Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report	
Enter and View Visit to	**Avandale Lodge** **420 Manchester Rd,** **Lostock Gralam,** **Northwich** **CW9 7QA**
Date and Time	**19th December Arriving at 10.00 am**
Authorised Representatives	**Janet Lomas, George Gibson, Neil Garbett**
Staff Present	**Gaynor – Assistant Manager**

Background

Healthwatch Cheshire CIC is the consumer champion for health and care services. It works as an umbrella organisation for both Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West. We gather the views of local people and look at information about how well local services are performing. We then use that information to assist residents and communities to be listened to by the organisations that provide, fund and monitor services.

What is Enter & View?
Enter and View is part of the local Healthwatch Cheshire CIC programme. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) grants local Healthwatch representatives powers of entry, allowing them to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, dental surgeries and GP practices.

Purpose of the visit

As part of its work plan agenda this year Healthwatch Cheshire CIC continues to work in observing Nursing and Care provision across the area. This work has the full support of health and Local Authority commissioners.
With this in mind, throughout the year, we visit a number of establishments with the intention of observing settings from a family perspective and gathering feedback from service users, relatives and staff. This report is based on these observations and conversations.

Highlights from the Visit

- A modern purpose built home with interesting areas and displays to generate memory moments and experiences - e.g. American Diner.
- Clean and tidy throughout
- A dementia friendly environment
- Friendly, approachable staff who appear to show great caring for residents.
- An expanding activity program.

General Information

Avandale Lodge is owned and run by HC-One – one of the largest providers of care in the country. Located in the Lostock Gralam suburb of Northwich Avandale is a purpose built home offering dementia residential and dementia nursing care. The home has 48 single rooms all which are ensuite and arranged over two floors.
In a recent inspection by CQC (August 2017), Avandale Lodge was judged as Good in all areas.
On arrival we were met by the Deputy Manager Gaynor, who explained that she was recently appointed. Representatives were given a brief tour of the premises before being left to view the service unaccompanied.

Environment

The home itself is set back slightly from the main Manchester Road and located adjacent to its sister facility Acorn Hollow. The home has adequate parking and landscape gardens to the front of the property are neatly maintained.

Although both homes are separately signed and have different entrances; on arrival Representatives felt that additional signage (perhaps arrows) could be used to indicate the direction of each entrance with greater clarity.	

Communal Areas - On entry a wide entrance hall is adjacent to a comfortable area set out with decor and seating to match an American diner complete with jukebox.
Representatives thought this a quite unique and a nice touch for residents in giving a different environment.

Located near the entrance is a ‘feedback station’ – an electronic touch-screen that allows the visitor to comment on their visit to the home. Representatives felt that this was an excellent tool providing immediate feedback and generally a good idea. However, on arrival the computer system seemed to have frozen and was not working until later on our visit. Also we felt that there should be written opportunities (perhaps feedback cards) available for those visitors who may be put off by the technology.

Resident’s bedrooms are sited off main corridors which are wide, well lit and provide sufficient space to move beds and large equipment around the home. In terms of the mechanics, safety and efficiency of the home the space offered in this purpose built facility is excellent, however to the visitor, the nature of these corridors gave the home more of a ‘hospital’ feel. Alarm systems indicate when someone enters or leaves a room. We were told by Gaynor that door sensors and protocols are in place on some resident’s doors for vulnerable patients and for safety. We were told that such measures were documented. Representatives asked about DOLs documentation and were told that this is in place.

The corridor displays included reminiscence posters and artwork - Beatles, Elvis and film reproduction posters. The signage in corridors to essential areas such as toilets, bath and showers were all dementia friendly (picture of bath, toilet etc.)

There are large windows throughout the building which allow plenty of natural light in.

We were told that residents are allowed to personalise their own rooms with photographs, ornaments and small items of furniture. Outside each room a ‘feature box’ containing photographs and small models was used to show individuals interests and likes – allowing fond memories of a senior’s history, personal interests and youth to be displayed and explored as well as providing an opening for carers and visitors when engaging in conversation.

Lounge areas - There is a main lounge area on each floor of the home, furnished with comfy chairs and tables set at different heights. At the time of our visit roughly half of the residents were in the main lounges while others were in their own rooms. Representatives viewed one lounge in which the activities co-ordinator was working ‘one-to-one’ with an individual resident on what appeared to be some sort of memory activity with cards. Other residents sat around facing each other but with little visible interaction. At the time of our visit the home was decorated for the festive season. All decorations were positioned at a fairly high level to avoid any risk to residents.

Rear Garden – A large rear garden at the rear of the property was well laid out and well kept. We were told by Gaynor that in better weather staff do take residents outside to experience a different environment.

Activities – An activities board featured a number of events organised on a monthly basis and included a clothes show, arts and crafts, films, music, reading, pot planting. Scheduled for the day after our visit there was a trip planned to the garden centre at Winnington. One relative of a resident commented on the trips out. She said, ***“The visits are quite good. It must be quite hard to get everyone together but I know those that go enjoy getting out.”***

We met with the activities coordinator; who at the time was sat with a resident in the lounge; she said that the home has regular visits from singers and entertainers and that a local vicar comes weekly to interact with residents and complete communion for those residents who wish to take part. She said that she would welcome greater input from local community organisations and felt that the residents would benefit from this.

Other features of note:

- Doll therapy was being used by one lady in an effort to bring back happy memories of early parenthood and help her feel useful.
- The home has a separate room established as a hair salon with defined opening hours advertised on the door.
- A post box (emptied daily by staff) located in the main corridor allows residents to post letters if they so wish.
- Near the main lounge a display of door locks and fasteners is fixed to allow individuals to fiddle/play with them rather than on real doors.
- Some salt-dough modelling activities have been tried by residents to improve dexterity and concentration.
- The home has some resident goldfish which provide an air of tranquillity and relaxation for the residents.

Health and Wellbeing

All residents at the home are living with some form of dementia.

We were told that a walking handover takes place with each shift regarding resident's conditions etc. and with care staff visiting and accounting for each resident in turn. Gaynor spoke eloquently about her aims of providing high clinical nursing standards, care and compassion. She felt her role was to help staff be more effective with time to care and time to monitor care planning.

Drugs and medicines – These are distributed by a qualified member of staff on an undisturbed round. We were told that Medicines are supplied by Boots at Winsford and that the service provided was excellent.

Staffing - All staff were very warm and welcoming to Representatives. We observed a number of staff interacting well and showing great patience and care with the residents.

Food / Dining – At the time of our visit the main dining room was closed. We were told that this was due to a heating failure. We were told that as an alternative the 'American' dining area was being used with some residents preferring to eat in their own rooms.

Food menus on the wall indicate a varied choice but Representatives felt that the text on these was very small and not particularly clear for those residents who may have vision problems. A central kitchen on site is used for the production of all meals.
We were told by staff that dining audits sometimes take place - where members of staff eat with residents to get a resident's perspective.

Feedback

One lady the wife of a resident commented that she was happy with the care her husband received. She told Representatives that she visited on most days. She also commented that, ***"It's a pity that we haven't got somewhere nearer to where I live in Knutsford. It's quite a way to come each day."***

Another visitor spoke to a Representative. ***"The staff here have to be incredibly patient and deserve a medal really. Some of the residents do need a lot of help and I take my hat off to those who look after them."***

A member of staff told Representatives that she had worked at the home for many years. She felt, ***"Our team is good and we try to help each other when we can. Some of the residents can be quite demanding but we just get on with the job."***

Another care assistant told us that she had worked at the home for several years. She said, ***"There have been changes for the better in recent years!"***

The assistant manager told us that she was new to the home – ***"I have not been here long but have already been given the opportunity to develop one or two ideas and feel that there is a lot of scope to move the home forward."***

- One member of staff said that due to management changes some staff have left affecting stability.
- The home has agency staff coming in which a member of staff said can distress residents as they don't know them and at times can be unreliable in not turning up.
- The staff member said that sometimes they can feel stretched and understaffed – only able to cater for the basic needs of residents.
- Two members of staff told Representatives that online training was available and that induction and supervision took place but felt this could be more regular and that time intervals between supervision should be shorter.

Suggestions for improvement

- Try to develop working links with community organizations (School, scouts W.I, charity groups etc) to help widen the range of activities on offer.
- Consider gardening activities inc. indoor gardening.
- Consider pat dog/animal visits as an activity.
- Consider programme of resident/relative meetings
- Review supervision arrangements in light of staff comments received.

Feedback from Provider of Service

To be completed prior to publication from comments received from feedback form.