



Cumbria Local Involvement Network

Visit Report

Twin Oaks, Windermere LA23 2DL
10.15am Wednesday 2 February 2011

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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 is just a snapshot of what life is like for residents on the day our visit took place. The members of the LINK visiting team who carried out this particular visit were very relaxed and informal.

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

Janet Pitman

Ella Cullen

Supported by Kay McGregor

LINK Visiting Team Findings:

First impressions:

We visited on a very cold, wet day in February, but found the home to be lovely and warm and cosy. All residents were choosing to stay indoors on that particular day. However, there is a garden available for residents to stroll in during the summer and some shared that they often sit outside and have a drink in the sunshine, a most enjoyable activity

Twin Oaks is a beautiful house with amazing views from many of the windows, especially those at the front of the building. It was actually very thick fog on the day we visited, but you could imagine the views.

The Manager told us the history of how it came to be a residential home for the elderly. She had previously been a nurse and a professional carer, and wanted to provide somewhere that could offer good quality care for the elderly.

In the building itself all the residents' rooms have en suite shower rooms attached with a sink and toilet. Some of these have steps down into them, but these are used by the more able bodied residents.

There is one bathroom with a hoist for assisted bathing for those residents who want or need to be helped

Those rooms at the front of the building have beautiful views, in fact, one resident who was one of those sitting in the room downstairs told us to go and have a look out of his bedroom window, he was very proud of the view.

There is a new extension that has provided a very light and comfortable extra sitting area, where a few of the residents were sitting that morning.

There is a stair lift available to help those who find getting up and down stairs a challenge. They told us that residents needed support from a member of staff to use it.

There was evidence of the rooms being personalised with residents own belongings

The Manager did tell us she has a few residents who are incontinent and one who is doubly incontinent, but there was no unpleasant odours related to this problem detected any time during visit

There are 6 rooms occupied at the moment, and a further room that is not as yet registered for occupation, but hopefully will be in the near future.

The Manager told us a lot about all her residents, she obviously knows them all very well, and their individual circumstances.

The owner's partner obviously has a good rapport with the residents

Mornings:

Residents can get up when they want and will receive assistance if they need it. Two ladies chose to stay in their own rooms during our visit due to restricted mobility.

Residents can choose what time they want to have breakfast, and where they want to eat it, many choosing to eat in their own rooms. Morning tea or coffee is served in china cups, the Manager did tell us she had bought some other crockery but had replaced it as it proved too heavy for some of her residents. Some residents chose to go back to their rooms when they fancied some privacy or when, in their words, 'sleep called'.

A snapshot at 10.30am found six of the residents up and dressed and in the lounge. They had all arisen in their own time and had their breakfasts at leisure in their own rooms.

One gentleman was stretching his legs having a walk around, one lady was seated quietly playing cards on her own. A member of staff noticed none of the residents seated in the lounge were watching what was on the television and she asked them very quietly and politely if they would prefer to listen to music. They all said yes and she changed the television to music.

All the residents we saw were very well groomed, and appeared well cared for.

Just after we arrived coffee and tea was served in china cups to residents, with an option of biscuits

Lunchtime:

Lunch is served at 1pm in the dining area. We were told that the food was very good, and cooked on the premises. Residents spoke of the lovely smells of home cooked food throughout the building that tempted their appetites.

The Manager did share with us that she has real concerns about one of her lady's 'self - restricted diet', and does go out of her way to produce tempting meals she might like.

One resident commented that relatives can come and go whenever they like, but she does not like it if they come at her meal times!

Afternoon:

Sometimes the Manager's partner takes some residents out for runs in the car, or for walks around the local area. This is difficult at this moment in time due to the very bad weather conditions recently

One ladies family take her out to the hairdressers, doctors, dentist, and shopping whenever she wants to go.

There does not appear to be any problem with visitors coming and going as they please, and those residents who have relatives can go out and about with them if they want to.

Evening:

Some residents watch the television in the sitting room in the evening, or go to their own rooms.

One resident mentioned he could have a drink of beer in the evenings whenever he wanted. The Manager confirmed this, but did say that those people who had medical conditions that could be affected by drinking alcohol had their intake monitored, and that their alcoholic drinks were kept in the kitchen for them

Night time:

The Manager mentioned they have sleeping night staff, either she, or her partner sleep in the building. There is a very good alarm system, each room has an emergency button and they are in many other places throughout the building. Residents shared that they slept well normally, but if there are any problems, they feel confident staff are there to help them.

Privacy and Dignity:

Residents can spend time in their own rooms whenever they want. Some told us they choose to have a rest and read the papers in their rooms before they have meals.

Observing the staff while we were there, they treated all residents with dignity, and were very calm, cool and collected.

Religious & Cultural Beliefs:

Communion is held once a month in the sitting room. It has gained in popularity recently, as it used to be only lady who held this in her own room.

Personal Belongings:

There was evidence in all the bedrooms of personal belongings such as art work, photographs of family, favourite books and lots of other things

Control of their surroundings:

One resident was frustrated because they no longer felt in charge of their life, this was no fault of the home, but due to ongoing deterioration of health

One resident talked of being completely contented and that Twin Oaks was better than home as he got taken out for trips, and was very well looked after

Both stair lifts were in good working order, however one lady preferred to stay in her own room upstairs.

One resident shared that she had come from a busy town, and had been moved there by a family member so that she would be nearer to them. She enjoyed the fact that they could visit more regularly but missed being able to go to Bingo. This was one resident who struggled with the change from being fully in control of her life and surroundings, to the drastic change after suffering health problems that

restricted her ability to continue living independently and safely, of living in a care home. Her frustration with her situation now and her need to adapt does not in any way reflect badly on this home. In fact, the Manager was fully aware of this lady's concerns, and was trying to work with the family to resolve some of the issues.

The Manager was concerned about her one resident with occasional tendencies towards aggression due to her dementia problems, as she felt that at this moment in time, she has no other residents with these problems and wasn't sure if her present placement was appropriate.

Money Matters:

Some residents mentioned relatives looking after their finances for them, but no major conversations around finance were held.

Aides to maintain independence:

All residents appeared to have walking aides if they needed them, but most of those we saw downstairs appeared to be walking unaided. There is a hoist available in the bathroom, and a stair-lift on the staircase.

Any other comments about living here:

One lady was feeling particularly frustrated with her situation. This was absolutely no reflection on the care she was receiving at Twin Oaks, and absolutely no blame can be apportioned to the care home for the resident's unrest, but did actually example how difficult it must be for care staff when there are problems between their residents and family members who may not be doing what the resident actually wants them to do.

One resident said they rarely left their room, but staff always had time for a 'natter', but sometimes talked when she wanted to watch the television!

One resident said she thought a hairdresser came regularly, and all the ladies appeared to be very well groomed.

A resident told us that they often get taken for runs out by the Manager's partner, and they really like that. He will take them into town when they ask

General:

Any areas of Concern:

None

Any areas of Best Practice:

The Manager knows a lot about her residents past lives, and was able to share some of their wonderful experiences with us. She had great admiration for the previous lives led by some of her residents, and raised awareness of the changes to their lives now and the restrictions they now face because of various health problems and deterioration to their different abilities, for example, one resident no longer had the interest in art she previously lived for.

The home was very clean, and welcoming with a very calm feel about it.

Even though we were told some residents were doubly incontinent, there was no evidence of this, for example, no unpleasant odours that can indicate incontinence problems or poor care standards.

Those members of the staff who were observed working around residents were very respectful and calm. No uniforms are worn and this seems to make it more homely.

Residents commented on the good cooking smells coming from the kitchen where their lunches were being prepared, and had nothing but praise for the quality of meals they were offered. The Manager did mention she is aware of a resident who has a difficult relationship with the way she is nourished and that this can cause problems at times, but she tries her hardest to tempt her with food she knows are liked.

Personal laundry is washed on the premises and returned in good condition. One resident told us that their drawers were full of nice clean washing as if by magic.

A resident who needs palliative care was being nursed by the Manager and her deputy with privacy and dignity and appeared pain free and comfortable

Circulation

Adele Palling - Manager and Owner of Twin Oaks, Windermere

Cumbria LINK Governing Body - approved

Care Quality Commission - sent by email on Monday 4th April 2011

Adult Social Care sent by email on Monday 4th April 2011

Upload onto LINK website

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