

Enter and View – Visit Report

Name of Supported Living Scheme:	Visram House, 250 Acton Lane, London
	Scheme Provider: Notting Hill Genesis (NHG)
	Manager: Mushrik Hameed
	Email: http://www.nhhgroup.or.uk
	Cc:
	Website: www.asra.org.uk
Date of visit:	05.09.2019
Healthwatch Brent Staff	Ibrahim Ali [Projects Officer Healthwatch Brent]
Authorised representatives:	Mary Oyemade, Mary Evans, Nisha Gohil, & Grace Johnson [Healthwatch Brent Volunteers]
Author	Ibrahim Ali

Introduction and Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View (E&V) visit undertaken by Healthwatch Brent Projects Officer and authorized Enter & View Volunteers, as part of a planned strategy to look at a range of health and social care services within the London Borough of Brent to obtain a better idea of the quality of care provided. Healthwatch E&V representatives have statutory powers to enter Health and Social Care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the views of the people using those services. The aim is to report the service that is observed, to consider how services may be improved and how good practice can be disseminated.

The Healthwatch Brent team visit the service and record their observations along with the feedback from residents, relatives, carers and staff. The report is based on observations and interviews with residents, relatives, carers, staff - with recommendations. The Report is sent to the registered Scheme Manager for comments, corrections and responses to the recommendations. The final version is then sent to interested parties, including the Head Office of the managing organisation, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Adults and Safeguarding Committee, CQC, Brent Council and the public via the Healthwatch website.

DISCLAIMER: This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the staff, visitors and residents who met members of the Enter and View team on that date, and those who completed and returned questionnaires relating to the visit.

General Information

Introduction

Supported Living is a person-centred approach to housing and care support services. It is based on Service Users having a tenancy or license agreement offering the right to remain in their own home and change their support provider if they wish. It can mean living in shared accommodation or living alone with care and support.

Half of the population of adults with learning disabilities in England live with their families, most of the remainder (33%) live in residential care. Only 15% of adults with learning disabilities have a secure long-term tenancy or their own home. [1] Supported living assumes that all people with learning disabilities, regardless of the level or type of disability, are able to make choices about how to live their lives even if the person does not make choices in conventional ways.

The Healthwatch Brent Social Isolation Report - 'Staying Well in The Community' [May 2019], has concluded from surveys conducted that there was a rise in respondents living in Supported Housing and Care Homes reporting dissatisfaction with their social contacts. As a result of this, we were particularly interested in monitoring levels of social interactions available to the residents of Supported Living Schemes. We were particularly keen to find out more about the ability of residents to engage in activities based on their own individual preferences, monitor the skills and abilities of staff, and gain knowledge of any innovative good practice. The questionnaires used were similar to those previously used, however, we were particularly interested in the four main themes of -

1. Staff development & Clinical Input
2. Emotional and Psychological Well-being
3. Social Inclusion and Meaningful Activities
4. Organised Person-centred Holidays and Days Out

Background

The aim of Supported Living Schemes is to deliver alternatives to residential and nursing care and to ensure that individuals' needs are met, giving people more independence, choice and control. The desired outcome is that by providing services in this manner will enable clients to live independently in the community, promoting well-being and alleviating social isolation.

According to Brent Council website [2], Visram House Scheme is a Supported Living Service that provides support for adults aged 50 plus - eligibility criteria is : Aged 50+ years old (or close to it), require a minimum of 14 core hours support per week, an benefit from the provision of flexible care and support or have needs that would be difficult to be managed by a traditional home care package, and could be at risk of needing residential care if not housed.

The Scheme has 84 one bedroom and 15 two-bedroom apartments in a modern, purpose built Extra Care Supported Living Scheme in the heart of Park Royal, North London. [2]

The Scheme is well located with good access to local amenities including, doctors, bank and a supermarket, as well as transport links into central London. It has level access wet rooms, secure entry

systems intercom giving 24 hour access to staff, lift access to all floors, independent living in a communal setting, night time staffing to help with evening routines, assistance in bed, toileting and monitoring for wandering, and communal lounges and facilities for socialising. There is a require minimum of 14 core hours support per week.

The front entrance of the building is accessed by fob-key. The reception area is large clean area with prominent plants providing a pleasant decorative environment. The reception Staff were very welcoming and polite. A notice board clearly displayed pictures of the Staff employed. The building had the following layout:

- Ground floor - reception, office, toilet and lifts
- First Floor, Apartments 101-108, Communal Lounge, Communal Dining, Toilets, Assisted Bathrooms, Meeting Room 1, Meeting Room 2, & Office.
- Second Floor Apartments 201-213, Lounge
- Mezzanine Floor, scooter room
- Third Floor, Apartments 301-313, Library
- Fourth Floor, Apartments 401-413, Lounge
- Fifth Floor, Apartments 501-513, Computer Suite
- Sixth Floor, Apartments 601-613
- Seventh Floor, Apartments 701-713, Games Room
- Eight Floor, Apartments 801-813, Lounge

Visram House is a new service which opened in February 2019 and has a capacity of 99 - currently a third of the flats are occupied.

Staff Development & Clinical Input

The HWB Enter & View Team were keen to explore the various services provided at the Scheme. We were keen to observe the level of skills of each staff member and to review the variety and quality of the services available to residents.

The residents have a variety of different health conditions. These include learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health issues, and dementia. With regards to the latter, residents with dementia must be 'non-wandering' and no risk in the building. When residents take up a place within the scheme, the Manager consults with a wide range of people such as previous GP.

Staff training on medication is particularly emphasised by the Manager - "Staff have to get this right," said the Manager. "We do a lot of spot checks, to make sure it's done properly - especially how to report not taking medication, and how to hand over this information," said the Manager.

The Manager was asked about Staff recruitment and retention. He stated, "Initially no experience is required. It's a difficult job, it's hard work and we support the Staff by team building - the company

takes them to a restaurant. Also, we reward Staff and we have relaxed meetings and an open approach - the team building makes a big difference.” Monthly Staff meetings are held with the Manger.

The HWB Team was introduced to the Compliance Officer, whose role involved developing service improvements - to see what can be improved, review Staff induction process, and to monitor any changes in legislation which may have an impact and brief all Staff.

The HWB Team observed a new resident being booked in - he was asked if he knew his way to his flat and was offered assistance in a very polite manner.

Residents stated that they had access to dentist, opticians, chiropodist at the Scheme. Another resident was asked if she had every complained - she replied, “Yes, I complained to the Manager and he came to speak to me, and he spoke to the care worker; he is such a nice man.”

Recruitment of Staff is handled by NHG central office. The process involves initial telephone screen of potential employees, interview at central office, 2 references and DRB check. Successful candidates have to attend 2-week induction programme and shadowing. No agency Staff are used at the Scheme and all Staff are permanent.

Emotional & Psychological Well-being

(e.g. ability to tune into non-verbal cues as to what the person is feeling and wanting)

Residents were interviewed and asked if they felt supported by the Staff at the Scheme. One resident said, “They encourage us to do things for ourselves and they don’t hurry you up. I can’t go to the front door on my own, they come up and get me and bring me down.”

The Manager was dedicated to making sure that the services provided were person-centred. Only one Pharmacy was used by the Scheme so as to ensure consistency in the delivery of medications and to prevent medication errors. The Manager explained how registering residents with local GP’s was difficult when the Scheme opened; but with intervention from CQC and Brent Council this was resolved, and 4 GP’s agreed to take residents -one was Central Middlesex Hospital which is directly opposite the Scheme.

Residents felt that Staff had the right skills - “They have the time, they let you talk and they don’t shut you down.” Staff expressed that there was a fantastic energy in the Scheme and that they all communicate well with each other as a team.

Residents have access prepared meals service run by Wiltshire Farm Foods - family members also help their relative with preparing meals if needed.

The lounge and games rooms were beautifully decorated and provide a calm environment for residents to relax and enjoy. Modified assisted bathrooms were observed and flats were adapted by for any residents with special needs.

A resident who described herself as a quiet person and enjoyed her own company, said -” Sometimes I want to be alone, but I am persuaded to do some activities. They talk to me every day and I like that.”

Social Inclusion & Meaningful Activity based on individual preferences

Each resident is given a comprehensive welcome pack, with information on essential contacts such as opticians, local shops, emergency services, external meals deliveries, transport links, dentist, police station, local authority contacts, restaurants and food places, complaint procedure, safeguarding, and staff contact details.

A full-time activity coordinator is employed by the Scheme. A full range of activities are available at the Scheme - these include arts & crafts, bingo, takeaway night, hand massage and nail painting, book club, board games & quiz night, coffee morning, meet the new neighbour's, what the papers say discussion, mobile hairdresser, strength and balance session, film night, and 'Oomph' exercise training.

The activity coordinator was observed by the HWB Team conducting a class with residents. They seem to be enjoying the organised activity and it was well attended. Classes are adapted to the resident's needs. So as to encourage more residents to attend, a number of new volunteers to run sessions and to be a befriended residents. Residents are also encouraged to help run classes. The purchase of equipment is through fund-raising activities. Feedback from residents is encouraged and some recent suggestions have been swimming and cultural activities.

Sometimes family members of residents help. The activity coordinator works very closely with the residents and family members. If a resident does not want to leave the flat, the activity coordinator will interact one to one with the resident by play cards or games and design some activities around the individual preferences. Family members input is encouraged and activities such as barbecue parties help bring residents, their family and staff together.

Residents and family members were asked about the activities at the Scheme. We were told that Staff encourage residents to get together and one resident said, "The activity coordinator is fantastic." Although residents were still settling in to the Scheme, they were optimistic that more residents would get to know each other in time.

One resident described how she was able to go to the shop by herself and that she has met lots of new people since moving into the Scheme. She felt reassured by the emergency call pendant and that carers were easily available in an emergency. A community dentist visits the Scheme.

An interpreting service is available and existing Staff speak a number of different languages.

Organised Person-centred Holidays & Days Out

(do they pro-actively support the resident to access person centred and carefully planned holidays and days outs – based on the resident's preferences. What evidence is there?)

The Manager was asked about the importance of activities to the Scheme - he stated, "When the residents are happy, they are easier to handle. We have been on trips to Brighton and everyone went.

Other Managers say was the secret to a good rating - "It's the activities, because medication and personal care everyone can do, but social life not all can do - the quality of the activity co-ordinator, that is the secret."

There was evidence of various organised trips - pictures of a trip to Brighton was displayed. Family outings are encouraged, and the input of the family and relatives of the residents are actively encouraged.

The activity coordinator is looking to expand the range of activities available based on feedback from residents. The residents were very happy with the Manager and Activity Coordinator. The

Compliments/Complaints/Incidents

Compliments

The residents and staff were very complementing of the Manager (Mushrik Hameed). They valued his skills, trusted him, and described him as a very nice man. His strong skill-set and high compassion has resulted in the very high standards at the Scheme.

A very well Managed Scheme with a dedicated Manager, providing a very high-level service.

The Manger has shown that a large supported living scheme can still provide person-centred services of a very high quality.

Complaints

none

Recommendations for Visram House

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Comments from Visram House

Thank you for your kind words.

References

[1] Supported Living – Making the Move Developing Supported Living options for people with learning disabilities, Alicia Wood and Rob Greig, NDTi, September

[2] <https://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/adult-social-care/extra-care-accommodation/visram-house/>