Enter and View Report
Rivacre House

Care Home Contact Details:
Dreena Davies, Manager
Rivacre House
47a Seymour Drive,
Ellesmere Port
CH66 1LZ

Date of Visit: 23 September 2019
Time of Visit: 09.45 a.m.

Healthwatch Cheshire Authorised Representatives (ARs):
Hafsa Jahangir, Andrew Pleass

Rivacre House Staff Present:
Dreena Davies, Registered Manager
Julie, Senior Support Worker

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.

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1. Description & Nature of Service

Group: Making Space

Person in charge: Dreena Davies (Manager)

Local Authority / Social Services: Cheshire West and Chester Council (click for contact details)

Type of Service: Care Home only (Residential Care) – Voluntary / Not for Profit Owned , Registered for a maximum of 12 Service Users

Registered Care Categories*: Mental Health Condition

Single Rooms: 12

Weekly Charges Guide: Personal Care Single £340 – £442 (These prices are only a guideline, please contact Rivacre to find out the exact price for your requirements.)

Facilities & Services: Own GP • Own Furniture if required • Close to Local shops • Near Public Transport • Wheelchair access • Gardens for residents • Residents Kitchenette • Television point in own room

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 HWC ARs at the time of the visit.

4. Purpose of the visit

- To enable Healthwatch Cheshire ARs 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 ARs to observe how the service delivers on the statements it advertises on its website

5. Introduction/Orientation to Service

Rivacre House is a 12 bed residential home providing support services for people living with a diverse range of mental health conditions or learning difficulties. Examples of health conditions supported include schizophrenia, challenging behaviours, dementia, dual personality, anxiety, emotional support and acute lack of confidence. The aim of the facility is to provide residents with the life skills and confidence necessary to allow them eventually to move into extra care housing or independent living. Rivacre House is owned by Making Space, a registered charity, which runs adult health and social care facilities nationwide, including 13 supported-living flats nearby at Pooltown Road, Ellesmere Port.

Rivacre House is registered to provide care for adults between the ages of 18 and 65. The youngest current resident is 42. There are currently 5 female and 6 male residents, the remaining vacancy likely to be filled by a lady currently in transition to the home for two days per week. Rivacre has a waiting list of potential placements.

6. Methodology

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

- 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

• A friendly welcoming home with experienced, well-trained supportive staff
• Provision of individually tailored care to residents
• A patient approach to care – no pre-determined pathways or timescales for resident recovery programmes
• The manager has been in place for 6 years and has many years' experience in adult and child social and mental health care
• Healthwatch ARs spoke to 3 members of staff and 2 residents.

8. Detailed Findings

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

Rivacre House is a well-maintained two storey building, dating from 1991, located in a residential street close to local shops, transport links and other services in Overpool, Ellesmere Port. The enclosed site is fronted by lawn and paved areas with additional shrubs and trees. To the right of the building is a small parking area and driveway. Additional on-street parking is available in front of the building. No external signage was apparent, apart from the name immediately next to the entrance door, but the building itself is easily identifiable in relation to the adjacent residential housing.

On-site parking appears to be restricted to three spaces but street parking is also available

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

Access is via a secure front door and intercom. On arrival, Healthwatch ARs were met by Julie, the senior support worker on duty that day, who was welcoming and open. She checked our identity badges and asked us to sign the visitor book while she notified the manager of our arrival.
The Manager, Dreena Davies, had received the Healthwatch introduction letter and was familiar with the remit of Healthwatch having received an Enter and View visit two years previously. She led us through to an upstairs lounge and was happy to describe the home and to answer any questions we had.

The entrance hallway is clean, bright, welcoming and uncluttered.

8.3 Facilities for and involvement with family/friends

Families and carers of residents are welcome to visit Rivacre at any time. They usually arrange their visits with the resident directly. Visits can include meeting the resident at Rivacre or taking him her out e.g. for a meal, to Parkgate (a popular destination) or to their own house. There are no time restrictions on visits.

Residents are asked what information concerning their care plan, support and reviews they wish to share with family members. Their

wishes are supported and followed by the staff at Rivacre. As a result only 1 current resident wishes their family to be involved directly in reviews and progress meetings.

Poster inviting friends and family to an Open Day at Rivacre House

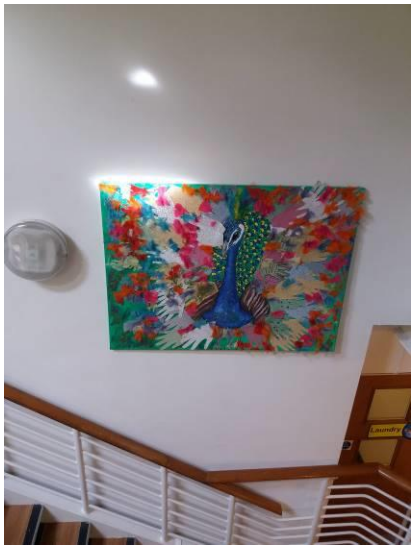
Families, carers and friends are invited to themed days held throughout the year and these are well attended. The Christmas Party is also well attended by families.

8.4 Internal physical environment

8.4.1 Décor, Lighting, heating, furnishing & floor coverings

The building is well maintained, clean and bright. Walls are plain coloured and have recently been redecorated with areas of more vibrant colours following suggestions/requests via residents meetings. Floors were wooden or laminate throughout and uncluttered. Furniture appeared comfortable and in good condition. Two large 'collage'-type artworks adorn walls on the main staircase: these were made by residents with the assistance of a volunteer art student

Collage artwork on staircase made by residents



Peacock artwork made from imprints of staff and resident hands

8.4.2 Freshness, cleanliness/hygiene & cross infection measures

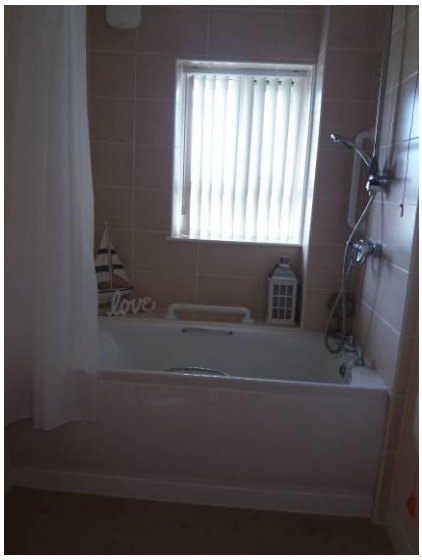
Rivacre House appeared spotlessly clean throughout: it was fresh with no unpleasant smells. A general assistant works a 16 hour week over four days and cleans communal areas but all residents, as part of their development pathway to independent living, clean their own rooms, do their own laundry, take turns in vacuum-cleaning lounges and are encouraged to tidy bathrooms after use. All residents are offered, and staff undertake, cross-infection prevention training. Handwashing instruction notices are on all sinks: sanitising gels are available throughout the building. The manager attends Cheshire and Wirral Partnership link meetings on infection control and stated that in the 6 years she has been at Rivacre there has not been a serious notifiable infection outbreak.

Cleaning instructions and checklist for residents in upstairs lounge

8.4.3 Suitability of design to meet needs of residents

The 12 bedrooms are well-sized, are bright and are clustered in groups of four; two clusters at either end of the upper floor, one cluster on the ground floor. None are en-suite but all have a wash basin. There are sufficient bathrooms, showers and WCs on both floors conveniently located for bedrooms and communal areas. Corridors are spacious and uncluttered.

Picture symbols accompany room description for dementia sufferers



Bathrooms are clean, tidy and in good condition

The main lounge on the ground floor extends into the dining area with adjacent kitchen and serving hatch. Upstairs is a smaller quieter lounge with kitchenette which also serves as a 'resource lounge' for 1:1 sessions with residents e.g. for practising cooking skills.

A pleasant conservatory leads from the main lunge and dining room to the rear garden

8.5 Staff support skills & interaction

8.5.1 Staff appearance/presentation

Staff wear uniform: a polo shirt with Making Space logo. Those met on duty were friendly, polite and welcoming. Staff coverage consists of 4 seniors working 35 hour weeks and 5 part time support staff working 20 hours over 3 days on rota. Daily coverage consists of 1 senior and one support worker on duty at all times, supplemented by experienced bank staff and volunteers, such that emergency cover from agency staff is rarely required. 1 senior sleeps in Rivacre House each night.

8.5.2 Affording dignity and respect/Approach to care giving

The care provided to residents is genuinely and visibly individualised. Referral to Rivacre House is by local authority social services departments or NHS clinical commissioning groups. Residents arrive on a mental health pathway, often as a 'step-down' from specialist units such as the Bowmere and Meadow Park hospitals, with the expectation that ultimately they will move on to independent living. There is no prescribed timescale for this at Rivacre. The average stay was said to be 3 years; the resident only moves on, however, when he or she feels ready.

After an initial period of settling in, each new resident writes a 'My Plan' document with his or her key worker which sets out steps, often small life skills such as going to the shops independently or choosing personal activities, which help them on their path to recovery. Residents may also be given a personal role to support the day to day life at Rivacre, such as buying

flowers or newspapers, helping in the office admin or on reception. My Plan documents are reviewed with the key worker every 6 months at a time of the resident's choice and adapted as necessary.

Each April, residents also write a 'Wish List', often highlighting more stretching or gratifying ambitions, which staff and key workers aim to help them achieve.
Achievements are recorded as an 'I Can' statement which helps to demonstrate increasing confidence and evidence of success. Healthwatch ARs were shown a representative selection of these documents.

8.5.3 Effective communications – alternative systems and accessible information

Residents meetings take place monthly. These are described by the manager as '*Their meeting'*. Residents are encouraged to own and run the meeting, to set the agenda for items they wish to discuss and they invite staff to participate as required. Residents type up minutes and action items for themselves or staff accordingly.

A notice board in the main hallway has a photo display of all staff members but which is personalised to give a 'biography' showing their background, their likes and interests. This helps to break down any perceived hierarchical barriers between staff and residents.

Notice boards in the main lounge list nearby events taking place outside Rivacre House as suggestions for activities which residents may wish to undertake as part of their recovery plans

8.6 Physical welfare

8.6.1 Appearance, dress & hygiene

We saw 3 or 4 residents during our visit. All were well dressed, appeared clean and alert. One lady was interested in who we were, inspected our identity badges and, unprompted, was complimentary on her experience at Rivacre House:
'It's always spotless. The staff are great'
'Do you feel supported?'
'I don't think I need support. I am enabled'

8.6.2 Nutrition/ mealtimes and hydration

Breakfast is casual, lunchtime meals are prepared by staff or residents are encouraged to make their own as they prefer. 2 part time cooks prepare evening meals on a rota basis. Snacks fruit and drinks are available at all times

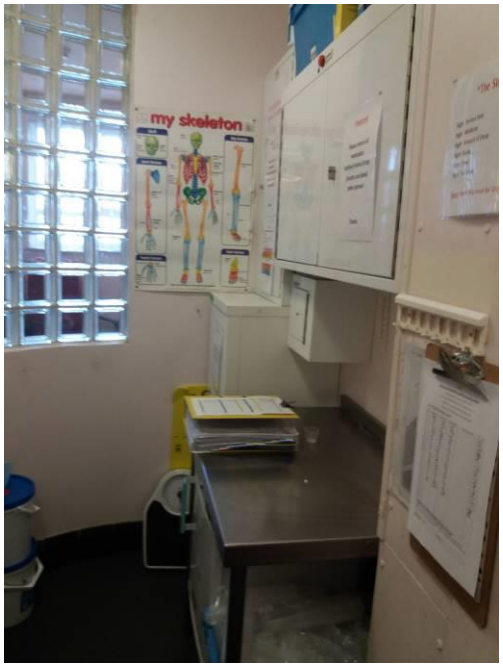
Weekly menus are displayed on a 4 week rotation cycle. A tick list is alongside for residents to make their choices for that day or to request alternatives.

A recent female resident, who has since moved to independent living, made progress in her recovery to the extent that she was eventually assisting in the kitchen on two days per week. She undertook a food hygiene course, received her hygiene certificate and is now working in catering.

The dining area is bright and cheerful. Residents are encouraged to lay the tables themselves.

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

Staff are all trained to a minimum of NVQ level 2 in Health and Social Care. Any new recruits who do not already have this level, first complete the Care Certificate before undertaking NVQ training. Making Space supports ongoing training for staff. Seniors all have level 5 NVQ. Staff receive additional training in medication administration, dementia care, transgender awareness etc. Staff champions are in place for dignity, health & safety, infection prevention and control, quality assurance and other areas.



A secure, well -appointed medication room is used for medicine administration. Residents are taught to self –medicate where appropriate.

GP support is by individual choice of practice: local residents tend to retain their own GP and dentist; out of county residents (2 currently -1 funded by Wrexham, 1 by Trafford) are provided with options for choice of local surgeries.

8.7 Social, emotional and cultural welfare

8.7.1 Personalisation & personal possessions

The whole ethos of the care provided at Rivacre House is personalisation. As part of their recovery plan residents are encouraged to develop their skills through their personal choice of activities whether hobbies, volunteering, pursuing college courses or whatever. The manager quoted the example of a resident who arrived under a social care guardianship order, was unable initially to fend for himself in any way but ended up cooking for himself and eventually went on holiday unaccompanied.

8.7.2 Choice, control & identity

Although, for personal privacy reasons, Healthwatch ARs were unable to see any occupied bedrooms we were told that residents are free and encouraged to personalise their rooms. Rooms are considered their own property and staff always knock and wait to be invited in.

The only currently unoccupied bedroom at Rivacre. Residents are encouraged to personalise bedrooms with their own possessions.

No DoLS are currently in place at Rivacre. As mentioned previously, residents are actively encouraged to go out to participate in external activities. Smoking is allowed in a garden shelter.

8.7.3 Feeling safe and able to raise concerns/complaints

The residents' meeting takes place monthly and is minuted. We saw the agenda for the next meeting which included items such as meal and activity suggestions, satisfaction surveys, safeguarding.

Suggestions are also made to improve the day-to-day environment at Rivacre and are welcomed by staff. A recent example was the request to redecorate the hall and stairwell. In the words of the manager *'It is their home'*.

Residents have access to independent advocacy, if required.

8.7.4 Structured and unstructured activities/stimulation

An activities coordinator is in place: this role is undertaken by Lisa, the acting deputy manager. As well as popular indoor activities such as bingo, quizzes, tai-chi, arts and crafts, Rivacre tries to access and offer external activities wherever possible.

Further suggestions for resident activities including those run weekly by a local church and village hall

In previous years residents have been asked to choose a country 'theme night' in which the care home has been decorated with pictures and flags, food and films have been provided from that country. This year residents have been asked to propose their own theme: choices to date have included an 80's disco, Goodnight Sweetheart, musicals, Tom Jones, casino, James Bond.

Earlier this year an 'Incredible Eggs' project was a great success. Chicken eggs were brought in which were incubated to hatching of the chicks.

Individual hobbies are accommodated and encouraged. Vehicle parts have been secured for a resident who enjoys renovating old cars

8.7.5 Cultural, religious/spiritual needs

Regular contact is maintained with local churches such as Holy Trinity and St Thomas. Volunteer placements at Rivacre are also provided for students at Chester and John Moores Universities, typical for students undertaking health and social care courses. One such student from Chester University was met by ARs in the admin office.

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

There is a small enclosed garden area to the rear of the property. This has recently been re-laid with paving by Making Space and is in the process of being re-planned to allow greater participation, it is hoped, and re-planting by residents next year.

9. Additional Areas of observation

9.1 Comparisons of observations against providers website

Rivacre House features in a comprehensive Making Space website https://makingspace.co.uk/services/centres/rivacre-house. This gives a brief overview of services provided, contact details and a link to the latest CQC report.

9.2 Comparisons with previous Healthwatch Visit(s) where applicable

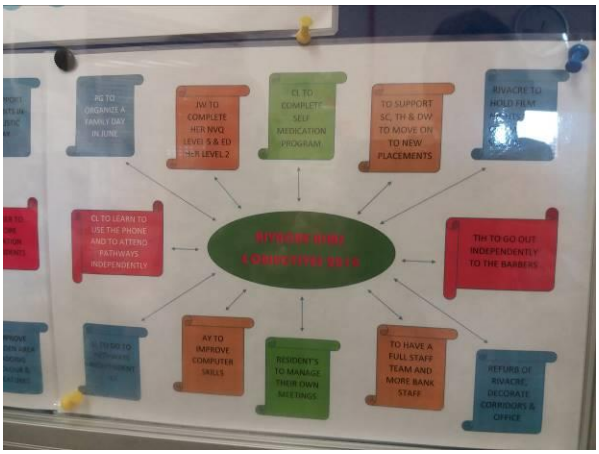
Healthwatch previously visited in April 2017 and gained a positive impression of the home and services provided. This was also the experience of ARs on this visit. Suggestions of minor improvements to garden areas made by Healthwatch in April 2017 appear to have been taken on board in the meantime.

9.3 Comparisons with the most recent CQC report

Healthwatch ARs endorse the positive rating given by CQC in its March 2018 report – Good overall with Outstanding in the area of responsiveness. It is hoped that Rivacre will be able to maintain this rating and achieve at least an additional Outstanding rating in one of the other categories at the next inspection.

9.4 Other observations/findings of note

As further evidence of staff motivation, at the beginning of each year staff independently compile and record their aims and objectives for the forthcoming year and record their achievements in the previous year. These are displayed for all to see in the manager's and admin office



Display of staff objectives for 2019

Rivacre staff organise a fund raising day annually. Additionally the deputy manager undertook a sponsored cycle ride this from Liverpool to Chester to raise funds for the home.

10. <u>Elements of Observed/Reported Good Practice [BULLET POINT LIST]</u>

- The focus on individual, person-tailored care and the reported outcomes achieved is exemplary
- The lack of pressure on the timescale for resident recovery. Timing is solely when the resident feels ready to move on
- The systematic documentation and recording of resident recovery plans e.g. My Plan and Wish Lists to motivate and track progress
- Experienced, motivated and caring staff
- The experience and dedication of the manager
  'Once you do this job it's in you. I've loved it. It's hard work but it's very rewarding'.

11. Recommendations

• More prominent external signage would be helpful for new visitors – local by-laws permitting
• The information provided on Rivacre House on the Making Space website could be expanded and made more accessible. Perhaps include a downloadable brochure as shown to us by the manager and update the newsletter link (currently showing a summer 2018 newsletter)

12. Service Provider Response

Feedback from Provider of Service
To be completed prior to publication from comments received from feedback form.