



Cumbria Local Involvement Network

Visit Report

**Grange Bank Residential Home, Cross Lane,
Wigton CA7 9DL**

21st October 2010, 2pm

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Cumbria Local Involvement Network (LINK)

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) were established in April 2008 to give people the opportunity to influence local health and care services by representing their views to those responsible for the planning, commissioning and delivery of services.

LINKs may, in certain circumstances, enter health and social care premises to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the views of the people using those services. Properly conducted and co-ordinated visits, carried out as part of a constructive relationship between LINKs and organisations commissioning and/or providing health and social care services, may enable ongoing service improvement. LINKs' role is not to seek out faults with local services, but to consider the standard and provision of care services and how they may be improved.

Purpose of Visit

Cumbria LINK Visiting Team will be looking to gather individual residents personal experiences of what life is like for them living day to day in that particular residential establishment.

Methodology

Cumbria LINK were approached by Adult Social Care to carry out visits to specific residential homes named by them, specifically asking for residents views about their care and how 'at home' they feel.

The LINK Visiting Team has been drawn from the membership of the LINK. Those members who volunteered to be part of the LINK Visiting team have received appropriate training in Safeguarding (level 1), Interviewing Skills, Listening Skills and LINK Visiting training. Further training opportunities will be available as and when required

A questionnaire was designed by the team to help them gather the resident's perspectives of their day. The questionnaire was designed to include prompts for the visiting team members. Residents were not given the questionnaires to complete on their own.

If individual residential homes request a copy, this will be sent in advance of the visit.

This particular visit was carried out by the following LINK Visiting team members:

Don Joscelyn, supported by Kay McGregor

Arrangements were made to visit Grange Bank on the 21st October 2010 at 2.00pm

A copy of the final report will be sent out to Margaret Beasley at Grange Bank for comments before forwarding to Adult Social Care, the Care Quality Commission, then to be uploaded onto LINK website.

LINK Visiting Team Findings:

The following observations were noted from discussions with members of staff and visiting relatives, as all residents have mild to severe dementia

First impressions:

Grange Bank is a large old house surrounded by large front garden area, with a well planned back garden area designed specifically with the residents in mind. The doors leading into the house are all locked, as some residents would wander and be unsafe if allowed to go out on their own.

Margaret Beasley, the Officer in Charge, greeted the Link Visitors and took them to see a couple of the bedrooms upstairs, through a labyrinth of small sets of stairs and corridors. She informed them that the wooden flooring had just been replaced on some of the landings, and they had recently acquired hospital beds for some residents. These are excellent, but do appear to be very large in the bedrooms. There was evidence of personal items and belongings like photographs in some of the bedrooms.

Margaret was keen to share with us that it is their policy not to medicate their residents for the sake of medication, and that when a new resident is admitted, if they are medicated for difficult behaviour, they will work hard at reducing, and eventually stopping this, as it is thought to be unnecessary.

As all the residents have communication problems due to dementia, it was not possible to hold conversations with any of them to ascertain what their opinions were about their daily routines and standards of care.

The fact that there were 2 visitors with a couple of the residents who quite happily talked to the LINK Visitors was very helpful, and at least some insight into a daily routine was gained.

Mornings:

From the limited evidence we gained from visitors only it would seem that residents can get up when they want in the morning, staff are flexible.

It was difficult to ascertain any other information as none of the residents were able to tell us of their own personal experiences

Lunchtime:

Based on what the visitors had observed, the meals were very good, and staff appeared very patient in their efforts to help those to eat who needed it.

The residents were unable to make choices for themselves about what they wanted to eat due to dementia.

Afternoon:

As we arrived at 2pm we observed some residents having visitors. The television was on in the corner of the communal room where LINK visitors were introduced to some of the residents. As most of these were either sleeping, or unable to

communicate, it was very difficult to get a picture about how residents spent their afternoons.

One resident's visitor talked about the parties that have been organised for Halloween, Bonfire night and Christmas, and how hard the staff work. We saw staff coming on duty, talking to residents before they had even taking their coats off. Every member of staff seen seemed engaged with a resident in some way or another.

One resident had just returned from hospital and received a lovely welcome home. There was a piano in the main sitting room and apparently one of the residents plays occasionally, she used to be a very accomplished player.

Evening:

Unable to pass comments

Night time:

One visitor told us that her husband used to get up every hour, and how exhausting his behaviour had been. They slept well now they were resident at Grange Bank and their visitor felt very relieved that they were in such good hands

A question was asked post-visit about whether or not residents were locked in their rooms at night because many of them wander and have dementia. There were concerns about getting residents out if there was a fire for instance.

Margaret re-assured us that no doors were locked at night. Residents could wander in their own rooms, but as soon as they left their rooms an alarm would sound, informing staff who had left there room and where they were.

Privacy and Dignity:

Every member of staff we observed in that very short space of time treated every resident with respect and a high element of friendliness.

Religious & Cultural Beliefs:

No evidence

Personal Belongings:

Due to the high level of Dementia it would be difficult for all residents to have their own personal belongings, however we did see evidence of photographs in some of the bedrooms

Control of their surroundings:

N/A

Money Matters:

N/A

Aides to Maintain Independence:

We saw evidence of residents using wheelchairs for the staff to take them to the toilet. There were new hospital beds in some of the rooms, and Margaret told us about the ripple mattresses they had bought for those residents who needed them at night.

Any other comments about living here:

N/A

General:

This was a particularly difficult visit as fulfilling the remit we were given by Adult Social Care proved impossible, and actually would have been for anyone with vast amounts of experience with people who suffer from Dementia. There is no way we could produce a report with any evidence, based on any of the conversations we had with any of the residents. All our evidence comes from conversations with 2 resident's visitors, or what we observed, or what we were told by staff.

Any areas of Concern:

The only area of concern was around the value of this actual report, as it is purely based on 'opinion', and that is not the opinion of the residents themselves. The LINK Visit was only a snap shot of 1 and a half hours during the afternoon, and discussions with resident's visitors who shared that they were very pleased that their relatives were being cared for so well. It would be inappropriate to depend on this report for anything other than information, as the remit was impossible to fulfil

Any areas of Best Practice:

- This home had a lovely calm, homely atmosphere about it during the time we visited (1 and a half hours).
- The staff went about their work in an efficient and industrious manner that led to a stress free and relaxed environment, very positive for those residents with any challenging behaviour.
- Margaret told us about how her team strive to fulfil their policy of non – medicating their residents, and this is commendable.

Circulation

Officer in Charge, Grange Bank - approved
LINK Governing Body
Adult Social Care
Care Quality Commission
Upload onto LINK website

Contact Details:

Cumbria LINK can be contacted via the Host Organisation,

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