a flat for a number of years.

Overall

Healthwatch enjoyed their visit to Bargery Road and agreed that residents were happy and settled in their home, and that staff had gotten to know each individual's likes and dislikes.

Plus, Springbank Road

Observations

ARs felt that there was a lack of information displayed and agreed the walls were 'bare'. ARs noticed the odd picture however felt that the walls could be better utilised to create a more homely environment.

ARs thought that the home was clean and tidy however did comment that the soap in the downstairs toilet needed replacing.

When ARs looked at support and care packs, it appeared that they were out of date.

Interviews

Staff / Resident interaction

One resident who was deaf seemed to get on well with residents and staff members however it appeared that often staff members were unable to sign.

On ARs second visit, there was only one male staff member on site for 24 hours. ARs were concerned as it stipulated in the female residents notes that she needed help with personal care including having a bath and washing her hair. When asked the staff member said that the resident did not need help with personal care however her assessment notes stated otherwise. This was something that was raised at the time of the visit and also to the commissioner. Again, during this visit, the staff member on site told ARs that he had 'attended a day or two day sign course a long time ago' however could not 'remember too much'. ARs felt that this could be a barrier for the resident who could only communicate in sign.

Food and drink

One resident has gluten free food and showed ARs his cupboard in the kitchen where they keep their gluten free products. ARs were told 'that on a couple of occasion's staff have given him none gluten free food by mistake'. This resident communicated that they enjoyed the food provided at Springbank Road. The other resident also indicated that they enjoyed the food, and enjoyed drinking tea and eating biscuits through-out the day.

ARs looked in the cupboards, fridge and freezer however on both days that ARs visited. The cupboards seemed a little 'bare' and they felt that there 'was not much of a selection of healthy foods available'.

Activities

One resident told ARs that they enjoyed cycling, swimming, bowling, arts and crafts and using their laptop. This resident also communicated that he helps to load the dishwasher and bring his washing down which helps him to be independent. He told ARs that he goes to Wesley Hall every Monday and to Gateway on Tuesday evenings.

Health and Care plans

Residents were not aware of their health or care plans and were not able to articulate when they last had health checks. When ARs checked their personal files, it was apparent that the files were not up to date or in any form of order.

Overall

Although there were areas of good practice at Springbank Road, Healthwatch Lewisham feels that there is room for improvement and suggests the following recommendations to Springbank Road:

1. Ensure that resident files are up to date and filed in an orderly fashion
1. Ensure that residents assessments are taking place
2. Ensure that resident are having their regular health checks
3. Display recycling boxes and encourage residents to recycle
4. Ensure that all staff have regular sign language training
5. Display signs through-out the house
6. Display additional photos and information through-out the house

Aurora Options, Burnt Ash Hill

Observations

ARs were very impressed by the ambience and tidiness of Burnt Ash Hill and rated it as excellent. ARs also rated the décor as excellent and felt that the photos of residents displayed throughout the house added to the 'homely' environment. Residents clearly felt 'at home' and 'relaxed' in their home, and could 'come and go as they pleased'.

ARs observed evening meals being served and commented on the 'delicious smell' and described the meals as looking 'appetizing'. Meals being served were described as a 'good evening meal' as well as 'healthy'. Evening meals seemed to be a social event for residents as they all sat together round the dining table.

The fridge, freezer and cupboards were well stocked with a variety of foods, and ARs were impressed to see a recycling bin for different materials clearly displayed and labelled and saw residents being encouraged to recycle.

Interviews

Staff and resident interaction

Over the two visits ARs spent a good amount of time speaking with all of the residents. Residents spoke highly of staff and their experience of living there. Residents told ARs that staff spend time speaking to them and getting to know them. Residents said that staff call them by their preferred name and treat them

in a friendly and respectful manner. One resident said ‘the staff here are nice and friendly’. All residents told ARs that they felt listened to and understood by staff, one told ARs ‘they always listen to me and speak to me on the left ear as I am a little hard of hearing’.

Food and drink

All residents spoke highly of the meals prepared and told ARs that they ‘thoroughly enjoyed’ the meals there. One resident said that they ‘loved coke and Kentucky Fried Chicken’ as a treat but also like healthy foods saying ‘tonight we had roast potatoes with garlic, Yorkshire pudding, pork chops and mint sauce’, and went on to say ‘sometimes we have takeaway at the weekend’. Another resident said that they ‘liked everything’ and felt that they were given a good selection of food. Another said ‘I like to have a cooked breakfast or toast or cereal in a morning, then a sandwich or something from a tin for lunch; I usually see what I can find in the cupboard’. Another resident said ‘I like something small for breakfast then spaghetti on toast for lunch and something with vegetables in the evening’. Another person told ARs that they are offered a good selection of sandwich fillings for lunch. Another resident said ‘we have a big fruit bowl so we can eat fruit through-out the day too; I like to have pears’. All residents had a good understanding of healthy foods and what their diet should be made up of, and spoke of enjoying takeaways and fast food as a treat.

Residents also told ARs that they enjoyed a glass of red wine or a bottle of beer in the evenings and enjoyed to sit with other residents in the evenings and equally enjoyed spending time in their rooms whilst enjoying an alcoholic beverage.

Residents were full of excitement when they spoke of their cooked roast lunches on Sundays and enjoyed helping to prepare meals. Residents also had set days where they could choose meals for other residents. One resident said ‘I love spicy food like curry or chilli but no one else really likes it, but I do get to have them sometimes’. Residents also enjoyed their ‘Fish and Chip Friday’, and again enjoyed the social aspect of it.

Activities

Residents all seemed to have full diaries during the week of activities and things to do. One resident said ‘I like parties and going to the clubs; I also like reading and being in my room’. This resident said that they particularly like to spend time with another one of the residents. Another resident told ARS that they enjoy ‘gardening, walking, bowling, bingo, reading the newspaper, table tennis and watching television’. This resident gave details of his weekly schedule that included going to an evening club at Leamore on a Monday evening, going to Gateway on a Tuesday and attending an arts and craft workshop on a Wednesday. This resident also attended church on a Sunday and worked on a Saturday as a

cleaner. Another resident said that they enjoyed activities provided by Age UK, attending Bobby Dazzlers and doing their banking on a weekly basis and said ‘I think there is enough activities for me to do when I am out and about, and I enjoy being in the house too’. Another resident told ARs ‘there is enough to do here; I go out and enjoy activities’. Another resident told ARs that they enjoyed ‘going to the local pub’. One resident told ARs that took part in various activities and regularly visited their fiancé in Victoria. One resident said that they ‘walk down to Lee Green Community Centre’ for exercise classes and enjoyed ‘knitting, painting and Bobby Dazzlers’.

Health and Care plans

Most residents did not seem aware of their health and care plans when asked, however did say that they felt confident that this was looked after by Aurora Options. One said ‘I’m sure they have everything in hand’. ARs looked at a sample of health and care plans, as well as other information relating to residents. ARs were impressed with the thorough information that was kept on each person and described them as ‘very detailed and upto date’. ARs saw that files were kept neat and chronological order. ARs saw that a hospital appointment had been updated in one resident’s folder after attending just the afternoon before. ARs felt that this was best practice.

Overall

Healthwatch Lewisham was incredibly impressed with what they saw at Burnt Ash Hill and feel that the home is a shining example of areas of best practice.

Findings - Day Centres

Mulberry Centre

Observations

ARs felt that from the outside, the Mulberry Centre did not look ‘welcoming’ or ‘appealing’ and that the building looked ‘closed’, however once arriving in the building all of the ARs rated the reception and décor as either good or excellent. ARs felt that the décor throughout the building was ‘bright’ and ‘welcoming’ however a little ‘worn’ in places.

ARs felt that although information displayed was ‘adequate’, information boards could be better utilised. ARs noticed that in one corridor, there was an empty display board.

Although the noise level was sometimes a little ‘lively’, ARs felt that it was appropriate and added to the ‘happy’ and ‘friendly’ environment.

Although ARs did not observe food being served at lunch, they commented that the food smelled 'good' and 'appetizing'.

ARs felt that generally staff interacted well with service users, and some staff members clearly knew their service users well and were well thought of by their service users. ARs witnessed a number of staff members using sign to service users, and encouraging service users to sign. ARs were impressed with the sign templates displayed around the centre and felt that this was 'good practice'.

Interviews

Staff / service user interaction

ARs spoke with nine service users at the day centre. All nine service users told ARs that staff members call them by their preferred name and that they found staff 'friendly' and 'helpful'. One service user described the staff as 'good folk' and said 'they always take time to speak to us'.

Service users told ARs that they felt that they did have a choice of what to do at the day centre, however some indicated that sometimes there was a limited amount of choice.

Service users that spoke with ARs said that they felt that they were encouraged to be independent whilst at the centre, and gave examples of learning to iron, washing clothes, preparing and cooking meals, cleaning, and travelling on the bus.

Activities

All nine service users told ARs that they enjoyed the activities and gave examples of life skill based activities such as ironing, washing, cooking and cleaning, and gave other examples of dancing, singing, computer sessions, arts and music.

Meals

ARs were very impressed with the catering plans that Mulberry has in place, and how involved service users were in the catering. Staff members informed ARs that they promoted 'healthy eating' at the centre, and encouraged service users to eat lots of fruit and vegetables and to have no more than 2 or 4 cups of tea or coffee a day.

On the day that ARs visited, a group of service users had made polish meatballs, and they were clearly enjoyed by all service users. ARs were informed that on Tuesday they have a 'Sandwich Club' that was run by service users, and provided sandwiches that could be made to order. The Mulberry Centre have a tuck shop based at the Waldron Centre which is also run by service users, ARs visited the tuck shop and were again extremely impressed. Service users provided a friendly service that was clearly well thought of by the people using the tuck shop. Service

users running the tuck shop were passionate about their work and put a lot of effort into making sandwiches and serving refreshments.

ARs asked the nine service users that they spoke to if they enjoyed the food provided at the centre, and all nine replied that they very much enjoyed the food, and felt that there was a good variety and that they were encouraged to eat and drink healthily.

Travel

All nine service users told ARs that they felt safe travelling to and from the day centre. One told ARs that they travelled by the 199 bus, four said that they travelled by a bus provided by the local authority, two said that they walked, one said that they got a taxi and another said that they were driven by the parents.

From the service users we spoke to, there was a mixture of how many days that they were able to use the centre for. Three service users told ARs that they used the centre for three days a week, and three others told ARs they used the centre twice a week. One told ARs that they accessed the day centre four days a week. Two service users said that they use the service every day. All of the nine people that ARs spoke with said that they thought that the days they had were enough however felt that a reduction would be concerning and upsetting.

All nine service users were really happy with the services provided at the day centre and really enjoyed attending the centre.

Ladywell Centre

Observations

ARs rated the Ladywell Day Centre well in terms of décor, tidiness, lighting, cleanliness and noise level. ARs felt that there was a good amount of information displayed however felt that this could be utilised even more. A suggestion from one AR was that a 'Who's Who' board could be displayed in the reception and entrance area. ARs were impressed with the creative displays and said that it added to the 'welcoming and happy environment' ARs felt that there were 'plenty' of staff around and felt that staff were engaging well with service users.

Interviews

Staff / service user interaction

All eight service users that spoke with ARs said that staff called them by their preferred name. Service users felt that the staff spent enough time talking with them. One person told ARs that staff speak with him 'only at lunch time' and when he plays bingo but he told ARs that he was 'quite happy doing my own thing'. Another person told ARs that staff talk 'quite a bit' to her and that she 'enjoys

talking to staff'. Another described staff and the other service users at the Ladywell as their 'family' and said 'I love everyone here'. This person told ARs that often they like to sit on their own but enjoys doing so and is happy as they 'know someone is there'.

Service users generally felt as though they were encouraged and supported by staff at the day centre. One service user described themselves as 'self-motivated', another said that they felt 'very much' encouraged at the centre to be independent however 'at home I don't have support to be independent'. Another told ARs that they are 'learning to look things up on a computer' which they felt encouraged them to be independent and said that being at Ladywell has helped them significantly. One service user spoke incredibly highly of the centre, particularly one staff member and told ARs that when they first arrived at the centre they were in a wheelchair however since being at Ladywell can now walk a little. This service user felt that the Ladywell Centre was key to this and encouraged her to walk and work positively with the OT, and said that they now had 'lots of self-confidence'. This person also said that they could now use a laptop and now used it to do online shopping. This was something they could not do before they accessed the day centre at the Ladywell Centre.

Activities

Out of the eight people that spoke with ARs, seven enjoyed the activities a great deal however one person felt that they could be improved. This person told ARs that they would change the activities when asked 'What would you change to make it better at the Day Centre?'. Another person did tell ARs that they 'missed cooking activities' however they did enjoy 'crafts', One person spoke highly of the IT class and had 'learned how to use a computer'. Although one person felt the activities could be improved, the remaining seven that spoke with ARs were very happy and listed off the daily activity schedules with excitement.

ARs observed the woodwork group taking place and were very impressed with the quality of things being made. Service users were in the process of making foot stools.

Meals

There was mixed feelings towards the food that was served for lunch. One person said 'the food its fine here, I can't complain'. Another described the food as 'lovely' and another as 'nice'. However two people were less complimentary and said that they felt the meals served weren't 'healthy' and were often 'lumpy or burnt'. Another said that 'there was never much on offer' and that they would 'like to try more foods'.

Travel

Seven service users told ARs that they travelled to the centre by the 'door to door' coach that was provided, and said that generally the service was on time however could vary up to half an hour. Service users said that this was not a problem and that they were very grateful that transport was available for them. One person said they would like to walk and found it 'a bit frustrating' that they had to rely on the door to door service. Another said that they have 'got a mobility scooter but comes on the bus as can only get so far on the scooter'. All service users said that they felt 'safe' when travelling to and from the centre.

One service user told ARs that they attended the centre five days a week, one said they attended four days a week, two said they attended three days a week, two said they attended twice and one said that they attended once a week. All service users felt that their days were enough and that they 'really enjoyed' their days at the day centre, however the person that came just once a week said that they 'don't do much at home'.

Leemore Centre

Observations

ARs rated tidiness, lighting, cleanliness and staffing as either good or excellent. ARs felt that the noise level was adequate and one described the environment as 'lively but not overwhelming'.

ARs felt that the décor reflected the services users and described it as 'bright and happy'. Another described the entrance as 'welcoming and colourful'.

Most service users brought in their own packed lunches and some opted to go out with staff to Lewisham High Street to get something to eat. On certain days during the week, a small team of service users prepare and serve food in the centre's canteen.

Interviews

Staff / service user interaction

Service users that spoke with ARs said that they were called by their preferred name by staff members and that they felt staff members spoke with and supported them. One said 'I like staff members'; another said 'they are friendly'. Another said that they thought staff were 'alright' however were 'sometimes busy'.

All service users that spoke with ARs said that they really enjoyed being at Leemore and when asked what their favourite things were about the centre, responded with 'everything', 'meeting friends', 'I like it here a lot', 'learning to do catering', 'the people', 'everyone here is nice to talk to' and 'it's great here'.

Service users had little to say when they were asked if there was anything that they don't like however one responded with 'some people shout a lot here and it can be too loud'. Another person said that they 'would like to eat healthier food' and would like the centre to be 'quieter'.

Service users generally felt that they were encouraged to be independent. One gave an example of 'the staff help you so you can do things by yourself', another said 'we get a script for drama then we get help to learn the words' and another said that sometimes they get the bus on their own to the centre which they felt encouraged them to be independent. One service users said that they were encouraged to be independent at home by helping with 'washing, meals and tidying'.

The five service users from Naborhood told ARs that their life plans were at Narborhood Centre when asked, however they all had an understanding of what their life plan was. One service user appeared to be very engaged with their life plan and went to the main office to show ARs their life plan however ARs saw that their life plan was a little out of date. Staff acknowledged that the life plan needed to be updated and reviewed. Four other service users did not seem familiar with the term life plan and said 'I don't know what that is', and another said 'I'm not sure about that'.

ARs were showed a sample of life plans and most seemed very accurate and up to date.

Activities

Service users that spoke with ARs all felt that there was enough to do at the day centre.

One service user told ARs that sometimes 'activities don't happen if there aren't many people in the group' or if a staff member is 'on holiday'. Four service users that spoke to ARs said that they 'only come on Fridays for drama' and used Narborhood Day Centre during other days. Generally service users that spoke with ARs said that they enjoyed the activities. Service users told ARs that they took part in the following activities: IT, preparing lunch in the canteen on Wednesdays, sign lessons, music, drama and art.

One service user told ARs that they enjoyed word puzzles and suggested that the centre could include an activity around this as others may too be interested. This service user also told ARs that they 'really enjoyed learning sign' and said that it allowed them to communicate better with other service users. This person said 'I like learning new things'.

One service user said that they would like to be involved in preparing and serving the lunches with a small number of other service users on Wednesdays.

ARs were particularly impressed with the quality of art produced and cards that the centre had published working with a local publisher.

Meals

Service users that spoke with ARs said that they brought in their own packed lunches however did sometimes go out for lunch too. One service user said that they liked 'rice and peas, and chicken and chips' from the local takeaway. Another said that they buy a 'meal deal' from the shop which usually includes a 'sandwich'.

Travel

Six service users told ARs that they received transport from the local authority and felt safe on the coach. All six said that the times they were picked up varied however they felt that timings were adequate saying 'I don't mind waiting around' and 'it's not normally really late or too early'. One person said that sometimes they get the public bus however felt better when they had someone with them. One service user had issues with transport and ARs discussed this with the Day Centre and were satisfied that the centre had the issue in hand.

Five service users said that they usually accessed Naborhood Centre and just came to Leemore for the drama activity. Three people told ARs that they attended Leemore five days a week, two people said they attended twice a week and one person said that they attended three days a week. All service users felt that they benefited tremendously from their days and felt that if the number of days they attended were dropped then they would not feel supported enough.

Naborhood Centre

Observations

ARs rated safety at Naborhood as excellent, and had strict procedures of displaying name badges at all times, and signing in and out of the building.

ARs felt that although there was no 'reception' area upon arrival, the entrance was 'welcoming' and displayed lots of artwork and photos. ARs felt that not having a reception area was 'confusing' however understood that this was due to the layout of the building.

ARs rated the noise level, lighting, tidiness and décor as good, and staff level as 'acceptable'.

ARs observed lunch being served, and described the food as smelling and looking 'delicious'. ARs were pleased to see a service user helping to prepare the lunch. ARs described lunch as 'lively' and 'sociable', and ARs saw that service users were enjoying their lunch whilst talking amongst each other and laughing. Out of the 16

people having lunch, one person needed assisted feeding and a staff member was helping out with this.

Staff explained to ARs that some of the service users bring their own packed lunches however the rest choose to have the meals prepared at Narborough. Lunch is only prepared at the centre twice a week and costs £3.50 which includes a main and pudding. During the visit that ARs attended, a chilli beef and vegetable wrap was offered followed by berries and yogurt. During the other days service users that don't bring in their packed lunches can go out for lunch. ARs were told that the local supermarket and fast food takeaway nearby were most popular.

Interviews

ARs spoke with 10 service users at the day centre, and all 10 were incredibly happy with the service being provided.

Staff / service user interaction

All 10 service users felt that staff spent enough time speaking with them and supported them. Service users told ARs that they liked the staff and thought they were 'nice' and 'friendly'. One person told ARs 'they spend lots of time talking to me'. Another told ARs that they 'have a laugh' with the staff.

Four service users told ARs that they felt they were encouraged to be independent. One person said that they had noticed that one of the toilets was not working properly which he reported to staff, a staff member then asked if he would like to phone the local authority to notify them which he did. Another person said that the signing that they learn in the reading and writing group encouraged them to be independent and helped them to communicate to other people. Another person told ARs that he felt independent by travelling to and from the centre on his own. One more person told ARs that they were encouraged to be independent by being able to help out in the office at the day centre and gave examples of helping with filing and planning diaries and activities.

Activities

ARs observed, and took part in an activity called 'Knock Your Block Off' which was being played by 10 service users during the morning. The sit down activity meant that everyone could be involved and join in; even those that were not mobile could take part with an aid that a member of staff had made for them. ARs described the activity as 'fun' and saw that everyone was included and enjoying themselves.

Service users felt that they had a choice of what they could do and were involved. Service users told ARs that they 'do all sorts' and took part in the following activities: London walks, music, bowling, drama, reading and writing, arts and

crafts and computer based activities. Service users that we spoke to knew the weekly set activities, and told ARs that they enjoyed all of the activities. One person said ‘I can choose what I do’. Another told ARs that they liked going to the Ladywell Arena to play sports such as ‘ball’ and ‘cricket’.

ARs were impressed by the music group, Uproar, which had been established by the day centre. Service users could take part in a variety of activities including; writing music and lyrics, singing, performing, helping with the music production and engineering and selling the music.

Meals

Out of the 10 people that spoke to ARs, 9 said that they bought in their own packed lunch and 1 had the lunch provided.

Travel

Six people told ARs that they travelled by the door to door bus that is provided by the council and felt safe travelling this way. They felt that generally the bus was on time however ‘sometimes can be late or early’. One person told ARs that they travelled by public bus, on the 202 or 75 and felt independent by doing this and said that they felt safe travelling this way. Another person told ARs that they walked as they lived nearby and also felt very safe doing this.

Two service users told ARs that they attended the Day Centre four days a week and five said that they attend five days a week. The service users told ARs that they felt that the days were appropriate however felt that they would not be fully supported if these days dropped. One person told ARs that during the day he wasn’t at the centre he liked to go to the bank which helped him to be independent.

Conclusion - Day Centres

Healthwatch were very impressed with all of the day centres and each one had its own qualities and quirks. Service users were clearly upset by the thought of the day centres being changed or closed, and a number of service users told ARs that they felt it would be detrimental to their health.

Healthwatch felt that there were lots of areas of best practice including:

- The Greenhouse Project at Mulberry; service users were in the process of making a green-house out of plastic bottles which ARs found very impressive.
- Life skills; a selection of life skills were taught and encouraged across the day centres including washing clothes and ironing, preparing meals, reading

and writing clubs, current affairs clubs and activities around what you can buy from the local supermarket for an amount of money.

- Art and crafts; some service users are clearly very talented at carpentry, arts and crafts. Examples were given of service users' work being sold. Healthwatch feel that this could be utilised even more by hosting stalls at events and in shops or even online to sell their work
- Tuck shop at Mulberry; service users gained a lot of experience in preparing sandwiches, serving to the public and managing the till and money.

Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Lewisham would like to thank service users, their families, friends and carers, as well as the staff who welcomed, supported and engaged with us whilst carrying out visits and producing this report. Healthwatch Lewisham would also like to thank Lewisham Speaking Up for their help and support in creating the interview tools.

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