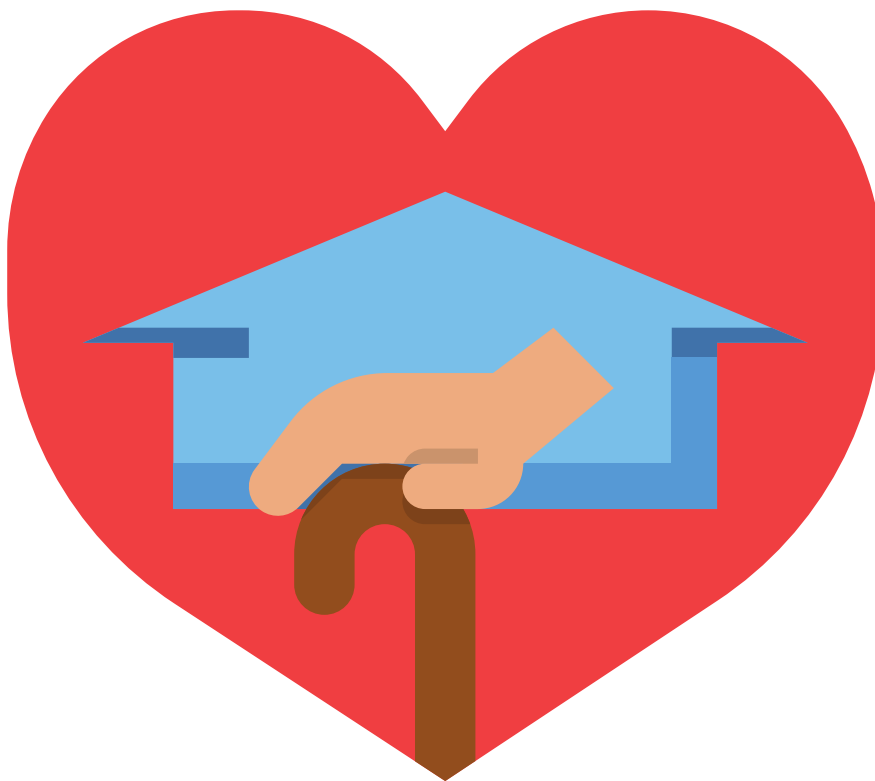


# **Spotlight on Care Homes in Medway**

## **Frindsbury Hall 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](http://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 Frindsbury Hall 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 Frindsbury Hall 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 Frindsbury Hall 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 Frindsbury Hall Care Home on 13th December 2019. 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 spoke to residents and staff and asked them a series of set questions and we listened to their thoughts and experiences.

The following quotes in “italics” are direct quotes from residents (and family members who were there on the day we visited), taken down by our Trained Volunteers and staff during our visit.

We spoke to 6 residents and 2 members of staff during our visit. We also heard from seven families.

## In Summary

- Out of the 8 residents we spoke to, only 3 told us they had chosen Frindsbury Hall Care Home.
- One resident told us that they thought the services at the Home had improved since they moved in and two other residents said they thought the standard of service was the same.
- The GP visits once a week, sometimes twice a week.
- Two members of staff told us that there had been an improvement in service since the new GP service commenced.
- The GP has been working with the home for over 30 years and has a good relationship with staff.

## What have we recommended?

Based on the feedback from residents and what we saw during our visit, we have made the following recommendations.

- We would encourage the home to let families know prior to a resident having a GP visit in case they have any concerns or questions to send in advance.
- All residents should be encouraged and offered the opportunity to go outside.
- Activities for residents should reflect the hobbies and wishes of the residents.

We will be following up with all the homes we have visited to check that they have implemented our recommendations.



## Our Findings in Detail

\*Please note some residents did not answer all questions

### What did residents tell us?

We asked residents whether they had a choice of Home when moving to a Care Home, this is what we heard:

Only three residents told us that they had chosen Frindsbury Hall Care Home. Five of the residents we spoke to told us that did not have a choice when moving into a Care Home, here are some things they told us:

“It was chosen by the hospital”

“Only place where there was a vacancy”

“I was sent here from Maidstone”

“No, I didn’t choose the home but my family are happy with the care I receive.”

We heard what was important to residents when choosing Frindsbury Hall Care Home:

“I just came here for respite. If my Mum was alive and I had to choose a home for her, it would have been Frindsbury Hall Care Home”.

One resident told us that their care manager directed them to move here, another told us they could no longer cope at home.

Residents talked about the importance of the atmosphere when choosing a home. Other talked about looking at how other residents appeared to be finding it and the activities available.

We asked how long each resident had been living at Friston House Care Home and had they notice any changes in services during that time?

Only 2 residents that we spoke to had been at Frindsbury Hall Care Home had lived there for over a year.

One resident said they thought the services offered by the home had improved.

“I have not been in the home long enough to observe changes but very happy with the care”.

“Staff here are good, they treat everyone the same”.

“Although I did not choose the home myself, I am very happy with the care I am receiving. My family are also happy”.

“I am having all my needs met”.

## **Our Findings in Detail cont.**

We asked residents whether they had a care plan:

Seven out of the 8 residents confirmed that they were aware of their Care Plan.

We wanted to know when residents had last seen a GP or practice nurse, and were appointments well co-ordinated and convenient:

Staff told us that the GP makes regular weekly visits to the home. According to NHS England's plan, GPs should carry out a weekly round in the care homes that they cover.

One resident told us that they had not seen a GP recently. They thought they hadn't seen them for 6 months.

"I have not seen a GP or practice nurse since moving here, 6 months ago. I have seen a specialist hospital doctor while here".

"Not recently, seen him about twice since moving in 5 years ago".

One resident told us they had been at Frindsbury Hall Care Home for just 3 months and saw the GP approximately one month ago. Two other residents told us they had seen either the GP or practice nurse within the last 3 months.

We asked residents whether they made decisions around their medical needs?

Six residents answered this question, and all told us that staff discuss their medical needs with them and/or their family members.

We asked residents whether they had been offered support by staff to access other health services e.g. dentist, chiropodist?

The CQC published a report in 2019 on oral care in Care Homes.

Their findings show us that people in care homes do not always get the support they need with oral care with one third of care homes saying they found it difficult to access routine NHS dentistry services. Domiciliary dental services should be in place in every town to support the needs of residents in care and nursing homes, whether this is through visits from dentists or the training of staff to support them in offering general oral care and hygiene to their residents.

Does a Dentist visit Frindsbury Hall Care Home to examine residents:

"I waited a long time for a dentist and one came a couple of weeks ago".

### Does an Optometrist visit Frindsbury Hall Care Home to examine residents:

All of the residents we spoke to said they had been offered access to other health services such as chiropody.

“Yes, I’ve have been offered the services that are needed. Very pleased. I have chiropody regularly”.

“I had physiotherapy here and was pleased about this because I’ve started walking again as a result”.

### Social Activities at Friston House Care Home:

Staff told us that there is a schedule of weekly activities for residents to choose to take part in.

All the residents that we spoke to were aware of activities that the care home offers, here is what some of the residents told us:

“I take part in activities. I was at carol singing this morning, and children were involved”.

“There are crafts, though I can’t partake because my arm doesn’t work. Singing. Children are coming to sing carols today”.

“One Wednesday a month a local church come in and bring communion”.

“I visit a Stroke Club once a week”.

“I would like to play dominos”.

“I would like football quizzes; a sports quiz would be good”.

“I would like to go for walks locally or further afield - that would be great”.

“I should like to go to church every week. It would be good if churches could ensure this attendance was more regular”.



## What did family and friends tell us?

Family and friends of the residents of Frindsbury Hall Care Home kindly answered a questionnaire for Healthwatch, here is what they said:

Please note: The word 'resident' is used to identify the resident in the home that family and friends are commenting on behalf of:

We asked whether there was a choice when choosing a home for the resident and if so, what was important to them?

Six families told us that they, along with the resident, had chosen this home.

"We as a family chose the home because on visiting were shown around by Jackie and Emma. They made us feel that the residents are more like family and we felt that although our Mum can't make her needs known, she would be constantly made sure she was comfortable".

"I chose the home, felt happy with it and it was local to me so making visiting easy and convenient".

"My mother chose this home as it appears to be friendly, gave caring service and is close to family to enable regular visits".

Three families told us that the choice to move into a Care Home had been urgent, or there had not been a choice when the decision had to be made.

"No. They were fast tracked from a hospice. After 6 weeks this was the first place found to have a room available".

"Admission was urgent, and this was the only place suitable, however we're very satisfied with care. The staff are lovely".

"This was the only care home with availability for their nursing needs, when they came out of hospital".

### Health and GP service at Frindsbury Hall Care Home:

To gain an insight into the impact the new enhanced GP service was making on the resident's lives at Frindsbury Hall Care Home we asked family and friends whether they had noticed any changes in service. Do their loved ones have regular visits from the GP, has there been more support with their medical needs and therefore, has there been less visits to hospital and less outside medical intervention?



## What did family and friends tell us cont.?

When choosing Frindsbury Hall Care Home, was the new enhanced GP service discussed with you?

Seven families told us that the new enhanced GP service was not discussed with them when their resident moved into Frindsbury Hall Care Home. However, it is important to note that some of the residents we spoke to were on Respite Care at the home.

“We felt a change of GP was not needed as admission was only temporary until Mum was no longer non-weight bearing”.

We asked whether residents had encountered any problems in seeing a GP when the need arises?

“Only once, eventually the GP turned up”.

“When the Doctor has been called in its always been prompt”.

If the resident is using the care home’s GP, have you noticed any changes or differences to the medical support over the past six months, for example, regularity of visits by the GP; less need for hospital visits/outside medical intervention?

Most families said that they had not seen any change in medical support.

“Fewer emergencies requiring hospital admission”.

“We have requested that they were only to be visited by the GP and not to go to hospital. The GP and nurse care is more personalised”.

“I am aware that the GP visits regularly, but I have not yet met them - the care home staff liaise on my behalf”.

On the day that the GP is due to visit, are residents asked whether they would like to be seen during this visit?

Six families told us they did not recall being asked.

“No, but I live too far away from Frindsbury Hall to be involved in this way. There are other family members who live nearer”.

“Not necessary - they refer to the GP direct”.

“Never been told when he is due to visit or asked if he would pop in”.

When we asked how satisfied family and friends were with the GP service at Frindsbury Hall Care Home:

Seven families told us that they were satisfied with the GP service at the Home with one telling us:

“Resident is satisfied. He told us he likes his GP”.

## What did family and friends tell us cont.?

### Are family members involved in the medical care of the resident?

Four families told us they weren't involved in the medical care with one telling us that other family members who lived closer were involved.

### When asked whether they knew of a Care Plan in place for their family member:

Four of the nine families told us they are aware of the care plan for their family member.

One told us their family member was receiving end of life care and four families were unsure of whether there was a care plan in place. One family commented:

"I'm not aware of any goals or what the next steps are.....".

### We asked, was the resident able to go outdoors unaided? If so, do you think they would like to be taken out by staff?

Seven families told us that their family member was unable to go outside unaided with two saying they think they would like to go outside, with assistance.

"They're unable to go outside as they're unable to walk".

"He would welcome opportunities to be taken out by staff".

### How often is the resident taken outdoors?

"Resident goes out twice a week but this is because the family or volunteer agencies take him. They would welcome being taken out into the garden, but it rarely happens".

"They never go outside".

"Why can't the home get a minibus and take them for a walk around a lake to see the birds and trees, or go to a shopping mall (she said they did do this once and they went to the Savacentre)".

"It would be ideal for him to go out when he wants to when he would not be too tired - to see the stars, something to look forward to.

"They would love to be taken outside to sit in garden in warm weather, but there are too many demands on staff. It is not a priority. They would like to have a shower more often than once a week, but not enough staff to enable this, either"

## What did staff at Frindsbury Hall Care Home tell us?

We asked staff whether they had noticed any improvement since the enhanced GP service commenced, this is what they told us:

Staff told us that there was a better working relationship between staff and residents and the home and the GP service, with more continuity.

How often does the dedicated Homes' GP visit?

Staff told us that the GP makes regular visits every week, sometimes twice a week.

What proportion of residents are seen on those occasions and does the GP have enough time to see all the residents who wish to be seen?

Staff told us that the number varies, but the GP is able to have time with all residents who wish to be seen.

Does the GP refer residents to other healthcare specialists such as physiotherapists, dieticians and Parkinson disease nurses as frequently as you think they should?

The GP does referrals to Physiotherapists. Staff can also make referrals to dieticians and other specialists.

Do you have an Infection Prevention Lead at this residence?

Staff told us that regular training takes place both in-house and online and that they have an infection control lead. If there is an infection in the home, the office writes to the family - then it is up to the family to visit or not. Staff told us they always wear PPE (aprons and gloves) and these are disposed of in yellow bins.

How do you ensure residents are hydrated and are eating well?

Do you have a schedule which includes checking on each resident at regular intervals?

Staff told us that fluids are encouraged, and some residents are fed. Residents are checked regularly to ensure they are not dehydrated. Residents intake is logged, if they are worried about a resident, and they inform the nurse. If necessary, the dietician is also informed.

Are refreshments offered to residents through the night? Is this logged?

Staff told us that residents can access food and drinks during the night. "If they want drinks or a sandwich, staff make it - it's their home".

Pressure Sores/Pressure Ulcers - What is the procedure for checking residents and are all staff trained to identify early symptoms?

Staff told us that procedures are in place to aim for prevention. For example, they use special mattresses. If something is noticed, the nurse is alerted.

## **What did the Staff at Frindsbury Hall Care Home tell us cont.**

Activities for the residents: Do you have a weekly schedule of activities for the residents to take part in if they wish to?

Staff told us that there is a weekly schedule of activities. If residents do not wish to take part in activities, they can have one to one time.

Are residents offered time outdoors and if so, how often do staff take residents outdoors (whether into the home's grounds or further afield)

Staff told us that residents are not being offered time outdoors at the present time, due to the weather. They hoped it would re-start soon. In warm weather residents like to sit outside on the patio.

If residents are taken outside less often than on a monthly basis - what is the reasoning for this?

“The weather. Staff always offer to take residents out. A lot of residents like to stay in their own rooms”.

Befriending Service - we asked both Staff and family and friends whether they thought a befriending service would benefit the residents:

Befrienders would be a group of volunteers who would be appropriately vetted and trained and residents and their families would be approached and could sign up to the service.

Three people told us it would be nice to have a befriending service in place for when family/friends cannot visit.

## General observations made by Healthwatch staff and volunteers during the visit:

Healthwatch were warmly welcomed on arrival and staff were helpful and friendly. Staff seemed happy in their roles and the atmosphere was pleasant and relaxed.

Staff told us that they all worked well together and felt supported. One member of staff has been at the home for over ten years. She clearly loved her job and was very caring with the residents. We were told that staff have a very good working relationship with the GP, and the communication with the residents is good.

The Home has in-house chefs and laundry services. Frindsbury Hall offers residents access to other health services including a podiatrist, who visits regularly.

### CQC rating:

Current CQC Rating of Frindsbury Hall Care Home - Good. Visited on 16th May 2018.

### 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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