



healthwatch
Blackburn with Darwen

**Northwood Nursing and
Residential Home.**

Tuesday 9th August 2022



DISCLAIMER

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and residents who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

Contact Details:

206 Preston New Rd
Blackburn
BB2 6PN

Staff met during our visit:

Hussain Tahir (Provider)

Date and time of our visit:

Tuesday 9th August 2022 10.30am

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen
Representatives

Michele Chapman (Lead)
Michelle Livesey (Volunteer)
Trish Whalley (Volunteer)



Introduction

This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the view of those people using the services. The representatives observe and speak to residents in communal areas only.

This visit was arranged as part of Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen's Enter and View programme. The aim is to observe services, consider how services may be improved and disseminate good practice. The team of trained Enter and View authorised representatives record their observations along with feedback from residents, staff and, where possible, residents' families or friends.

A report is sent to the manager of the facility for validation of the facts. Any response from the manager is included with the final version of the report which is published on the Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen website at www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen would like to thank Hussain Tahir, together with staff, residents, and visitors, for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

General Information

Northwood Nursing and Residential Care is privately owned by TOB Care Ltd with places for 27 residents. There were 5 vacancies at the time of our visit. The person in charge is Pearl Greenwood.

Information obtained from carehome.co.uk uk states that the home provides care for people from the ages of who are affected by old age, physical disability, and dementia.

Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Tuesday 9th August 2022.

We spoke to 4 residents 8 staff, where possible within the constraints of the home routine, people's willingness, and ability to engage and access to people in public areas. Discussion was structured around four themes (Environment, Care, Nutrition and Activities) designed to gather information concerning residents overall experience of living at the home.

The team also recorded their own observations of the environment and facilities.

Our role at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen is to gather the views of service users, especially those that are hard to reach and seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service regardless of their perceived ability to be able to do so. It is not our role to censor feedback from respondents.

We use templates to assess the environment of a facility and gather information from respondents, to ensure that reports are compiled in a fair and comparative manner.

Observations were rated on Red, Amber, Green scale as follows:

Green = Based on our observations and the responses gathered we would consider the experience of this home to be good.

Amber = Based on our observations and the responses gathered we consider the experience of this home to be need of some improvements.

Red = Based on our observations and the responses gathered we would consider the experience of this home to be in need of significant improvement.

Summary:

Northwood Nursing Home is in a period of transition with the new provider commencing leadership in February 2022.

Representatives evidenced a clear programme of environmental improvement and update, and staff told us that *“We have new owners now that have made a massive (positive) difference. The owner is very visible and approachable and even comes in at weekends. I’ve done lots of training like pressure ulcers and moving and handling. I’ve been offered to do my NVQ and my Assistant Practitioner training.”*

There was a very relaxed atmosphere with lots of humorous interaction between staff and residents. Residents reporting that *“I like the carers”* and *“the care is good.”*

Good levels of diversity were reflected in both the staff team and residents with the staff team being aware of how to support individuals on a person-centred basis.

However, the update of resident information/orientation and the display of an activity schedule required consolidating into the home’s daily routine.

The majority of feedback from residents was very positive they told us *“There is always someone to talk to”* and *“I am happy.”* Another resident told us *“There are no worries here as everything is provided for you.”*

Food was referred to as *“good”* and *“tasty”*, but two respondents felt there could be more choice. Residents told us they have film nights and had pamper sessions with one resident appreciating being taken on walks. All the residents who spoke to us told they were looking forward to the birthday party planned for the afternoon.

Staff were evidenced as caring and responsive with all the staff we spoke to reporting being happy working at Northwood with particular praise for the new provider. *“We had new owners in February who have made good changes here.”*

Based on the criteria, the Enter and View Representatives gave the home an overall score of:

Green

Enter and View observations

Pre-visit and location

Prior to our visit we took the opportunity to look at the home's website. The website is available under "Northwood nursing home" and is clear and easily understandable with some good pictorial representation.

Situated on the main A667, this home is close to local amenities, including schools, churches, and local shops. Its position on the main road makes it easily accessible to those using public transport and it is a short drive into Blackburn town centre.

The home is clearly signposted on the main Preston New Rd, but when we tried to access the carpark from there, we were redirected to another entrance on St Silas's Rd.

We noted that the ground approaching the main door was graduated and accessible by wheelchair, however we did not see a dedicated disabled parking space.

Green

The external environment

Northwood is a large red brick Victorian villa set in its own grounds. The construction is typified by large windows to the front of the property overlooking the front garden and car park. The car park was sufficient to accommodate approximately eight cars with further space to the side of the building. Representatives noted a skip at the side of the building, the provider confirming later that he was undertaking improvements and updates.

The grounds to the front are very pleasant and reasonably maintained, they are fringed with large trees and mature planting, with an attractive and traditional style gazebo at the centre. The provider told us that residents liked to use the gazebo to sit out, and we observed this later in our visit. When we spoke to staff later, they told us that the rear grounds were rarely used due to the steep incline. However the provider clarified that the rear grounds were not used in wet weather and the majority of residents preferred to sit out in the gazebo.

Visitors were clearly directed to a secured side door, and we were greeted there by staff and the provider.

Green

The internal environment/reception -first impressions

All the staff were very welcoming and happy to talk to us and we were greeted initially by reception staff and then the deputy manager and the provider.

Representatives observed the Covid protocols requested by the provider and supplied evidence of negative lateral flow tests taken that day, we also gelled our

hands. Likewise, we were invited to sign into a visitors' book displayed at the doorway close by to the office.

On first impressions, the home seemed clean and bright with no discernible odour. However, there were areas throughout the home in need of a decorative update (which the provider told us he had planned).

Staff were easily identifiable by uniform, with staff telling us they were awaiting a new uniform issue. Staffing levels at the time of our visit seemed appropriate.

Staff were in the process of updating the noticeboard in reception we saw a large, illustrated display "What is Dignity". We also noted the Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen poster prominently displayed as requested. Statutory notices were visible as necessary, and we noticed that a residents meeting had been scheduled for 8th September with "all welcome" the poster encouraging residents to "meet the team." The feedback results of a Dignity audit from 28/07/2022 were also clearly displayed.

Green

The observation of corridors public toilets and bathrooms

Representatives observed some of the corridor areas to be in need of redecoration but nonetheless being clean bright and uncluttered. (Many of the internal doors were reinforced glass and this distributed the light from the large front windows). A lift to all floors was conveniently situated close by reception and clearly signposted. Indeed, signposting throughout the home was observed to be consistent, being pictorial, written and colour coded.

Corridors were populated with information posters and advice, an exterior butterfly symbol was used to identify residents at end of life and remind passers-by to call in "*if you see a butterfly please don't flutter by, just pop in and say hi.*"

There were a variety of floorcoverings throughout the home some of which had been upgraded. The provider told us that each Tuesday was "deep clean day" when all three cleaners were on duty together and were able to steam clean carpets and any rooms that were empty.

Representatives considered that there were an appropriate number of public bathrooms to accommodate the number of residents, as twelve bedrooms had ensuite facilities. The bathrooms were conveniently sited, and some were furnished with adaptive bathing facilities. All the bathrooms we observed were clean and well stocked with toilet rolls, soap and towels. The provider had begun a programme of refurbishment and we noted the introduction of anti-bacterial floor coverings and wipe clean wall panelling in some bathrooms.

The provider was keen to show representatives the upgrades he had introduced to the bedrooms and demonstrated the new Hi-Lo profile electrically operated beds which were able to reduce to as little as 50cm from the floor. We also observed

the provision of pressure mats alongside the beds. Likewise, we were shown a bedroom which had been appropriated for end-of-life care known as the “Serenity Suite.” This was situated in a low traffic area at the end of a corridor and was similar to a small self-contained unit where relatives could make refreshments and sleep alongside their loved one where necessary. The room had been made welcoming and attractive with a coffee table, flowers and a sofa bed with the window overlooking the front garden.

Green

The lounges, dining area and other public areas

Northwood has a variety of social spaces with more than one lounge area. At the time of our visit the majority of residents (who were up and about) had chosen to sit in the lounge area nearest the main dining area. This lounge had an adjoining staff area with internal windows overlooking the lounge so that staff could observe residents whilst completing paperwork. An IT station was available here for the use of both staff and residents.

Unfortunately, a notice board and an orientation board displayed here were both out of date. A poster displaying the details of a film afternoon the Friday prior to our visit (5th August 2022) and the orientation board displaying the date as Monday 8th August 2022 when in fact the date was Tuesday 9th August 2022. Representatives felt this may have been confusing for some residents.

All of the public rooms reflected the period of the home with high ceilings decorative mouldings and a central fireplace. TVs were placed centrally. Likewise, the rooms were nicely decorated in neutral colours with mirrors, ornaments and occasional tables replicating a domestic theme.

There were a variety of seating options and representatives observed the provision of pressure relieving seat pads and chair risers. A hoist was used appropriately by staff.

The environment appeared warm and homely. Residents chatted to one another and there was a very convivial atmosphere. However, representatives did not hear or see a TV, radio or piped music and it was unclear whether this was the residents’ preference.

One of the lounges “The Samlesbury” was being used to store wheelchairs and had evidently been used for previous social occasions hosting the “Northwood Bar.” This lounge displayed a large clockface which orientated to the correct time, day and date.

The provider told us that the seating in here had been earmarked for improvement and new cushions had been ordered for the chairs.

A library room close by was in the process of being decorated to celebrate a resident’s birthday with banners and balloons. The room contained items for activities such as board games, a large Connect four game and a large stock of

books. There were easy chairs in the library and at least one resident told us he preferred to sit there.

However, whilst it was evident that activities were provided at the home there was no activity schedule displayed or available when we asked to see it.

The provider was able to show us a dedicated hairdressing room (Northwood Hair) with a professional station. The provider telling us he was updating and improving this area too.

Prior to entering the dining room representatives observed both a cyclical menu and a daily menu displayed. The daily menu was colour coded pictorial and written. The daily menu offered a breakfast of toast, cereal, egg, or porridge. Lunch was beef stew, mashed or jacket potato and green beans. Dinner was a choice of either chicken curry or various sandwiches. No desserts were illustrated on the daily menu, but the cyclical menu indicated a choice of meals and desserts of yoghurts, cakes, ice cream, stewed fruits and gateaux.

The cyclical menu also indicated a choice of two main courses per mealtime with favourites such as spaghetti Bolognese, chilli, fish and chips, quiche, and home-made pies.

The dining area was very welcoming and attractive with high decorative ceilings and large windows overlooking the front garden. In keeping with the age of the building the décor was traditional and complemented by chandelier lighting and wallpaper panels. Flooring was wipe clean wood effect vinyl and this highlighted the amount of space available. We observed ample square dining tables of four set with placemats, napkins, cutlery, drinking water and a tumbler at each setting. Condiments and sauces were also available on each table. Tables were spaciouly set to accommodate residents in wheelchairs/walking aids and representatives noted they had a wide stabilised base.

Representatives observed both a sound system and a large cinema screen were available in the dining area.

Green

Observations of resident and staff interactions

Representatives found staff to be open and happy to talk to us and this reflected the warm and comfortable atmosphere between staff and residents. We observed staff to have discrete but high levels of oversight of residents, being aware of individual resident's needs.

Indeed, staff told us that one resident has had several falls and a resident also told us that he had fallen recently so was not allowed to go outside on his own. *“Staff take me outside in a chair. They don't have to stay with me. I am hoping to go outside this afternoon.”*

We also noted that staff responded quickly to a resident who complained of back pain, by checking on him and offering to help him reposition in his chair.

Similarly, a resident remarked that they always have a cup of tea at 10.30 am but haven't had it today. The staff overheard and quickly a trolley of tea/ coffee /juice was brought. Staff apologised for overlooking the drink explaining they were busy preparing for the birthday celebration. (The preparation for the birthday party causing anticipation and laughter all round).

Some residents were initially reluctant to engage with us (and some were asleep or in their bedrooms) however this quickly dissipated and those that responded to us told us how happy they were at the home and that "*the food is good.*"

Three gentlemen sitting in the lounge were eager to engage in general conversation. They were seen to enjoy conversations with each other, staff members and representatives. One of them became anxious about his wife (also a resident) and they share a room. The resident was reassured by staff as his wife remained in her room.

Residents also shared with us that staff went for newspapers for them, and took them out for a walk, and how much this was appreciated.

Despite there being no activity schedule displayed it was clear that activities did take place and were varied. The activity coordinator post had been newly allocated to an enthusiastic staff member who was keen to hear of ideas for activities. Representatives were able to chat to her at length and she told us that she was looking to expand world culture days and that she enjoyed doing hand massage and manicures for the residents who were confined to bed.

Residents told us about Friday film nights when they had chosen to watch a disaster movie rather than Downton Abbey. They told us they had sweets and popcorn. Another resident reported enjoying the Commonwealth games and using Alexa to choose music.

One resident talked about bowling, and the representative mentioned taster sessions at Darwen bowling club. The activity coordinator showed interest telling us that she was looking into some form of bowling activity for residents. However, a resident told us that the home did not have the transport for organized trips out.

The activity coordinator was looking to reintroduce a newsletter to the home.

Green

The Lunchtime Experience

On this occasion, representatives chose to focus on the experience of residents during the lunchtime. We evaluated the lunchtime as a social experience, the quantity and quality of the food, the interaction between staff and residents, and the dignity afforded residents during this period.

The food at Northwood is prepared by dedicated kitchen staff and we observed residents reading the daily menu on their way into the dining room and looking forward to the meal. However, there seemed only one option for the lunchtime meal and the residents were unaware of the dessert option until it was served later (fruit flan).

Two residents did not go into the dining room. One gentleman was seen to wander from room to room and we did not see him eat. However, he seemed perfectly capable of requesting a meal should he be hungry (and he may have already eaten). A lady remained in the lounge area during this period and despite the best endeavours of the staff she could not be persuaded to eat. The two feeder cups in front of her looked to be untouched.

The other residents were brought into the dining room from 12.00 noon and the meal was served from 12.05pm, staff being observed to wear PPE and assist residents to the table as required.

Only five residents were observed in the dining room however this can be attributed to the nursing function of the home and the number of residents eating in their bedrooms. (Several staff were taking lunch trays to resident's bedrooms throughout the lunchtime, and these were still going out at 12.30pm).

When the meal arrived at the dining table it was already plated, and representatives reported it being of sufficient quantity and looking appetising and hot.

Residents were also offered water and /or a hot drink during the meal. Representatives observing that staff were aware of the residents' drink preferences and that large and smaller white pottery cups were in use, as well as lidded feeder cups and straws.

The majority of residents we observed were able to eat independently and did not need adaptations or support to eat. Despite this, staff were present throughout the meal offering encouragement and help as needed (cutting up food).

Staff were quick to notice a resident eating with his knife and offered him the option of a spoon. Staff spoke to us later and said that it wasn't uncommon for the resident to eat this way and he would be distressed if interrupted. It was noted that the knives were not sharp, and the resident continued to eat and enjoy his lunch.

Representatives perceived the lunchtime experience as very relaxed and sociable. Several male residents sat together chatting and the staff appeared to enjoy

interacting with the residents. Indeed, we heard staff and residents laughing about the birthday party planned for the afternoon.

Nonetheless, we considered the atmosphere may have been enhanced by some light background music or a local radio, (however we did not hear residents request this.)

Additional information

- The current management team took over in February 2022 and are gradually making changes and improvements
- The provider told us that some of the bedrooms have a double occupancy option for couples who want to share.
- The provider told us that an Indian chef comes in to provide South Asian food for residents who would like it.

Feedback from residents

The residents we spoke to were all positive about their experiences at Northwood, with lack of food choice mentioned as a minor issue.

Residents told us that they appreciated the care with independence that the staff aspired to deliver.

Environment

“I like that I have freedom, but that someone is looking after you which you don’t get if you live at home. There are three lounges. I usually sit in the quiet one, but there is a birthday party in there this afternoon. There are lots of wheelchairs and things in the other lounge. There is always someone to talk to. I can sit out in the gazebo, though I can’t go out there on my own.”

“There are no worries here as everything is provided for you. I stay in my bedroom for most of the time and come down for meals. I like the quiet lounge better downstairs. I like to sit outside sometimes.”

Activities

“We have visitors.”

“There is T.V. and a Friday movie night. There isn’t any bingo or anything like that.”

“I don’t bother with activities”.

Care

“I am happy and the staff are very good.”

“I have to get up early as the night staff get me up. The time varies depending who is on.”

“The staff are all very nice and the care is very good.”

“I have help to get dressed. I like all the carers. They are very approachable, and you can ask them anything.”

Food

“The food is good and we always have a pudding.”

“The food isn’t so bad at all. Mostly very good. There isn’t much choice, but they will make something else like sandwiches if I don’t like it.”

“There isn’t much choice, but the kitchen staff know what I like. It’s hot and tasty.”

Staff views

Representatives observed suitable staff ratios during our visit with 2 student nurses on placement supplementing the care team. We had chance to speak to them about their placement (6 weeks including 2 weeks of night duty) with the senior nurse being their mentor. Both students reported a positive experience with good communication between the home and their practice educator at UCLAN.

Each student said they had *“learned lots at the home”* had enjoyed the interaction with residents. They expressed how much they will miss the placement when they move on as they had truly felt *“part of the team.”*

Representatives were left with the impression that staff were caring and had formed bonds with their colleagues and residents the home seemed to support an *“open culture”*.

During our visit we spoke to staff about person centred care and observed the environment and interaction between residents and staff as convivial and comfortable.

The majority of respondents reported feeling that there were enough staff on duty, and two recent appointees felt that the management were supportive and the training helpful.

Both the staff base and the resident base at the home reflected the local multi-cultural dynamic and the home was able to support this diversity appropriately.

Do you have enough staff when on duty to allow you to deliver person centred care?

“We generally have enough staff, but it can depend on the residents. Sometimes if they are being a little more challenging it feels like we could use a bit more staff.”

“Yes, unless there is sickness.”

“I usually have an assistant but get help from the girls at other times.”

“We work together to support residents who need additional supervision.”

How does the organisation support you in your work?

“We have new owners now that have made a massive (positive) difference. The owner is very visible and approachable and even comes in at weekends. I’ve done lots of training like pressure ulcers and moving and handling. I’ve been offered to do my NVQ and my Assistant Practitioner training.”

“We do a lot of online training like end of life, palliative care and peg feeding. We do these whilst on duty when it’s quiet. We had new owners in February who have made good changes here”.

“I’ve not been here very long, but I’ve had the remit to bring in things like a monthly world culture night where we have food from other countries, and a Sunday buffet. I’m also given money where I need, to help to do things. This afternoon we are having a birthday party for one of the residents”.

“It feels more like a family here.”

“I am happy working here we have a good team who look out for each other.”

How do you deliver care to diverse groups such as LGBTQ +

“We have anti-discriminatory training which covers things like cultural differences, but nothing specific on LGBTQ+”

“We provide care to residents of different cultures”.

“There is a choice of 2 main courses, and all my meals are from scratch so I can provide halal food.”

Are you aware of residents’ individual preferences? Where do you find this information?

“We follow care plans. We have dislikes/likes charts for food”.

“The manager and deputy do care plans for all new residents. Also includes things like allergies”.

“I have quickly got to know what the residents like and don’t like”.

“There is a limited supply of wipes and pads.”

Would you recommend this care home to a close friend or family.”

“Yes - It’s lovely here.”

“Yes”

“I would not place my relative in any care home. I would look after them at home.”

“Yes”

“Yes”

Response from provider

We would like to thank the team for providing a fair, representative, and honest report that reflects the hard work that the management team have done.

We have taken on board all the findings from this report and have added them to our action plan such as adding the disabled car space and removing the clutter from the wheelchairs.

We have recently recruited two chefs to allow more choice on the menu in the kitchen. We have recently been inspected by the CQC (21 September 2022) and received a GOOD rating in all 5 areas.

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

Unit 19, Eanam Wharf, Blackburn BB1 5BL

Telephone 07538 540237 or 01254 480002

Website: [Healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk](https://www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk)

