

Enter and View Report: Victoria House Care Home



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Background

What is Healthwatch Warrington?

Healthwatch Warrington helps the residents and communities of Warrington to get the best out of local health and social care services. We gather the views of local people and make sure that they are heard and listened to by the organisations that provide, fund and monitor services.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View (E&V) visits. Local Healthwatch representatives, who are trained volunteers, carry out E&V visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) allows local Healthwatch representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, opticians and pharmacies. E&V visits can happen if people identify a problem. Equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation; enabling lessons to be learned and good practice shared.

Healthwatch E&V visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. If safeguarding issues are raised during a visit, Healthwatch Warrington safeguarding policies identify the correct procedures to be followed.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to the findings observed on the specific date of the visit. This report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users / residents and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time. Wherever possible, the report below is in the words of the E&V team members present at the time of the visit. The report has been collated by Crissi Morad as the visit lead and some of the text has been formatted to allow for easy reading. The essential facts of the team's reports have not been altered.



Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Warrington would like to thank everyone at Victoria House Care Home for their welcome, and in particular, Josmy Anish (Registered Manager) who made time to share information with the team and answer questions.

Purpose of the visit

We received some feedback on the home and were asked to see how they had responded to a recent CQC visit.

Details of the Visit

Details of the Service

Victoria House is owned and operated by W H Investments Limited. Located in a quiet, suburban area of Grappenhall, Victoria House is an adapted building that can accommodate up to 30 people, with personal care being provided to residents in accordance with their needs (some of whom are living with dementia). The Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted an inspection at Victoria House in February 2019. The overall service was graded 'Good' however there were some improvements required regarding effectiveness, mainly surrounding staff and understanding dietary requirements.

Location, Date and Time

Victoria House Care Home, Grappenhall

12th November 2019

11am-1pm

Panel Members

Crissi Morad

Clare Screeton

Dida Goode

Provider Service Staff

Josmy Anish - Registered Manager

Suzanne McNamee - Activities Co-Ordinator

Spotlight on Values

Victoria House's Philosophy of Care according to Victoria House's website: (<http://www.victoriahousecarehome.co.uk/>), the provider aims to offer its Residents a secure, relaxed, and homely environment in which their care, well-being and comfort are of prime importance. This includes maintaining an awareness of resident's ever-changing needs (physical, emotional, spiritual, etc.), as well as involving residents, their families and carers in the development of individualised care plans. In order to achieve this ambition, Victoria House has identified the following aims and objectives;

Our Vision

"A Life where every person is valued, included and empowered"

Our Values

Listen- Always with interest, concern and action

Inspire- Through Every Interaction so people can achieve their ambitions

Kind- Genuine care and compassion

Excellence- By striving to be the best we can

Integrity- Acting ethically and being accountable

Trusting- Rely upon us to do what we say we will do.

Therefore, Healthwatch Warrington's visiting team would expect to see evidence of these values strongly influencing 'lived experiences' at Victoria Care Home.

Results of the Visit

First Impressions

On approach from the main road, Victoria House is prominently sign posted. There is some designated parking at the home and visitors are required to park off-site (on nearby roads). The driveway and front garden areas appear to be tired and overgrown with fence panels missing and the back gate was broken. The home's main entrance is accessible via a set of steps. Disabled access is facilitated by 'grab handles' fitted at either side of the entrance and a wheelchair ramp to the right. However, the wheelchair ramp was not clearly advertised from the front of the building.

Entrance and Reception Area

Upon entering the home, we were greeted and asked to sign in, there were signs to say that the doors must always be kept locked for the safety of residents. On the door the homes mission statement was visible (as seen above). There was a hand gel dispenser on entering the property, however this was empty and could cause some infection control issues, although the home is not clinical. The entrance is very small and cramped; however, it feels very homely and there is a lot of artwork displayed from the residents. The floors throughout the home were uneven and most of the residents are living with dementia. We were assured by the care home manager that these will be replaced in due course.

Near the kitchen there is a board with staff members names and images, however this is extremely outdated and doesn't reflect the current staff which could be confusing for residents.

Next to this board there is a display board with Mass cards of deceased residents. Whilst this is a lovely gesture, the visiting team thought that possibly having just an image of the resident may be more tasteful.

Activities and Leisure

Victoria House Care Homes Activities Co-Ordinator appears to be doing a fantastic job with the residents and they all seemed happy, laughing and smiling. In one of the lounges there was a TV switched on to a music station, on entering 'Danny Boy'

was playing and all residents looked contented and happy singing along. The list of activities and stimulation sessions were very impressive. They have a walking group for able bodied residents, Brownie Pen friends who write residents letters and send arts and crafts. The residents are taken to a local charity shop and then a café for tea & cake. Each Friday they have a “songs of praise” session if residents wish to attend. There is also a group of residents that attend a coffee morning at a neighbouring home (Summerville) for a coffee morning once a week for a sing-song with the residents.

There are regular days out to Southport and Wales, and they display photos and keepsakes all over the walls, which is a lovely touch for the residents.

The activities at the home should be held as an example of best practice. It is clear to see that Suzanne appears to be dedicated to her role and enjoys her position.

When talking to her she explained *“I enjoy my job at Victoria house with such passion, I am here to make a difference in their daily lives. The residents love seeing me come in to work in the morning and I put 100% into my job. I love being an activity co-ordinator and I love my residents; they deserve the best in their golden years.”*

Food and Refreshments

The Dining room was cosy and welcoming. There was bunting up and we were informed that residents have their birthday parties and activities in this area. They have 2 menu choices at every meal and the day we visited residents had a choice of Spaghetti Bolognese or Cottage Pie. We spoke to residents who said that they enjoyed the meals provided. We witnessed residents eating in the lounges with assistance. It was important that residents felt that this was their home and should be able to eat where they wanted to and whenever they wanted. If residents didn't want to eat what was on offer an alternative would be made for them.

In the last CQC report it was reported that *“staff were unaware of a specific type of food which one person should not eat due to the type of medication they were prescribed.”*

The care home manager has addressed this issue since coming in to post in August. Outside the dining room there is a board which is coded for staff which makes them all aware of the resident's dietary requirements and any foods that are not permitted due to medication, this system is new, but it seems to be working.

Cleanliness, Environment and Infection Control

At the time of the visit, Victoria House appeared to be clean, tidy, and well maintained throughout. There were no unpleasant odours and hand sanitizers were located around the home. However, during our visit several of these were empty or were old and clumpy and needed replacing.

Most of the residents were in social areas and seemed to be clean and well kempt.

In terms of external support, a practice nurse from a local surgery comes every Tuesday to see residents. The home benefits from a visiting dentist and optician for the residents which helps to avoid any confusion and unnecessary upheaval.

Administration

Victoria House has been owned by W H Investments Limited for approximately five years and the home is one of ten homes in the group. Although the home has a 30-bed occupancy capacity, only 27 residents were living there at the time of the visit (most of whom were living with dementia), this has almost doubled since our last visit in 2018 by 13 residents. Victoria House is now taking on respite residents and has recently changed the age group of residents from 18+ to 65+.

The Care Home manager informed us that this was only changed to allow respite residents to come, and they wouldn't accept any residents to stay full time with them below 65 as it wouldn't be fair to them and the other residents.

Victoria House is in the process of updating their processes and moving to an electronic care plan for all residents, we at Healthwatch welcome this good practice.

Staffing and Staff Training

Since the new Care Home manager has come into post (in August) 7 new staff have been recruited due to the large increase of residents, although this is still ongoing and at the time of our visit they were using 1-2 Agency staff a day.

When speaking to Josmy she explained that 2 staff had recently resigned due to them not being able to cope with a respite resident who had insomnia attributed to dementia. She felt that this was unreasonable as it was part of their job. She stated, *“I do respect my staff but for me my priority is the residents”*.

Whilst Healthwatch understand that patient centred care is extremely important, staff morale is key to ensuring this care is provided. We were constantly reminded that a huge importance lay with the residents but in our view staff retention and satisfaction will enhance the environment.

Current staff ratio with the current number of residents is:

4- 5 staff during the day

3 staff at night.

Senior Carers are trained to carry out blood pressure and temperature, if they are concerned, they can contact 111 or the care home support team who can analyse the data.

We spoke to 6 staff in total who gave their feedback on working at Victoria House Care Home. All feedback was extremely positive with almost 100% satisfaction on Safety, Effectiveness, Caring, Responsiveness & Well Led.

There were some concerns over training, with one out of 6 not receiving an induction and one stated that they had “recently been sent online training” in response to *“are your training needs regularly reviewed and updated as necessary”* one responded *“They are now being updated”*

Many staff members commented on the care home manager being *“very approachable”* and *“doing all she can to make the home a safe and friendly place to live and work”*

One staff member remarked *“The Victoria is doing its best in a very good way. I have worked at different care homes over 20 years and I know that management are trying their very best. They are both approachable (Jos & Hayley) and make everyone feel welcome.”*

One staff member said *“Everyone is family at Victoria House”*.

One new member of staff said *“Having recently started at Victoria House I was welcomed and soon settled in.”*

With regard to staff, although there has been an issue with staff retention due to the changes in numbers. The remaining staff are happy to work there and can see the new care home manager making changes that will be beneficial to the working environment.

Safety & Security

Victoria House has numerous safety procedures in place. In relation to the physical environment, keypad entry systems and a sign-in book help to control visitor flow. In our *previous* visit it was noted that unsuitable flooring on the ground floor had been replaced with a dementia friendly alternative (fairly neutral, non-shiny pattern) with the secondary aim of reducing the risk of a trip hazard. Unfortunately during *this* visit it was noted the floor has now become very uneven and could actually be a hazard.

The home was uncluttered with no obvious obstructions inhibiting access to passageways or fire exits. Furthermore, in the event of a night-time health-related emergency, staff would call a GP, or the NHS 111 phone triage service.

The Home has a passenger lift to help residents get to the upper floors should they require. (Residents are risk assessed and a room assigned on the lower floors where needed). However the lift is very noisy and seemed to jolt when moving, we were assured that they have been safety checked and are up to date. However the lifts

have mirrors in them which for a dementia friendly home are not appropriate as residents could find this distressing.

On the third floor we noticed a room that was filled with boxes and supplies which was unsightly and we recommend they obscure the glass from residents.

All rooms have wardrobes that are attached to the walls, each room is equipped with a thermometer so they can keep track of the temperature and alarm mats are available depending on their needs.

Privacy, Dignity and Treating People as Individuals

We were shown around the property and there are 2 main lounges, both of which are light and airy, well decorated and utilised.

In here I witnessed the staff interaction with the residents, and they were gentle, engaging and empathetic towards the residents. The care home manager said that she was extremely proud of the way that the staff treated the residents with such care and dignity. In the reception area we noticed a “*Respect & Dignity Tree*” where residents can say what they like about the home. Some of the comments were “*I like to choose my own clothes & speak my own mind*”, “*I like a cigarette- I like to watch true entertainment*”

All our E&V representatives were very impressed and had empowering statements about how residents maintain their dignity whilst living with dementia.

All rooms have a picture of the resident and their name on the door. Whilst residents have the option to stay in their rooms if they wish, they are encouraged by staff to go down to the communal rooms and engage with other residents and participate in activities.

During our visit we found staff to be very accommodating and caring to all residents, making sure they felt comfortable in their home and talking to them with dignity. Some residents wanted to eat whilst watching TV and the carers brought in

their food and helped them if they needed it. We were impressed with how happy the residents seemed.

Other Comments

Some of the rooms in the care home could do with renovation, the conservatory at the back of the care home needs some attention as it appears very “office like” and was currently being used for team members meetings, we were informed that chairs had been ordered to make it a more useable space for the residents. The care home was clean and tidy, however there were some unpleasant odours on the upper floors on our visit.

Some of the areas should be updated such as the level of the floors in around the home but we have been assured this is a work in progress and the care home manager has improvement plans in motion.

The facilities for residents are great, with access to a hairdresser, optician and dentist at the home, as well as the outstanding activities which allow residents to be creative at the home and also to explore whilst out and about.

Staff & Residents Feedback

I like to choose
my own clothes
& speak my
own mind”

“Victoria
House is a
Family”

“Residents
deserve the best
in their golden
years!”

“Management
are
approachable &
Helpful”

Recommendations

1. **Staff Training and Team Building** - We know that the focus is on the residents and making sure they are happy; however, staff need to feel valued so that they can be the best they can be. Staff morale does seem high from our feedback but we feel that team building and possibly rewarding staff for their exemplary work will only improve the care of residents.
2. **Remove Mirrors from Lift** - as a care home that specialises in dementia, all mirrors should be removed from the lifts. Removing these will help those living with dementia at the home.
3. **Improve the flooring throughout the home**- our E&V Representatives found the levels of the floor hard to navigate as they were all different levels. In order to make sure that accessibility is safe for residents all the flooring should be levelled off.
4. **Create a Memory board of past residents**- replace the memorial board with images of residents removing the mass cards as may be more tasteful.

Distribution List

This report has been distributed to the following:

- Warrington Council
- Warrington CCG
- Care Quality Commission
- Healthwatch England
- Josmy Amish- Registered Manager Victoria House Care Home



Appendices

Appendix A

Response from provider

This report was shared to the registered manager for response- they declined to respond.

