

Willow Cottage Care Home Ltd

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Willow Cottage
Nursing & Residential Home
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Response to the Healthwatch South Gloucestershire - Enter and View visit on 01/05/15

Meals and Nutrition

All residents throughout the day and night are offered drinks and water and squash are always available in the bedrooms and lounges. All residents are encouraged by staff with their eating and drinking.

This is evidenced by monthly monitoring in place, this is monitored both by the RGN's and the GP on a monthly basis. All residents are weighed monthly and all are currently stable. If any resident loses weight, this is discussed with the Dr and usually advised to implement supplements. Any resident who does lose weight will be weighed weekly for monitoring purposes.

The nutritional value of the food in the home is reviewed regularly and it was explained to the E & V volunteers that we have recently set up a "Food Forum" where residents, family members and the kitchen staff can get together to discuss the menus for the home. One meeting had already taken place prior to the visit and further meetings are to be put in place, this will be discussed at the Residents and Relatives meeting on 18th June.

The Home continues to work hard on a daily basis to improve and maintain the highest standard of nutrition. We have recently had our environmental health inspection in the kitchen and have maintained our 5 stars. A couple of recommendations were included in the environmental health teams report, and we shared with the Healthwatch volunteers that a plan was already in place to improve the kitchen environment.

Residents are always encouraged to use the dining areas at mealtimes, and in response to a comment made by our CQC inspector, the dining areas have been made more inviting, new place mats and cushions for the chairs have been purchased. However, we of course need to respect the personal choice of the residents and their decision about where they would like to eat their meals.

Residents are always encouraged to socialise with other residents.

Activities

It was explained to the Healthwatch volunteers that the current Activity Co-ordinator had just resigned, and we are in the process of advertising and appointing a new Activity Organiser. This new person, with support from an experienced manager within the group, will develop a meaningful and inclusive programme of activities for the residents. The Office Manager explained that this new person would be registered with NAPA.

The new Activity Organiser has been appointed and has just received back her DBS certificate. She will be introduced to the residents and their families at the Residents and Relatives meeting being held on 18th June with her first planned garden activity taking place on Friday 19th. This member of staff will be working 5 hours per day from Monday 29th June, with her first major task being the completion of "Memory boxes" with the residents as explained to the E & V volunteers. This will be extremely beneficial to both residents and the Activity person, and aid the "getting to know you" process immensely. In preparation for this, families have been asked to complete a short questionnaire with their resident regarding their history, including where they worked, their hobbies, music they enjoy, family members and pets etc.

During the transition period, staff are continuing to provide as many activities as possible including some planned additional activities, for example the Duke of Edinburgh girls arranged a Tea and Cake Sale with a raffle, which was well supported by residents, families and visitors from outside.

Residents regularly go to the local church craft morning every Wednesday, sit in the garden, weather permitting, and go to the shopping centre either with family or members of staff. The local church continue to visit once a month to deliver a short service and a different outside entertainer also comes in every month. The hairdresser is here every Tuesday and staff often offer residents a mini manicure and the chance to have their nails painted.

Environment

The old part of the Willow Cottage was built in 1766 and as such we are not a purpose built home, however this is an integral part of the homely atmosphere we provide, and ultimately why some residents choose to come to Willow Cottage. We often here “it’s more of a home than a hospital”.

There has been an ongoing action plan to redecorate the home since January of this year. Almost every bedroom has been repainted prior to a new resident moving in, the lounge on the middle floor has recently been redecorated and the corridors and other communal areas are also scheduled to be redecorated. Since the visit from Healthwatch, one of the bathrooms has been redecorated and we are currently working on other redecoration around the home.

Leadership and Person Centred Care

The Home Manager and Office Manager work very closely as a team to ensure the smooth running of the home, the support from the Office Manager, working with the experienced group manager allows the Home Manager to focus on the everyday running of the home and give his full attention to the residents, their families and the Staff. As a result of this the Office Manager may be more ofay with some of the initiatives being introduced in the background until it is shared with the Manager and ultimately the Staff. It was explained to the Healthwatch volunteers that the Manager is new in post and therefore being offered as much support as possible while he continues to develop his role.

Safe Staffing

We always schedule in a full complement of staff on duty, on the odd occasion someone rings in sick we always try to cover that shift at short notice, however, depending on the circumstances this is not always possible. Staff rotas and hours are calculated using the Rhys Hearn dependency tool which has been shared with staff in the past. This indicated that we were overstaffed even if every resident was at the highest dependency level. It is company policy, all new employees are taken on with a zero hour contract, regardless of their experience. After completion of a successful probationary period staff are encouraged to undertake the next level of training, be that NVQ level 2 for staff with limited experience or NVQ level 3 for more experienced staff. RGN’s are always on contracted hours. New staff are always paired with more experienced carers when working on the floor, thus offering them support and guidance, but more importantly ensures the continuity of care for the residents.

A couple of members of staff have chosen to leave recently, both requesting to remain on our Bank Staff, however one of these members of staff has since returned to us on a full time basis, and we have recently recruited 5 new members of care staff, who will be able to cover the maternity leave for 2 of our current staff.

Bed rails are NEVER used as a “stop gap” because of inappropriate staffing levels. The night staff team is NEVER left understaffed, to the point that even the Manager and

Deputy Care Manager have covered a night shift themselves to ensure the correct number of staff are on duty.

Risk assessments are always completed before any bed rails are put in place and the use of such discussed with the resident and their representative. Whilst your volunteer had concerns regarding a particular resident, we were not asked to see the appropriate paperwork which is in place.

Person Centred Care / Residents' Choice

Staff make a round of the residents at the beginning of each shift, to say hello and let residents know who is on shift at that time. They are then around on the floor for the whole of that shift to answer call bells, care for the residents and keep an eye on all of our clients. Inevitably within a large number of residents there will be people who are not as sociable as others and my wish to remain in their room. Where possible we position furniture so that the staff can be seen when passing the door and also that the staff can see the resident. More one to one time will be introduced by the new Activity Organiser to ensure that every resident has some stimulating input and conversation on a daily basis. Every resident is offered a bath or shower at least once a week, but have a full body wash every day. If anyone requests additional showers or baths we always try to accommodate this whilst ensuring that the needs of all residents are continued to be met. We do however, find that residents like routine, and like to stick to their regular bath day. Sometimes this is in place to fall in with other factors, like having hair washed ready for the hairdresser, or going out with family.

Projects

Projects have already moved forward, Meals have been discussed above, the residents' food forum is in place and the menus are being updated with the residents. The Kitchen is being redecorated and updated within the constraints of the limited space and in keeping with the age of the building.

The new Activity Organiser is in post as mentioned above and she is looking forward to almost "starting from scratch" to develop this area fully.

General

Willow Cottage is not a specialist Dementia Care Home, and whilst we do have some residents with dementia, normally their nursing needs outweigh their dementia needs. Further Dementia training has been planned by the Group Manager who has recently completed the "train the trainer" Dementia Champion course.

Residents have a regular appointment with the visiting chiropodist but she can be called at any time should it be required.

We have visiting opticians, who come into the home regularly and can be requested at any time. Some residents choose to stay with their own dentist or register locally at the Westgate Centre, where families or staff can take residents to appointments and the staff there are able to accommodate patients in wheelchairs.

We understand that your visit was instigated by a complaint about the home, however, we would also like to point out to you that we have a large number of complimentary letters and cards which we receive on a regular basis.