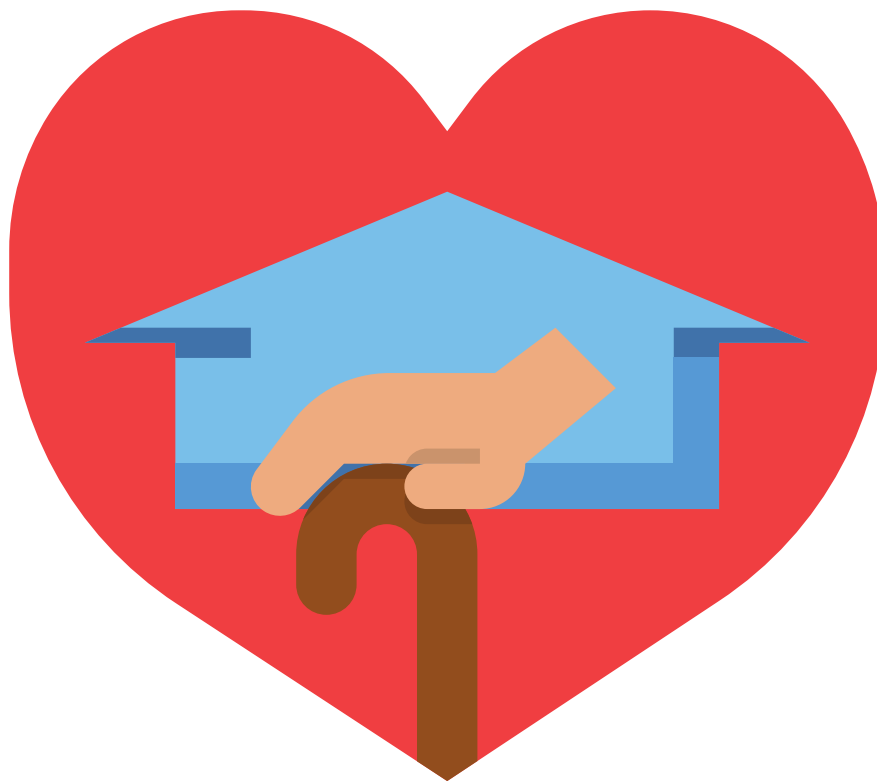


Spotlight on Care Homes in Medway

Friston House

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 Friston House 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 Friston House 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 Friston House 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 Friston House Care Home on 22nd October 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

- All 6 residents that we spoke to said they had chosen Friston House Care Home, with just one resident commenting that it was the only home close to where they lived.
- The new enhanced GP service seems to have had a positive impact, with most residents saying they like the new service.
- Three residents said that they thought the service they were offered had improved.
- One family told us that they had not been given a choice of GP and were told they would be automatically transferred to the home's dedicated GP Practice.
- The GP visits every week.
- Staff talked about a vast improvement since the new GP service commenced citing better consistency and familiarity with both staff and the residents.

What have we recommended?

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

- Let families know prior to a resident having a GP visit in case they have any concerns or questions to send in advance.
- The GP should visit all residents who require to be seen during their visit.
- All residents must have access to a dentist regularly
- Ensure the home always has a full schedule of staff with the capacity to ensure all residents needs are taken care of.
- Offer all residents time outside during dry weather and make every effort to encourage them

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:

All six residents that we spoke to told us that they chose Friston House Care Home.

We heard what was important to residents when choosing Friston House Care Home:

Most residents said that they chose Friston House Care Home because it was close to where they had lived and close to family and friends.

Other reasons for choosing the home included friendly staff, a GP that knew them and 24-hour nursing care.

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?

Five residents we spoke to had been at Friston House Care Home for over a year with three people living there for over 4 years.

Three of them told us that they had seen improvements in the services in the Home with two people saying the service was about the same.

“The new GP service seems to be working ok”

“The décor has improved and so have the services available

“The GP service is good”

“The rooms are large”

We asked residents whether they had a care plan:

Two residents spoke to us about their care plan, one was unsure, and another said they had a care plan, but it had not been reviewed recently.

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 visits weekly. According to NHS England’s plan, GPs should carry out a weekly round in the care homes that they cover.

Two residents told us they had seen the GP within the last month with another resident saying they saw the nurse every day. Two residents said it was good to have a GP visit regularly and one person commented that they thought their care was joined up and co-ordinated.

“A gentleman came and spoke to me, but he didn’t introduce himself as a nurse or GP, so I wasn’t aware he was from the surgery until a member of staff told me it was the Practice Nurse”.

Our Findings in Detail cont.

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

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 Friston House Care Home to examine residents:

Staff told us that residents contact their own dentist to arrange appointments.

Three residents told us they visited their own dentist and they did not think there was one who came to the home. Two residents said they would like to be able to see a dentist at the home and hadn't seen a dentist for years. Another resident told us they would like to be able to visit a dentist.

"I had toothache a while back and I had to visit my own dentist."

Does an Optometrist visit Friston House Care Home to examine residents:

Residents told us that an optician does visit the home.

5 out of the 6 residents we spoke to said they had been offered access to other health services such as chiropody.

Social Activities at Friston House Care Home:

The residents told us that there were weekly activities on offer at the home including music and themed nights.

"I am not always told about activities. I was taken downstairs once and just dumped into an armchair, but I can't communicate with a lot of the residents as they have dementia."

"I am encouraged to take part by relatives".

"I was taken downstairs recently for Aloha Night".

"I need help to go out but I would like to be taken out."

"I would like to go outdoors but I need help to do that."

"The activities are good".

What did family and friends tell us?

Families of the residents of Friston House 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:

Everyone who answered this question said they had chosen Friston House Care Home for their resident and offered some insight to why:

“very impressed, very homely, just the right size for our Mum. Staff friendly and answered all our questions”.

“The home offered the necessary level of care required”

“We chose Friston House Care Home due to the 24-hour nursing care”

“Residents home was unavailable, we had visited Friston House Care Home before and found it homely and efficient”

“The resident was not able to make the decision, so the we chose because it was close to family and friends and because of the cleanliness of the home”

“Friston House Care Home has a long standing good local reputation”

Health and GP service at at Friston House Care Home:

To gain an insight into the impact the new enhanced GP service was making on the resident's lives at at Friston House 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?

When choosing at Friston House Care Home, was the new enhanced GP service discussed with you?

Over half the people who answered this question said the enhanced GP service had been discussed with them however, two people said they were not aware of this.

“I was told he would be automatically transferred to the GP who attends the home and it's been very unsatisfactory”.

Our Findings in Detail cont.

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

No one had encountered any problems with the Care Homes GP. One resident is currently seeing the District Nurse who comes regularly to change her dressings.

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?

Out of the 6 families who commented, five said they had not noticed any changes, or their family member had not had the need to see the GP yet.

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

Two people said they do not recall being asked.

Another person told us they just needed to ask the nurse, and the GP then visits and another said they had only been told once about the visit when the medication was changed.

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

Three families told us that they were happy with the GP service but two families we talked to were unhappy with one commenting;

“Some medication was changed at the first visit - the GP having no prior knowledge of the reason for deciding on that medication and no reference to me as the family even though I have power of attorney.”

Are family members involved in the Medical Care of the resident?

Six families said they were involved with the medical care of their loved one.

One family commented: “It depends who is on duty as to the feedback you get”.

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

Four families told us that they were not aware of the care plan for their loved one.

“No idea, never been discussed with me although I visit several times a week”

What did the Staff at Berengrove Park Nursing Home tell us?

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

Five families told us that their family member was unable to go outside alone with four saying they think the resident would like to go outside, with assistance.

“He would love to be taken out on a weekly basis and has asked once. It took several days to organise it and he didn't find it very satisfactory; I have taken him out to the courtyard a couple of times, but I'm not physically fit enough to take him really. This is over a four month period”.

“They would like to go outdoors but they would need help”.

“On warm sunny days they go outside”.

“Not at all, only to go to hospital”.

What did staff at Friston House 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 they thought there had been a vast improvement. The GP is familiar with the staff and the residents bringing familiarity and consistency. If the GP cannot attend, the nurse practitioner comes.

The GP is fast to come when called and there is good communication between the Home and the surgery.

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

Staff told us that the GP will refer as necessary.

Do you have an Infection Prevention Lead at this residence?

We were told there is an infection control lead and that staff have a weeks training as part of their induction. Healthcare assistants have this reviewed annually.

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 they use charts to log fluid and food intake. Residents are weighed every month and if necessary are referred to an NHS dietician.

What did the Staff at Friston House Care Home tell us cont.

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.

Two 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. There was a temporary Manager in place who had just arrived that morning further to the last manager leaving her post.

The home was warm and pleasant with a relaxed atmosphere.

The décor was bright and pleasing to the eye.

CQC rating:

Current CQC Rating of Friston House Nursing Home - Good. Visited on 5th September 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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