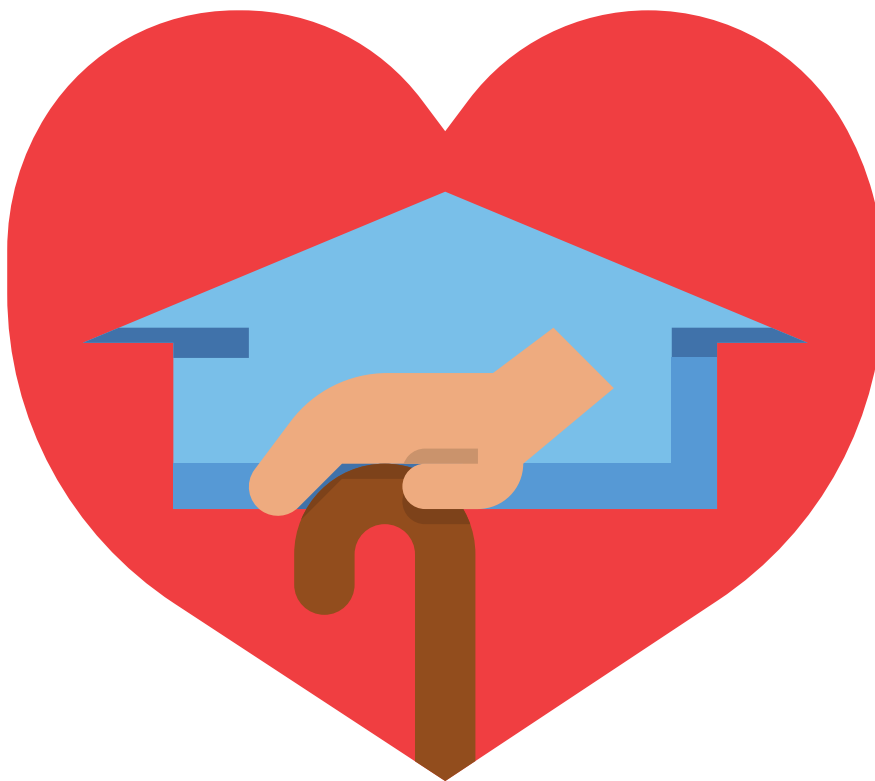


Spotlight on Care Homes in Medway

Copper Beeches Care Home, Rochester



September 2020

FOREWORD

In Medway we have 74 Care Homes offering a variety of services and different levels of support to residents and their families.

In June 2018, a new system was created to enable every nursing and residential home in Medway to form a partnership with a local GP. The partnership was designed to ensure residents would have a dedicated GP who could visit them in the home and help avoid unnecessary hospital admissions.

That means that every care home in Medway should now have a dedicated GP who visits the care home regularly, getting to know residents and their needs, giving continuity and more timely medication reviews. Patients still have the option to opt out of this service if they wish and register with an alternative GP.

This new way of working has been in place since 2018, and we wanted to talk to people to see what difference it has made to their experience.

We committed to visiting 24 Care Homes across Medway to talk to the residents, their friends and family and staff to hear about how the new enhanced GP service has changed the services offered at the homes. We also wanted to find out whether the residents were supported with other health and social services such as dental treatment and social activities.

Coupled with this desire, we knew that Medway Council were planning to recommission residential and nursing care services for older people and working aged adults in Medway. We wanted to ensure decision makers heard about peoples' experience of living in a Care Home in Medway to help inform their decisions.

Everything we found is detailed in this report and we have shared our findings directly with each Care Home, Medway Council and the Medway Clinical Commissioning Group.

We would love to hear your story about a Care Home in Medway. Was it good? Could it have been improved?

Get in touch with us anytime on: www.healthwatchmedway.com

We look forward to hearing from you

Maggie Cane
Healthwatch Medway

What were we trying to achieve from our visits?

We wanted to talk to people who were currently residents at Copper Beeches Care Home in Rochester about their experiences of the health and social care offered at this home. We also wanted to speak to staff to see if the new enhanced GP service had made a positive impact on how they work and support their residents.

We wanted to hear about some key areas of the resident's lives at Copper Beeches Care Home:

- Were residents given a choice about which Care Home to move into when they were choosing where to go?
- Were residents given the choice to keep their own GP or join the home's dedicated GP practice when they moved to Copper Beeches Care Home.
- For residents who have lived at the home since 2018, did they feel the new system of a dedicated GP visiting the home had benefited them?
- Are the social care needs of the residents supported at the home with a programme of activities?
- Are residents offered support with other health services, such as a dental services, eye sight checks etc.

How did we go about it?



Our trained Healthwatch staff and volunteers visited Copper Beeches Care Home on 22nd January 2020. These visits are known as Enter & View visits.

Prior to our visit, we provided printed questionnaires designed specifically for family and friends and we asked each home if they would kindly hand these out to family and friends as they visited their residents. These questionnaires were anonymous and had a freepost envelope included so that people could complete at their leisure and return to Healthwatch Medway directly.

During our visits, we had hoped to speak to residents and staff and ask them a series of set questions whilst listening to their thoughts and experiences.

What happened when we arrived?

Prior to our visit, we made a courtesy call to Copper Beeches and spoke to the home's manager. It was not a friendly welcome, and we were informed that we wouldn't be able to talk to any of the residents because they all had dementia. He told us he wouldn't be there on the day of our visit and that all the paperwork that we had been sent had been lost, including the friends and family questionnaires.

When our trained volunteers arrived they were warmly met by the Clinical Lead. They had not been informed about our visit, nor had any knowledge of the questionnaires. Neither the Manager nor Assistant Manager were on site. The Clinical Lead took us to their office and was happy to answer any questions. Our volunteers were not invited to speak to any residents as it was anticipated that they would not understand.

What did the Staff at Copper Beeches Care Home tell us?

Staff told us that they felt the support from the GP was working well under the new enhanced GP service. They felt that there had been improvements for residents with less interventions and unnecessary hospital visits.

We left further questionnaires with the clinical lead to be distributed to friends and family of the residents as well as staff. We are keen to hear from them about their experience of the home on behalf of the residents. After our visit, we spoke again to the Manager on the phone send another batch of questionnaires but to date we have not received any completed forms.

We had to leave all questionnaires with the clinical lead to be completed and returned to Healthwatch Medway.

What happens now?

Healthwatch has a statutory right to visit any adult health and social care service to gather independent feedback about services. Copper Beech prevented us from completing our statutory duty.

We work closely with the Care Quality Commission and share all the intelligence and feedback that we receive. We will make sure they are aware that Copper Beach Care Home had not been supportive of a visit and had not made it possible for us to gather feedback from residents, staff or families about their service.

This report has also been shared with Medway Council and the Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group who commission and monitor health and social services including care homes.



CQC rating:

Current CQC Rating of Copper Beeches - Requires Improvement. Visited on 8th May 2019.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Medway would like to thank the residents, family, friends and staff along with our volunteers for taking the time to contribute to this piece of work.

Disclaimer

Please note this report relates to what we saw and heard on the day of our visit. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients, family, friends and staff, only an account of what was contributed and observed during our visit on those days noted.



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