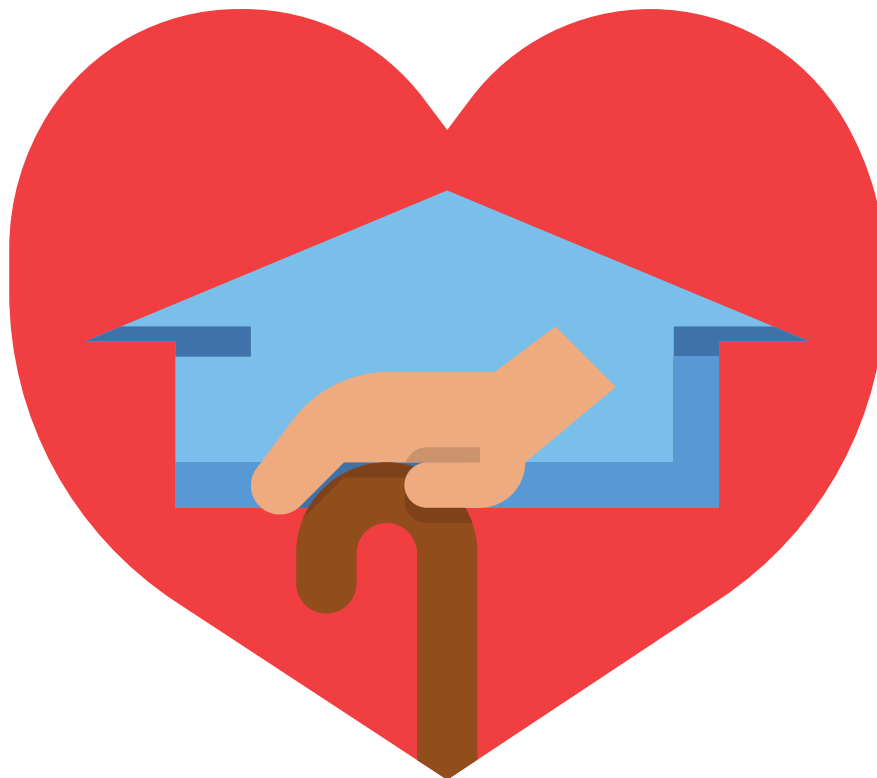


Spotlight on Care Homes in Medway

Winchester 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 Winchester 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 at Winchester 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 homes dedicated GP Practice when they moved to at Winchester 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 at Winchester House Care Home in Rochester on 4th February 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 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 four residents and four members of staff during our visit. We also heard from six families.

What did people tell us?

In Summary

- None of the residents we spoke to had seen any changes in service since moving into Winchester Care Home.
- The GP visits the home every week.
- One member of staff said that they had seen improvements in service since the new enhanced GP service commenced.
- We heard mixed reports from families about the GP service.
- Staff were unclear about who was in charge of infection prevention.

What have we recommended?

Based on feedback from residents, we have made the following recommendations:

- Ensure a dentist visits all residents in the home.
- Families and residents should be informed about the enhanced GP service and understand that they can keep their own GP if they wish.
- Communicate clearly with families about the medical care of their loved one.
- Offer residents time outside on a regular basis during dry weather.
- Explore a befriending service for the benefit of residents.
- Be very clear about who is the lead for Infection Prevention and ensure all staff are fully trained.

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:

Two residents told us that they had chosen Winchester House Care Home themselves. Family had made the decision the other two residents.

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

“Nice people to spend time with”.

“A place where it was well run, where I wasn't doing stupid things and am treated like an adult”.

“The medical attention was poor in my previous Care Home”.

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

Two residents had lived at Winchester House for over two years. They told us they had not noticed any changes in the services and shared some thoughts with us on this:

“It's pleasant, I'm not looking for anywhere else”.

“I noticed occasional problems with staffing which lasts a few days. I moved from another unit as I do not need such a high level of care now, this is better. I felt the management wanted to move me to free up space in the greater care unit”.

We asked residents whether they had a care plan?

One resident knew about their Care Plan but said they had not seen it but would like to.

The other two residents who commented were not aware of their Care Plans.

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

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

One resident could not recall when they last saw the GP. Another said it was longer than 6 months ago.

One resident had seen the Practice Nurse recently and have asked to see the GP but have not as yet.

Our Findings in Detail cont.

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

Two residents told us they were happy with their medical care.

One resident told us: “I think the dosage of my Parkinson’s meds need reviewing but it hasn't been done at all since I came here 14 months ago. I think the dopamine is wearing off quicker and if I get it late, I cannot do anything and feel helpless”.

“Yes, they look after me very well, I don't need much”.

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 Winchester House Care Home to examine residents?

It was unclear if a dentist actually visits residents in the home.

One resident said they could not recall last seeing a Dentist. Another shared a recent experience visiting the Dentist:

“They took me to the dentist, and I had to dodge the cobbly road and rough pavements with my rollator”. This resident told us that she got on very well with the carer who took her to the Dentist with lots of fun and stimulation.

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

All the residents who spoke to us regarding this said they were aware that there were other health services that they could experience. One of these residents told us that their Son organises everything for them, but they have seen the Chiroprapist at the Home.

Social Activities at Winchester House Care Home:

One resident said they could not recall taking part in any activities at the Home. Another told us that they knew there were activities, but they were not really interested.

“I do yoga and Indian dancing, that’s jolly good. I play bingo if there is nothing else. Friends play dominos all day. There are informative talks. I am not into knit and natter and most of what I see are children’s colouring books. I like it when we go out, we go to the church coffee morning”.

What did family and friends tell us?

Family and friends of the residents of Winchester 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?

All but one family told us that they had chosen Winchester House Care Home for their loved one.

“We had no choice where she went. We were told where she was going but she and I are very happy with the home”.

Health and GP service at Valley View Care Home:

To gain an insight into the impact the new enhanced GP service was making on the resident’s lives at Winchester 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 Winchester House Care Home, was the new enhanced GP service discussed with you?

Four families said that the new enhanced GP service was not discussed with them when their loved one moved into Winchester House. However, one family told us that they were told that they could not keep their own GP when moving into Winchester House.

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

“The GP allocated to home does not always come to see patients when they have booked an appointment. We have sometimes waited up to 4 hours until early evening for the GP to spend only two minutes with us. Never time to discuss the resident with the GP. Often, she does not come at all, just issues meds after discussing patient with the unit manager.

“No changes noticed but I would not know if she has been visited by a GP as staff wouldn’t tell me she has”.

“No problems; the GP can be reached by email or phone as well as regular visits”.

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?

“Resident doesn’t seem to have regular checks with GP and no feedback to family. Hospital visits same as before”.

“I would say the service is good, and the GP for me solves my wife’s problems within the Home”.

What did family and friends tell us? cont.

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

“Yes we are asked if we want to see the GP. The GP always sees my wife during the visit”.

“We ask staff if we feel resident needs to be seen but GP doesn't always come even then”.

“No, we've never been asked”.

We asked whether it was easy to access the GP outside of regular scheduled visiting times:

Four families said they had not experienced any issues with access to the GP outside regular visiting times. However, two families told us that they had experienced issues. This is what they told us:

“We have had to take my mother to the surgery ourselves”.

“The GP only comes on a set day and doesn't always see patient even if booked in”.

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

One family told us that they were not satisfied at all with the GP service at the Home.

“Not at all satisfied. No feedback on patient's long-or-short-term conditions except through the unit manager who is not a nurse or doctor”.

Two families said they were fairly satisfied and commented:

“I'm fairly satisfied with the GP service. Response to change in symptoms can be slow and there are delays with blood tests”.

One family said they were satisfied with the GP service and two said they were very satisfied, telling us:

“Very satisfied. With dementia, my wife has complex problems which are dealt with”.

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

“The GP ever consult me or ask to speak to me”.

“Yes. As much as I can be involved, but final decision rests with the GP and nurse”.

“Yes, I like to be informed”.

What did family and friends tell us? cont.

When asked whether they knew of a Care Plan in place for their family member, half said yes, and half said no with one person commenting:

“I’m unsure. I know there is an Advanced Care Plan and day to day nursing plan”.

“We have a Care Plan but not any goals or next steps or if there is, no one has discussed with me/family”.

“Has not been discussed with me”.

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

Families told us that their loved ones were unable to go outside without assistance. Three families told us they take their loved ones out and one family said they thought their loved one would like the option to go outside more.

How often is the resident taken outdoors?

Families commented that they visit and take their loved one out, in the summer. They also told us that they did not think staff took the residents out on a regular basis.



What did the staff at Winchester 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 there had never been a problem with the GP attending the home and there has always been a dedicated GP attending the Home.

One staff member talked about the difference in the service, commenting: “We are getting two visits per week from the GP and the Nurse Practitioner.

The other member of staff told us they had not noticed any changes.

Talking about ambulance call outs, staff told us that they had not seen any noticeable difference to Ambulance call out rates since the introduction of the enhanced GP service.

We were informed that when a resident passes away, the GP doesn’t always attend to verify the death very promptly which is frustrating for staff.

How often does the dedicated Homes GP visit?

The GP visits weekly and visits all the units within the home. This can take approximately 3 hours.

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?

“It depends on the resident’s conditions, up to 10% per week”.

“All residents that are ill”.

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 felt that the GP does refer residents as needed.

Do you have an Infection Prevention Lead at this residence?

The staff did not seem to know whether there was an Infection Prevention lead at the Home with two saying there was no infection prevention lead and two leaving no answer.

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 keep charts for fluids and food. Fluids are offered to residents every 1-2 hours. A handover report is passed to new staff when the shift changes.

Staff said that residents who are at risk of malnutrition have a daily food diary.

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

Staff told us that refreshments are offered during the night.

What did the Staff at Valley View Care Home tell us cont.

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

Staff check residents' skin during personal care each day.

Activity's 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.

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 said that residents are offered time outside and that there is a weekly coffee morning at the local church.

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

"It depends on the residents decision or practicalities of transferring them as some have limited movements".

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.

Four people said 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. The décor in the Home was finished to a high standard which was light and airy with comfortable seating areas, both in the lounge and the dining room. It was clear to see that staff had a very good rapport with the residents.

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

CQC rating:

Current CQC Rating of Winchester House Care Home - Requires Improvement. Visited on 7th January 2020.

Acknowledgements

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

Disclaimer

Please note this report relates to the findings on the days stated at the beginning of this report. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients, family, friends and carers, only an account of what was contributed and observed during our visit on those days noted.



Healthwatch Medway

5A New Rd Ave, Chatham ME4 6BB

 enquiries@healthwatchmedway.com

 @healthwmedway

 @HWMedway

 @HealthwatchMedway

 0800 136 656