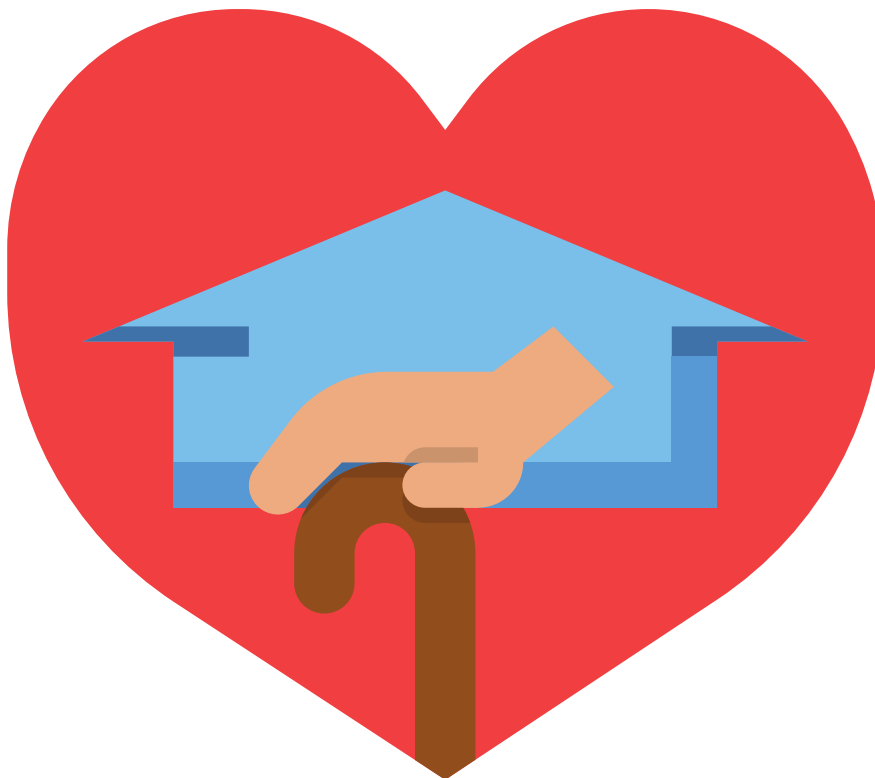


# **Spotlight on Care Homes in Medway**

## **Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home, Hoo**



**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 Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home in Hoo 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 Yew Tree Lodge Residential 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 Yew Tree Lodge Residential 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 Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home in Hoo on 27th 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 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 three residents and one member of staff during our visit.

## What did people tell us?

### In Summary

- The residents had not seen any changes in service since moving into Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home.
- The GP does not visit the home every week, however the paramedic does attend every week.
- The Practice Paramedic does not have enough time to see all the residents who wish to be seen during her visit.
- Staff talked about the improvement in GP service since the new enhanced GP service commenced.
- A range of activities is provided for residents including outside trips.

### What have we recommended?

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

- The GP should visit the home every week as per the NHS guidance.
- A dentist should visit the home regularly to ensure all residents get the dental care that they need.
- All residents should have their annual health check with the GP as per NHS guidance.

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 three residents that we spoke to said that they choose Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home themselves. Two of them had visited the home which helped them decide.

We heard what was important to residents when choosing Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home:

“Yes, I chose this Home. I particularly liked it as it is quiet here. My daughter also lives close by”.

We asked how long each resident had been living at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home and had they notice any changes in services during that time:

All three residents had been at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home for around a year. None of these residents had noticed any changes in services at the home since moving in.

We asked residents whether they had a care plan?

Staff told us that all residents have a Care Plan in place.

Two residents told us that they thought they had Care Plans, but weren't sure if they had seen it. One resident had not heard of a Care Plan and said they definitely hadn't seen it.

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 the GP does not visit the home regularly, only visiting when called out to a specific resident or in an emergency. However, the practice paramedic comes weekly for surgery hours. According to NHS England's plan, GPs should carry out a weekly round in the care homes that they cover.

Two residents said they had not seen a GP for longer than 6 months. The third resident told us they had seen a GP within the last 6 months.

“If I need to see a doctor, I feel able to ask a member of staff”.

“Haven't seen a GP recently. If I needed one, I would tell the staff”.

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

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

“I am very happy with my care, both medical and social”.

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 Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home to examine residents?

We heard that a dentist doesn't visit the home. Residents are expected to arrange dental appointments themselves.

“I'm still registered with a dentist in Orpington where I visited over a year ago, before I moved here. I would like to see a dentist”.

“My daughter took me to the dentist recently.”

Does an Optometrist visit Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home to examine residents:

“Chiropodist comes here.”

“The chiropodist is very good, I see her regularly”.

Social Activities at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home:

Staff told us that there is an Activity Co-ordinator at the Home.

“I go to visit friends who still live locally, They invite me to lunch on Sundays. My daughter also comes to take me out. My son also visits regularly and takes me out if I want to go”.

“I always join in and like most of the things they do here. I do go out with my family, they take me shopping. I went to Herne Bay and would love to go again with the staff”.

“I sometimes take part, it depends what activity it is, I enjoy spending time in the garden especially. My son and daughter visit and bring me anything I need”.

## **What did family and friends tell us?**

Unfortunately, we did not hear from any family or friends of residents at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home.

## **What did the staff at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home tell us?**

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

“It is much easier to have all residents registered with one local practice, however it is noted that the GP does not visit unless called out. The practice paramedic comes to the Home, she only works surgery hours but is well-known to residents and is respected by staff”.

Staff told us that there are only two local GP practices in Hoo and one of them is under ‘special measures’. One of the surgeries is not accepting new patients. Staff were concerned that this will put added strain on the surgery that they work with which will ultimately affect their residents.

The GP does not undertake annual routine medical examinations of the Home’s residents.

### **How often does the dedicated Home’s GP visit?**

The GP only visits the home when called out to see a specific resident or in an emergency. However, the Practice’s Paramedic attends the home on a weekly basis.

### **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 Practice Paramedic sees approximately 25% of residents and does have enough time to see the residents who wish to be seen during the visit.

### **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 Dietician from Medway Community Healthcare visits the home regularly.

Staff told us they have a good relationship with the local pharmacy, which delivers medicines to the home. The pharmacist provides training to Yew Tree staff and audits use of medicines.

### **Do you have an Infection Prevention Lead at this residence?**

The Manager is the Infection Lead at the Home. We were told that there was only one resident with pressure sores. This resident is bed bound and has a hospital bed and an airwave mattress. The District Nurse is involved and the resident is turned every hour by care staff. Everything is logged.

### **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?**

All residents are monitored regularly. Those at risk are on food & fluid charts. The staff do dehydration testing.

The Home is able to cope with special diets and the kitchen area has photographs of all residents with any allergies/special requirements listed. Two residents told us they enjoyed the food and they always had a choice at meal times.

## What did the Staff at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home tell us cont.

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

Refreshments are offered to residents throughout the night. They can have food and drink through the night if needed we were told.

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

Only one resident at the home has pressure sores. This resident is bed bound and has a hospital bed and air wave stress. All staff are trained in pressure sores.

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 they have an activities co-ordinator at the Home and activities such as arts and crafts, performances by visiting entertainers, dancing and singing, activities to commemorate national events and outings to the seaside and to local pubs. There are pictures and art on the walls of the Home showing such things as birds of prey.

The Home has links with the local Church and there is a church service each month. The home celebrates resident's birthdays with a special event. Residents are also encouraged to take part in daily routines, such as cleaning and light carpet sweeping.

Events and activities are photographed and there are pictures around the Home.

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 one of the resident's sons owns a taxi firm and so the Home receives good rates for hiring the minibus.

The garden is also used for activities and there are raised beds so that residents can help in the garden.

Families are always encouraged to take their family members out. We take residents out for meals at the pub and to the seaside.





## What did the Staff at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home tell us cont.

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

Staff told us it depends on the personal choice of the residents.

Some further comments from staff:

Staffing:

Staff suggested that although there were currently 24 residents at the Home, only four had regular and sustained visits from family members.

Staff told us that there had been a reliance on agency staff in recent months, particularly to cover night shifts, new personnel have recently been recruited, including a male senior carer, an innovation that is welcomed by other staff.

Training:

Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home has a range of programmes for staff, including Health & Safety, Dementia and Epilepsy Awareness, Infection Control, Diversity and Privacy. Most training is available online but external trainers are also used. There are no medically trained staff on site.

Medical Support:

Staff shared strong criticism of the Ambulance Service, for the length of time taken to respond to calls and the attitudes of paramedic staff to both residents and carers.

There is a dedicated Medical Room, equipped with an examination bed.

**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.

Staff told us that a befriending scheme might be helpful but this would need careful planning and management as to avoid raising residents' expectations.



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

Healthwatch were warmly welcomed on arrival and staff were helpful and friendly. The staff came across as dedicated and work well with residents. The Care Manager has been at Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home for 16 years and the Senior Carer for four years. Both members of staff were enthusiastic about their work and seemed genuinely committed to the residents. Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home had a homely, warm and clean and there is a pleasant atmosphere.

Each bedroom has a 'front door', to emphasise that this is the resident's home. Each front door with a letter box, door knocker and room number.

Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home has in-house laundry facilities.

### CQC rating:

Current CQC Rating of Yew Tree Lodge Residential Home - Requires Improvement. Visited on 29th January 2019.

### 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.



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