healthwatch Cheshire East healthwatch Cheshire West

Enter and View Report
Weatherstones House

Care Home Contact Details:
Weatherstones House,
Chester High Road,
Neston
CH64 7TD

Date of Visit: **16th July 2018**

Time of Visit: **9.00 am**

Healthwatch Cheshire Authorised Representatives:
Neil Garbett, Andrew Pleass, Pat Clare, Sheila Williams

Weatherstones House Staff Present: **Sharon Evans - Registered Manager, Sue Morris - Deputy Manager, Carol - Care Assistant, Saju - Registered General Nurse**

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Cheshire (HWC) is part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across England established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. HWC represents the consumer voice of those using local health and social services and trades as both Healthwatch Cheshire East and Healthwatch Cheshire West.

The statutory requirements of all local Healthwatch include an 'Enter and View' responsibility to visit any publicly funded adult health and social care services. Enter and View visits may be conducted if providers invite this, if HWC receive information of concern about a service and/or equally when consistently positive feedback about services is presented. In this way we can learn about and share examples of the limitations and strengths of services visited from the perspective of people who experience the services first hand.

Visits conducted are followed by the publication of formal reports where findings of good practice and recommendations to improves the service are made.

Contact Details: Healthwatch Cheshire, Denton Drive, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 7LU Tel: 0300 323 0006

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1. **Description & Nature of Service – (Information from carehome.co.uk)**

Group: Weatherstones House Care Ltd
Person in charge: Sharon Evans (Home Manager)
Local Authority / Social Services: Cheshire West and Chester Council (click for contact details)
Type of Service: Care Home with nursing – Privately Owned , Registered for a maximum of 31 Service Users
Registered Care Categories*: Old Age
Admission Information: Personal assessment and visit/trial stay. Ages 65+.
Languages Spoken by Staff (other than English): Welsh
Single Rooms: 31
Rooms with ensuite WC: 21
Weekly Charges Guide: Personal Care Single £750 – £900 Nursing Care Single £750 – £900 (These prices are only a guideline, please contact Weatherstones House to find out the exact price for your requirements.)
Facilities & Services: Respite Care • Convalescent Care • Own GP if required • Own Furniture if required • Pets by arrangement • Near Public Transport • Minibus or other transport • Lift • Wheelchair access • Gardens for residents • Phone Point in own room/Mobile • Television point in own room • Residents Internet Access

Latest Care Quality Commission* Report on Weatherstones House: click here

In the latest report on the service (February 2016) CQC Rated the home as Good in all areas.

Information from the homes website:

The Weatherstone house website states the home – ***"… offers all the facilities one would expect of a quality Nursing Home plus an attention to the wider needs of residents in order to give them a continuing quality of life."***

On this visit Representatives were keen to observe if the service really does meet its stated intentions as outlined above.

2. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cheshire would like to thank the service provider, care home manager, residents, visitors and staff for their contributions to this Enter and View visit.

3. Disclaimer

This report relates to findings gathered on a specific date of visiting the service as set out above. Consequently, the report is not suggested to be a fully representative portrayal of the experiences of all the residents and/or staff and/or family members/friends but does provide an account of what was observed and presented to Healthwatch Cheshire Representatives at the time of the visit.

4. Purpose of the visit

- To enable Healthwatch Cheshire Representatives to see for themselves how the service is being provided in terms of quality of life and quality of care principles
- To capture the views and experiences of residents, family members/friends and staff
- To consider the practical experience of family/friends when visiting the service in terms of access, parking and other visitor facilities
- To identify areas of resident satisfaction, good practice within the service and any areas felt to be in need of improvement
- To enable Healthwatch Cheshire Representatives to observe how the service delivers on the statements it advertises on its website.

5. Introduction/Orientation to Service

On arrival Representatives were met by Deputy Manager, Sue Morris, who was welcoming and invited us to sign the visitor's book. Sue provided us with drinks and went to fetch the Manager, Sharon Evans, who had just returned from holiday that morning. Sharon led us through to a quiet seating area in the conservatory and was happy to answer any questions we had.

6. Methodology

Representatives were equipped with various tools to aid the gathering of information. The following techniques were used by the Representatives:

- Direct observation of interactions between staff and residents
- Participant observation within therapeutic/social activities where appropriate
- Assessing the suitability of the environment in which the service operates in supporting the needs of the residents
- Observing the delivery and quality of care provided
- Talking to residents, visitors and staff (where appropriate and available) about their thoughts and feelings regarding the service provided
- Observing the quality and adequacy of access, parking and other facilities for visitors

7. Summary of Key Findings

- Despite limitations due to building layout this appeared a friendly, welcoming home with obvious care for residents
- Clean, bright and well decorated throughout
- Attractive, quiet and secluded setting
- All staff engaged with were welcoming and caring
- Positive feedback from residents and relatives
- May not suit residents who wish to use local facilities independently, but as a nursing facility for those more dependent, it seems to meet very well the needs of the residents and their families

8. Detailed Findings

8.1 Location, external appearance, ease of access, signage, parking

Weatherstones House Nursing Home is clearly signposted on the main Chester to Hoylake road, and is set back from the busy road in a secluded, wooded location, accessed by a pleasant driveway. There is ample car parking in front and to the side of the home. This has a welcoming aspect with plenty of floral and container planting in evidence and a large conservatory to the right of the building. Access to the entrance is via a short flight of steps or a ramp.

8.2 Initial impressions (from a visitor's perspective on entering the home)

Entrance to the home is via a locked door adjacent to a covered front patio. The call bell was answered quickly by the Deputy Manager and we entered a small vestibule, with visitors book, comments book, complaints book, CQC Registration certificates for the home and

manager, and a full copy of the latest CQC report all clearly displayed.

The main entrance hall is carpeted and well decorated with chandelier lighting above a large staircase. The dining room is to the left, and there is access to a lounge to the front right of the staircase.
Access to ground floor bedrooms is also available from this area.

There were no lingering food, or other unpleasant, smells.

Adequate car parking at the front of the home - at the end of a short private driveway.

The hall also contains a large fish tank, a notice board displaying photos of residents and entertainment activities. A blackboard listed the day's lunch menu, beneath which was a booklet detailing all mealtime and food choices

8.3 Facilities for and involvement with family/friends

Visiting hours are completely open and flexible; visitors are encouraged to stay for meals (as we were). There are no formal visitor meetings, although a notice highlighted the third Tuesday in each month for such access. The Manager stated, however, that she, her Deputy and all staff were always available to meet visitors. No recent complaints had been received and indeed a brief look through the complaints folder in reception confirmed this. It did, however, contain forms and envelopes for submission of complaints.

One of the pleasant features of the home - a quiet conservatory with views over the garden.

There are three lounges including the large conservatory, so plenty of quieter places for residents and visitors to meet. Two visitors were meeting a resident in the main lounge at the time of the Healthwatch visit.

8.4 Internal physical environment

8.4.1 Décor, Lighting, heating, furnishing & floor coverings

Although an old building, the nursing home is well decorated and well-lit throughout with plenty of natural light. All carpets and furniture appeared clean. Bright pictures are displayed on walls and there are plenty of floral arrangements throughout. A number of well-lit, comfortable seating areas are also available on upper floors

8.4.2 Freshness, cleanliness/hygiene & cross infection measures

As already highlighted the home smelt fresh. Although hand sanitizers were not immediately evident, Sharon stated that they had had no instances of MRSA and staff always used disposable gloves when administering medication or providing personal care. Staff were all wearing clean uniforms with those giving out drinks etc. all wearing disposable tabards/aprons

We were told that deep cleans of bedrooms are undertaken twice weekly.

8.4.3 Suitability of design to meet needs of residents

The home is registered for 31 residents, although shared rooms are no longer offered, so a maximum of 24 bedrooms are in fact available. Current occupancy is 20 residents of which three residents are male. 15 rooms have en-suite facilities (toilet and washbasins only). There are two shower rooms on the ground floor and one bathroom on the first floor. Toilets are clearly signed on the ground floor, with separate male and female toilets in the top floor bedroom area.

As is inevitable with an older building, corridors can be narrow with limitations for room layout. There are small variations in floor level both on ground floor and upper levels which are overcome though the provision of ramps and the Manager stated that resident mobility and ease of access to the various parts of the building is an issue which is always considered when assigning bedrooms.

A lift is available between floors

There are separate lounge and TV lounges on the ground floor and a large conservatory, accessed through the main lounge, extending on one side of the building. This overlooks gardens and enclosed lawn areas. The conservatory is comfortably furnished with sufficient internal shading to minimise overheating in summer

8.5 Staff support skills & interaction

8.5.1 Staff appearance/presentation

As well as the Manager and Deputy, the home has six registered nurses of which two are male. 24 hour nursing care is maintained with always at least one registered nurse available on nights as well as daytime shifts. All healthcare assistants are qualified to level two or three.

Staffing also includes a house keeper (three days per week), a cook and assistant, a gardener, two laundry assistants, a handyman and three cleaning staff plus a daily activities co-ordinator working Monday to Friday weekdays from 1 – 6pm.

We were told by the manager that staff share roles when required and turnover is said to be very low. The manager has worked at Weatherstones for 20 years starting as a healthcare assistant, before becoming deputy manager. She has been in her current role for four years. Agency staff are only used in emergencies, although one is currently in place due to sickness and a recent staff member departure.

All staff seen were wearing uniforms and were clean and presentable

8.5.2 Affording dignity and respect/Approach to care giving

Weatherstones House is a nursing home caring for elderly patients who are no longer able to cope for themselves and need assistance with washing, dressing and mobility. It also offers end of life care. Although the home is not EMI registered (Elderly Mentally Impaired) a number of residents suffer from early onset dementia. A number are also bedridden. Several staff members have specialist training e.g. tissue viability, but the approach of the manager is always to create a ‘home from home’ environment.

Staff, observed engaging with residents, were all seen to be compassionate and respectful.

8.5.3 Effective communications – alternative systems and accessible information

Although all residents' bedrooms were numbered rather than having nameplates or other descriptive images,a number of alternate aids were evident as in the picture below.

To help one lady who often became confused, a large picture of a butterfly was hung next to her room with a notice on her door reading: ***"MAVIS, THIS IS YOUR ROOM, NUMBER 8."***	

Simple, clear images were also placed on toilet bathroom and shower room doors.

8.6 Physical welfare

8.6.1 Appearance, dress & hygiene

Approximately half of the residents were sitting in the main lounge; all were fully and neatly dressed at 9.00am and clean in appearance. Residents met who were confined to beds were also well cared for and their rooms clean and tidy.

8.6.2 Nutrition/ mealtimes and hydration

All meals are prepared from fresh ingredients and are cooked on site by the cook who has been in place for 20 years. The home enjoys and displays a level five food hygiene rating. All dietary requirements are catered for including for example thickened fluids if prescribed by GPs.

Cooked breakfasts or cereals are available. Lunchtime menus consist of a choice of two main courses and desserts but individual options are also catered for. The evening meal is usually a selection of sandwiches or soup but other meals are available as required. Menu rota changes on a four week cycle. Drinks and snacks are available throughout the day as are alcoholic drinks if required. A cheese and wine afternoon is often held on Fridays.

A resident commented, ***"The food here is brilliant… the choice and the amount!"***

Another commented, ***"Food! - Just the right amount and lots of variety."***

8.6.3 Support with general & specialist health needs/Maximising mobility & sensory capacities

A male nurse was observed administering medication to residents in the lounge from a lockable medicine trolley which had clear photographs of the individual residents alongside their prescribed medication.

The home is serviced by three local GPs, one of whom visits every Tuesday, and a local pharmacy. Most residents are registered with one of two Neston surgeries. One room is maintained as a 'step-up bed' for GP referrals or hospital discharges - These are short stay beds available for up to six weeks within specifically selected services.

Wheelchairs were stored in the conservatory which also contained two hoists, one which is currently awaiting repair.

Plant and floral displays were evident throughout the building as are pictures. Varied planting and bird feeders are visible from the large conservatory.

8.7 Social, emotional and cultural welfare

8.7.1 Personalisation & personal possessions

Representatives visited several occupied and unoccupied rooms. Although they varied in size all had windows with an external view of different areas of the grounds. Personal possessions such as photos, books, and for example a teapot collection were in evidence.

By arrangement residents are allowed pets - One resident, who was confined to bed, had a budgie in a cage in her room.

Residents are encouraged to bring in their own items of furniture although not many do in practice. Many have TVs. One lady was observed using an IPad to assist her with a crossword, another family brings in an IPad to allow the resident to Skype her daughter.

Most residents have the use of mobile phones

8.7.2 Choice, control & identity

The front door is not always kept locked to allow access to the grounds by residents who are mobile. If residents are not considered safe to wander, staff members will accompany them. In extreme cases, recommendation may be made to move the resident to more suitable accommodation.

Some residents do take an interest in gardening but generally interact with the gardener rather than taking an active, independent role in the gardens themselves

8.7.3 Feeling safe and able to raise concerns/complaints

All bedrooms have an alarm call system and use is made of pressure sensitive warning mats for residents who may be prone to wandering at night. In extreme circumstances residents will be allocated alternative rooms if a particular area of the home is considered restrictive or hazardous to them.
Comments made on the day by individual residents (**R**) and visitors (**V**) were as follows:

- ***R - "My daughter felt I needed somewhere safe and I feel safe here."*** - (Resident was prone to falling)
- ***R - "The carers are brilliant. I'm happy here."***
- ***V - "We're very happy with the facility. Excellent staff and communication. [Resident] is eating well and looks much better than when she arrived"***

8.7.4 Structured and unstructured activities/stimulation

We were told by the manager that the current activities coordinator previously worked providing another role at the home and applied for the role when it became vacant. A number of structured and unstructured events take place daily.
The home shares a minibus with two nearby sister homes within the Weatherstones Group and a recent visit was made to Chester Zoo. The coordinator also recently arranged for an ice-cream van to visit which was very popular with residents.

Visits are often arranged from local entertainers. A therapy dog 'Archie' visits regularly and 'animal oddities' event is held each month (snakes, rabbits and cockroaches have been brought in on previous occasions). Each Christmas a visit is arranged to the home from a local pony sanctuary.
A reading library is available; games, puzzles and videos were in evidence. A separate TV lounge to the main lounge is available and there are many quiet corners for relaxation.

A hairdresser visits each Monday and arrived during our visit.

8.7.5 Cultural, religious/spiritual needs

A representative from the local Church of England parish visits the home every 3rd Sunday. Arrangements are made for other denominations as required. Links are in place for visits with a local

school and choir. A recent school volunteer placement to the home was very successful.

8.7.6 Gardens – maintenance & design/suitability for use/enjoyment

As previously mentioned the home is enclosed by very pleasant, extensive grounds containing a variety of wildlife. Gardens are well maintained, however, resident participation is more observational than active.

9. Additional Areas of observation

9.1 Comparisons of observations against providers website

The ethos of personal care highlighted on the provider's website appears to be fully met in practice. One discrepancy noted is that the home no longer has a Registered Mental Health Nurse as it does not cater for the more severe levels of dementia. The manager recognised that the provider needed to make this change to the website.

9.2 Comparisons with previous Healthwatch Visit(s) where applicable

On our previous visit in 2014 Representatives gained a positive impression of the home. Representatives were pleased that on this current visit impressions were similar.

9.3 Comparisons with the most recent CQC report

Our visit would confirm CQC's findings from two years ago.

9.4 Other observations/findings of note

We interviewed a staff member who has worked at Weatherstones for 16 years. She commented, ***"I love it here and can't imagine working anywhere else. It's like a family; we share tasks and I am very picky about standards."*** She further commented, ***"Sharon (the manager) is a very hands-on person and is always willing to help out. We look after the residents; that's the most important thing. All our residents are different"***

10. Elements of Observed/Reported Good Practice

- Visual reminder on door of resident who tends to lose her way in the building
- Simple images on toilet and wet room doors
- 'Animal oddities' visits – providing residents with unusual experience that represents a new challenge.

- Manager attending best practice meetings with other care home managers in West Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group – helping develop consistency in care opportunities.
- Role plays introduced for staff to better understand safety training
- Use of ramps to offset different floor levels

11. Recommendations

- Badges for all staff would be useful for visitors and residents alike
- Use of hand sanitisers to minimise spread of infections (none were observed by Representatives during visit)
- Fresh flowers in reception area as a welcoming touch
- Display board of staff on duty

Feedback from Provider of Service
• *We were happy with the arrangements prior to the visit.* • *We where informed by letter and leaflets to display to inform our residents and families about your visit and who you are* *Representatives:* • *The staff commented on how professional you where* • *They felt relaxed and able to answer your questions with out pressure* • *You appeared very friendly and helpful* *From the report:* *Badges: these are for discussion at the next staff meeting as some have been damaged in the wash etc. and some staff have expressed concerns with regard to privacy and data protection.* *Hand sanitisers: are usually available in the foyer and at the nurse desk. These will be replenished asap.* *Fresh flowers in the hall way are normally on display, and replenished at the beginning of each week.* *Again display board with staff names and photographs will be discussed at the next staff meeting due to personal information and data protection issues* *I don't think anything could be changed. It was a pleasure having you visit our home and some suggestions appeared to be very good and we will be pursuing community involvement* *SHARON EVANS, MANAGER - 10/08/2018*