



# Care Home Experience Report 3

September 2019/October 2019

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
Our strategic duties .....	3
Enter & View .....	4
Key Benefits of Enter & View .....	5
Details of the Visit.....	6
Purpose of the Visit.....	6
How the visit was conducted .....	6
Over view of Responses and Observations .....	8
Recommendations .....	21
Acknowledgements .....	21
Control Sheet.....	22

## Introduction

Healthwatch Darlington Ltd (HWD) is a strong independent community champion giving local people a voice that improves and enhances health and social care provision on behalf of the people of Darlington. HWD believe that no matter who you are, where you live or what age you are, you do have a voice and you have the right for that voice to be heard.

## Our Strategic Duties include:

### Information Gathering

- Gathering views, experiences and needs of local people about their health and social care, focusing on those who are under-represented in decision making or face barriers to influencing the system.
- Gathering and monitoring other key information that tells us how the local health and social care system is working for people.

### Influencing

- Influencing services and their commissioners to consider and act upon the views, experiences and needs we present.
- Championing the involvement of Darlington residents in the development and evaluation of services.

### Informing

- Enabling people to get the most out of the current system by providing information about service provision, the rights people have in relation to their care, and opportunities they have to influence what care looks like.

## Enter & View

In order to enable Healthwatch Darlington to gather the information it needs about services, there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Darlington Volunteers to see and hear for themselves how those services are provided. That is why the Government has introduced duties on certain commissioners and providers of health and social care services (with some exceptions) to allow authorised Healthwatch Darlington representatives to enter premises that service providers own or control to observe the nature and quality of those services.

Healthwatch Darlington Enter and Views are not part of a formal inspection process, neither are they any form of audit. Rather, they are a way for Healthwatch Darlington to gain a better understanding of local health and social care services by seeing them in operation. Healthwatch Darlington Enter and View Authorised Representatives are not required to have any prior in-depth knowledge about a service before they Enter and View it. Their role is simply to observe the service, talk to service users, family/friends and staff if appropriate, and make comments and recommendations based on their subjective observations and impressions in the form of a report.

This Enter and View Report is aimed at outlining what they saw and making any suitable suggestions for improvement to the service concerned. The reports may also make recommendations for commissioners, regulators or for Healthwatch Darlington to explore particular issues in more detail. Unless stated otherwise, the visits are not designed to pursue the rectification of issues previously identified by other regulatory agencies. Any serious issues that are identified during a Healthwatch Darlington Enter and View visit are referred to the service provider and appropriate regulatory agencies for their rectification.

Legislation allows 'Enter and View' activity to be undertaken with regard to the following organisations or persons:

- NHS Trusts.
- NHS Foundation Trusts.

- Local Authorities.
- a person providing primary medical services (e.g. GPs).
- a person providing primary dental services (i.e. dentists).
- a person providing primary ophthalmic services (i.e. opticians).
- a person providing pharmaceutical services (e.g. community pharmacists).
- a person who owns or controls premises where ophthalmic and pharmaceutical services are provided.
- Bodies or institutions which are contracted by Local Authorities or the NHS to provide health or care services (e.g. adult social care homes and day-care centers).

## Key Benefits of Enter & View

To encourage, support, recommend and influence service improvement - by:

- Capturing and reflecting the views of service users who often go unheard, e.g. care home residents.
- Offering service users an independent, trusted party (lay person) with whom they feel comfortable sharing experiences.
- Engaging carers and relatives.
- Identifying and sharing 'best practice', e.g. activities that work well.
- Keeping 'quality of life' matters firmly on the agenda.
- Encouraging providers to engage with local Healthwatch as a 'critical friend', outside of formal inspection.
- Gathering evidence at the point of service delivery, to add to a wider understanding of how services are delivered to local people.
- Supporting the local Healthwatch remit to help ensure that the views and feedback from service users and carers play an integral part in local commissioning.
- Spreading-the-word about local Healthwatch.

## Details of the Visit

Name of premises visited	Lawns Elderwood Eastbourne Rydal Gardens
Type of Service	Care Homes
Registered Manager	Amanda Rae-Campbell Ann Dale Shirley Delap Pauline Oakley Marie Nicholson
Date of visit	06/09/19 19/09/19 27/09/19 04/10/19 11/10/19
Authorised representatives undertaking the visit	Gill Waite Pat Martin Jamie Odgers
Support Staff	Diane Lax Rachel McCabe

## Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch Darlington is carrying out a series of visits across Car Home premises throughout Darlington, this is to ascertain the quality of life and choices offered to Darlington residents living in a Care Home. The visits also incorporate how staff and relatives feel about working or having their friend/relative living in a care home.

## How the visit was conducted

The visits conducted were all announced visit with the Manager being given a 4-week notice via email. This was then followed up by sending posters confirming dates and surveys 2-weeks in advance of visits giving residents, family/friends and staff notice of visit and time to complete at their leisure. On the dates of the visits Healthwatch members were able to observe the condition of the premises, and interaction between the staff and residents. In addition, they were also able to talk with

residents, family/friends and with staff about how they felt about living, visiting and working in a care home.

Information gathered varied from care home to care home with some homes just having a few responses from residents and others just a few from staff. One care home did not have any Family/Friends/Visitor responses.

Five care homes were visited, these were chosen from a list provided by Darlington Borough Council.

One survey and one letter were received by post, both were anonymous. The letter was shared immediately with Care Quality Commission.

The following pages incorporate the questions asked and an overview of the responses received from residents, family, friends and staff. The information received on this third report reflects very much the same as the first and second report produced by Healthwatch Darlington, with a lot of the same responses giving an overall view that people are generally happy with the respective Care Homes they live in, visit and work.



## Overview of Responses and Observations

### Residents

#### **Do you feel safe in the home?**

- All the residents we spoke to say they feel safe in their respective homes.

*"Yes definitely, always someone to turn to". "Yes, feel safe". Very safe". "Yes, no doubt, extremely safe, I've settled in well". "Yes, the staff are about all the time". "I do". "Yes". "Very much so". "Reasonably"*

#### **Are there enough staff?**

- There was a mixture of comments with some residents thinking there was enough staff, others saying sometimes and then others commenting there wasn't enough:

*"For my needs, I have no complaints". "I think so". "Yes". "Yes, all times of the day". "Always staff when I've needed". "Yes, no complaints about them". "Yes, there is".*

*"Sometimes". "Not all the time" "Not always". "Don't know". "Sometimes yes, sometimes no". "Yes, except when busy". "Depends on the balance, different days and what else is happening".*

*"No". "No, number of residents need caring only 2 members of staff, long waiting times as so much to do, pressure on staff to do job". "No, they are ever so busy, working hard". "No, the biggest trouble is when you want the toilet". "No, not on a morning or on a night as lots to do getting people ready".*

#### **Do staff know you and how to care for you?**

- Residents felt that staff knew them and how to care for them, giving some very positive comments about staff with the exception of a couple:

*"No, do their best". "Yes, most of the staff".*

*"They do but they are so rushed plus busy" "Yes they do" "Yes". "Yes, give time, get along with you". "Yes, look after me well". "Really good, very attentive". "Yes, very well". "They care". "They know me well, look after me well". "Yes, they know all my circumstances both with movement and diet".*



**What do you think about the food? What are the meals like?**

- The majority of residents liked the food and the choices they got although there were some negative comments received:

*“Choice of 2 options at most meal times, usually something I like”.*

*“Breakfast and dinner first class, tea not the same standard”.* *“Very good”*

*“Mostly very good”.* *“Yes, all good”.* *“Good food, excellent-homecooked, especially the soup, gorgeous”.* *“Very good”.* *“Good food and always willing to accommodate me”.* *“Nice like the puddings”.* *“Nice food”.* *“Wholesome”*

*“Passable”.* *“It’s OK”.* *“I’m not a big eater so feel the food is reasonable, could be room for improvement”.* *“It’s Alright”.* *“Not bad”.* *“Ordinary, not good/bad”*

**Do you get to see healthcare professionals such as GP’s, nurses, dentist?**

- Majority of residents were happy that if they need to see a professional then this was arranged although there were some negative responses:

*“Yes”.* *“Never asked”.* *“Well looked after, very good if doctor is needed”.*

*“Yes, as necessary”.* *“District nurse, doctor visit when I ask for them, community matron came to speak to me about physio”.* *“Yes, when needed”.* *“Sees nurse for leg, but not seen GP yet”.*

*“Yes, sometimes”.* *“Not very often”.* *“Don’t know”.* *“No”.*

**Do they allow you to make decisions about your care and respect these?**

- Most residents were happy that they were able to make their own decisions or advise the staff about what they wanted, although there was a few who commented about not been able to:

*“Yes”.* *“Yes, very good from my point of view, encouraged to say”.* *“Yes, I would object if not happy or didn’t think it was right”.* *“Yes, they are very good”.* *“Yes, always”.* *“Yes, they do”* *“Yes, I’m the boss”.*

*“No”.* *“No but I tell them anyway, I will make it clear if I’m not happy. Not quite as good here as it used to be”.* *“Not sure”.* *“No, not helping like they could”*

**Have you ever complained and what was the outcome?**

- Many residents said that they had not complained or had reason to complain, those that had, some felt things were dealt with adequately while others were still awaiting it to be resolved:

*"Never". "No, haven't needed to". "No, no need to". "No" "Nothing to complain about". "No never". "Not at all, no need to anyway". "No, made suggestions on things, some of which have been welcomed, some not so much". "Not many complaints and it was sorted out". "I once complained about the noise and the manager sorted the situation out". "No, give and take not all plain sailing, encouraged to say if there is a problem". "Yes, disappointed as I feel I am not listened to".*

*"Yes, male staff member that's not very helpful and rude". "Have complained, feel I wasn't listened to". "Yes, was dealt with".*

**What is the atmosphere like in the home?**

- There was a lot of very positive comments about each of the respective Care Homes with only a couple of that were not so positive:

*"Cheerful". "Very Friendly". "Good I like it". "Good". "Easy going, relaxed but also efficient". "Happy". "Very Pleasant". "Friendly and happy". "Alright, I like it". "Very Good" "It's good, from what I've seen, sometimes attended planned events". "Absolutely brilliant mainly due to activities co-ordinator who is wonderful". "First class". "It's nice"*

*"Mixed". "Alright". "Its good but staff just don't have the time". "Fine". "Fair". "Most of the time"*

**Tell me one good thing about living here?**

- All the comments received from the residents were positive:

*"Company". Happy and content". "Well safe". "Can usually find something enjoyable to do that interests me". "Nothing to worry about". "All good". "24-hour care and attention by each and every member of staff". "Always someone about and care". "Choice". "Food is good, good choice". "Staff are good, look after me, check on me". "Never lonely". "Staff" "Getting cared for". "Friendly".*

**Tell me one thing you would like to see improved?**

*"Change menu sometimes". "When you ring for assistance, a carer will come and say they are busy and will be with you in 10 minutes, sometimes they do come back sometimes they don't". "More staff on a morning plus on a night". "Wages for staff" "Personal outings" "More time for staff to do things, they don't have enough time". "Nothing happy with everything". "Time, sometimes it takes longer for someone to come and help". "Would*

*like to go out". "More entertainment". "Nothing to improve". "To be listened to"*

#### Observations/Comments

- Further comments from residents:

*"I feel happy safe and secure"*

*"I have been in the home a while and the care I receive is very good, staff are pleasant and cheerful. My room is clean, tidy and very spacious."*

*"The home is excellent with the carers always available"*

#### Family/Friends/Visitors

##### Are you happy that your relative is safe?

- All those who responded felt their relative was safe with the exception of one who advised *"Not completely"*:

*"Definitely". "Very Happy". Yes, extremely". "Yes, well looked after" Yes it's nice to know someone is always near in case of falls". "Yes".*

##### What are staff like? Is there enough?

- Respondents felt that staff were very friendly and good, there were also comments about there not been enough or been rushed:

*"Generally friendly but however it would be nice if they spent more time with individuals". "Happy cheerful plus professional". "Staff are very good, perhaps extra staff at certain time". "Occasions not enough but good staff". "Good". "Yes, sometimes the staff look stressed". "Staff excellent" "All very friendly and caring, as with all work places having more staff eases the work load". "Mostly".*

##### Do staff know you and how to care for your relative?

- The majority of respondents felt that staff knew them and cared well for their relatives:

*"Yes, the staff know me and are open and honest with matters regarding my friend's care". "Yes". "They do". "Yes, they take really good care of my mum". "Yes, they are very good". "Yes, but not enough carers to carry out everything my relative needs, never had a shower or bath for a week". "Yes, they do know us and how to care for our relative".*

##### Have you ever visited during meal times? What do you and your relative think of the food?

- Most of the respondents commented that they had not visited at meal times:

*"I would not interrupt during meal times". "Friend is a fussy eater and she thinks it is adequate". "My father is always pleased with the food". "No, but I have seen what they are like, there is plenty of choice". "Yes, my relative eats whatever is put in front of them, meals ok". "Only once". "Yes, and excellent" "Great choice of food for meal times".*

**Are you involved with the care planning? GP, nurse or care manager visits?**

- There was a mixture of comments some advising yes with others not having any involvement:

*"No". "Yes". "Not really needed at the moment". "Yes, it has always been discussed with me". "Yes, I was asked to read care plan and if there was anything I could add and sign it". "Yes, we had a meeting with the matron". "No, I have to ring or talk to the office staff to find out information".*

**Complaints and compliments how are they dealt with?**

- Majority of respondents hadn't complaint, those that had made complaints gave a mixed response of how they were dealt with:

*"Sometimes issues aren't dealt with promptly". Yes, all dealt with, but some are sometimes not passed on". "Sometimes dealt with speedily when they remember, complaints are appreciated and, on the whole, should be a two-way thing". "I haven't had any, but I know they would be" "Had no complaints, any queries are dealt with immediately". "No complaints" "I have had it dealt with by the manager". "Through the manager" "Care Manager" "Yes"*

**Do you feel the home are honest and open with you?**

- Most respondents felt the home was open and honest:

*"Yes, I think so" "Yes, definitely". "Yes, on the whole, regretfully there are times when there are differences of opinions". "Yes, I do". "Hard to tell, have to accept what they say". "I think so". "Yes, everything above board and open".*

**Tell me one good thing about your relative/friend living here?**

- Family and friends felt that relatives were safe and had good care:

*"Safe and has a better diet". "Excellent treatment, love and care". "Knowing she is safe". "She gets regular medication she needs". "safe and cared for". "The staff take really good care of my mum and everyone is friendly, the home feels homely". "Staff excellent, always on hand". "We*

*know she is warm, well fed and not having to cope on her own". "Would not be able to cope, therefor in the best place".*

**Tell me one thing you would like to see improved?**

*"Nothing is apparent". "An exercise format to be introduced for those people who would benefit". "I don't know of anything". "Maybe more staff". "my mum's personal appearance, I think she could change her clothes more often and sometimes think her hair could do with a wash". "Perhaps more stimulation just walks up and down". "More carers". "Need to be kept more active, need more encouragement". "Checking batteries". "Answering the bell, it goes for ages sometimes". "Communication".*

**Observations/Comments**

**Further comments from family/friends/relatives.**

- *"The Care Home has looked after my friend in a caring efficient manner. If she has needed medical care the matron has been called and the problem addressed. I do not feel she could have been looked after any better anywhere else. I find I am glad I chose this home".*
- *"Nice clean place here at the care home. Well pleased with the care given"*
- *"I'm one of the GP registrars and always look forward to seeing patients at this care home. Patients are always happy and looked after very well".*
- *"The patient buzzers seem to be going constantly at certain times of the day, which implies residents aren't getting attended to very promptly? Also awful for visitors".*
- *"I first came to this care home by bringing a neighbour to visit her son, each time I was so impressed at the attitude and friendliness of the staff. When it came to deciding where my mother would be well cared for, I spoke to other members of my family about the lovely atmosphere and genuine care for the people at the care home and this still stands today".*
- *"Improvement is interaction with all residents by the entertainment team".*
- *"She loves flowers and it is lovely she is allowed to have a mini garden in her room".*
- *"Always warm but sometimes too warm. Relaxed and love to visit. Very grateful to the staff".*

- *"I find the staff always treat my father as an individual and no matter how many times I ring them, they are so polite and helpful. If dad is in a mood with himself, they tell me, which I really appreciate".*
- *"I was scared about putting my mum in a care home, but the staff have reassured me. I know she is well looked after and looks so much better in herself".*
- *"From my visit I cannot fault This care home".*
- *"Friendly staff, nothing is too much trouble. Management are excellent we always get straight answers to our queries".*
- *"Everyone had expressed the same views. They all praise the staff and love the dedication and attention they receive. One thing that could be improved is a bit more entertainment. 'Well done'".*
- *"The staff are very helpful".*
- *"Over the past year since being in this care home, my mother in law has gained some weight and her hair has grown back due to a more regular diet. She is content and happy although she does know that she has been there in excess of a year and still thinks at times that she will be returning home. She has made friends and joins in with some of the activities. Altogether, it has given us as a family peace of mind that she is safe and cared for".*
- *"In general, very happy with the care my husband gets, and they have lovely caring staff".*
- *"More staff needed in every area. This would enable the shortfalls to be covered. Mum has waited 5 months for a dentist to visit, lost her teeth in the home and has been toothless since then. Laundry is basic and ruins all her white underwear, we have to buy them every month because mum has standards and won't wear stained and dirty looking underwear".*
- *"I believe there should be more staff to meet the needs of the residents, however they do very well given the circumstances".*

## Staff

### **What is the process for raising concerns/safeguarding issue?**

- Staff showed good knowledge of how to address different situations:

*"We go to the manager and she will aid and help difficult issues". "If there is any concerns or safeguarding issues we report them to the manager and also make a written statement of how the concern occurred". "Ring*



*helpline for advice, complete a form to send to safeguarding, make management aware". "Report to home manager". "Speak to a member of management to raise concerns to follow correct procedure". "Speak to management, senior member of staff". "Using company policy, report to manager of straight to Darlington safeguarding team, number is on the board". "Any concerns the residents have or concerns I have I would raise with the team leader on duty and the manager who would report to CQC if they think necessary".*

**Do you think there are enough staff, are they all trained to the right level?**

- Staffing levels, there was a mixed response with some staff happy with the amount of staff and training received with others saying on occasions could do with more staff and training:

*"Yes". "Yes, and there is always ongoing training". "Yes, all staff attend regular training". "Training good, staff level ok but could do with more". "Yes, enough staff and training - on occasions lazy and ignorant". "No, need more staff". "More staff would be good, but we don't seem to be short staffed, we have lots of training" "On paper we have staff, a lot of times we work short". "More practical training would be beneficial". "According to company policy we have the correct amount of staff, however training needs addressing". "Yes, but at times staff ring in sick so can be short" "Yes and yes". "All trained to correct level" "All shifts are covered when staff on are leave etc. so staffing levels are correct also staff have training passports to ensure this is in line with the job role and training is always 100%". "No, there isn't enough staff for the high dependency of some residents, we require 3 staff at all times so that double resident can be cared for (personal care), whilst 1 remains on the floor for the other residents". "Could be more staff, those here are all capable and well trained".*

**Do you involve people in decisions about their care? How do you do this?**

- There was a good response with staff talking about care planning and person-centred care:

*"Yes, when an individual arrives, we ask for preferences and any needs they feel should be met, we try to keep residents involved in their care decisions as much as possible". "Yes. give choices to residents". "Yes, we residents and staff meet up quite regularly". "Ask them their needs/views, if they lack capacity ask family how they like their care done, but always ask the service users consent before carrying out activities even if they lack capacity". "Yes, we make care plans person centred around their needs". "Always". "Yes, their opinion counts"*

*“Complete monthly reviews with clients to ensure all is fine and ask their preferences and record for carers to follow, always giving residents choices”. “Yes, I would always ask the resident if they would like to do things independently first before assisting, and always give them choices, and I would record if any changes”. “The residents are involved in decisions if they want to be, the seniors will sort this out”. “Yes, ask for consent, invite family to attend monthly review inform family of changes”. “Yes, we do, example: How would you like to have your shower, assisted or on your own?”.*

**How do you ensure people eat and drink healthily? How is it recorded?**

- Food charts used to help monitor and record food and liquid intake choice in the menus:

*“If a resident is underweight, they are placed on a food/fluid chart, this records everything they eat or drink throughout, weekly weight checks are also done”. “Yes, food and fluid chart, care plan”. “Constant checking at all meal times, have jugs of juice in their rooms, food and fluid charts for all residents”. “The kitchen provides a healthy balanced diet, if anyone requires fortified food, the kitchen will provide this also, some service users have food charts if losing weight to monitor intake”. “It’s recorded in the new phone system, and it’s always best to encourage eating and drinking”. “Residents have nutritious diets or fortified or adapted if needed, recorded on PCS (electronic system) on nutrition watch”. “Yes, documented in their care plan advise a healthy diet and encourage fluids”. “In care plan on iPad”. “By following their nutrition needs and recording in their care plan everything they have eaten or drank”. “This is recorded on our electronic devices, team leaders check this”. “Food charts, if losing weight, care plan, weekly/monthly weight”. “The residents are encouraged to eat, drink healthily, we complete food charts”.*

**How do you promote peoples independence?**

- Staff ask the residents what they would like encouraging independence where appropriate:

*“It’s important to maintain independence as long as possible. I encourage individuals to wash themselves, be independent with meals”. “Let people do as much as they can on their own but observe”. “We encourage them to try to do as much as possible for themselves”. “Giving choice of meals, outfits and giving them tools e.g. flannel and towel to bath themselves”. “Offering help where appropriate”. “Encourage the residents to do as much as they can for themselves without taking their independence”. “We always try to encourage our residents to keep their independence, but at times we need to help and advise”. “Encouragement prompts”. “Allow them to do*



*what they can for themselves and encourage them to do things that their ability allows". "Pre-admission assessments are carried out to identify the level of care required, staff encourage residents to remain as independent as possible and don't take independence from them". "Person centred approach encourage independence". "By support plan, talk to family".*

**How are people able to give their opinions on the service?**

- Most respondents said that they use regular meetings with residents, families talking to staff as well as surveys:

*"Regular resident meetings are held". "The home sends out questionnaires once a year to get opinion and suggestions from families, resident's meetings where they can voice their opinions and queries". "Vocal ring/phone calls, writing". "Regular customer surveys are sent out to complete, regular resident's meetings are held, one-to-one with staff regularly take place". "They speak to staff members who can then report back to the appropriate person". "We have resident's meetings where all residents can attend and voice their opinions, we also have a service sheet that can also be filled out". "Resident and relative's meetings are held in the home, but the management are always on hand to receive comments/opinion". "We have complaints procedures and service user meetings to discuss views where improvements are needed". "We have monthly resident's meetings where both residents/relatives are able to discuss improvements to the service, also the manager has an open-door policy". "Residents meetings and family meeting, staff meetings".*

**What is the atmosphere like in the home? Do you enjoy working here?**

- Feedback was very positive with most enjoying the team work and the atmosphere in the home, there was a couple of exceptions around morale:

*"Oh I love my job, it's a wonderful home, everyone is happy and friendly, when people visit they always say it feels nice and it doesn't smell. I'm glad I work here I love the service users". "Atmosphere is calm, yes, I enjoy working here". "I have worked in several residential home and I find here is a great place to work, staff always friendly and will go the extra mile for the residents which in turn makes happy residents". "Love working here, like a second home, great atmosphere". "Positive, yes, as a visiting professional". "We have a good relationship with service users and family, also the staff are happy to help each other when needed, yes, I enjoy working here". "Stressful at times but yes I enjoy working here" "The atmosphere at times needs improvement, there has been lots of changes in the home and has led to unrest, yes, I want to assist in improving the home which will be a challenge". "All the staff have a really good rapport with the residents and the staff always seem to get on well with each other".*

*"Friendly and homely". "The home has a family friendly attitude, I have worked here 10 years without any issues". "Mixed, depends on the day and the individual, some people can be difficult". "The atmosphere is warm, friendly and cheerful. staff are helpful and polite to all who come through the door. There are times when morale can be low". "The atmosphere is okay most of the time, yes, I like working here".*

**Tell me 1 good thing about the service?**

- Lots of good comments about working together, family atmosphere:

*"Residents are well cared for and management are VERY supportive if problems arise". "The staff always try to do their best for the residents". "You always get respect from others". "The residents, the staff, the manager". "The residents seem happy and content here". "Everyone feels able to chat if they have a problem which is a good thing". "Everyone is willing to help with any of the needs of the residents and their families". "Love and care for all in the home - Team work". "We are customer focused and residents have a say in what they want and how they want to see things". "I feel we look after our SU really, our home is ran well and the managers are great, our home never smells and it's always clean". "The care is excellent, the residents are well cared for and loved, the management team are very approachable and help out in every way".*

**Tell me 1 thing you would like to see improved?**

- Most responses commented about improving things for the residents and rates of pay for staff:

*"I would like to be paid more, I think I work hard enough to have a good wage". "More staff to allow more time with the customer". "Customers coming onto the home at an earlier stage". "Management". "Nothing I can think of". "Training, surroundings and refurbishment". "Staff numbers". "More funds for residents for more outings and activities". "The staff level increase should be based on dependency not occupancy i.e. could have 6 empty rooms but the level of dependency for residents could be high". "Staffing levels are right but would like more". "More money put in for resident's funds". "Wages". "More staff, it's always nice to have extra staff". "More money for events".*

**Observations / Comments**

- *"I do think sometimes that carers should be taken more notice of as they are the direct link between resident and senior. Just because they are seniors does not mean they are always in the right. Carers should not be made to feel that their views, opinions are just dismissed and are not*

important”.

- *“Sometimes I can have a good day at work and enjoy my work. However, I feel as though I am not valued as a member of the team and feel as though I’m singled out at times. I also feel as though jobs such as showers are left to me because there are some members of staff that can’t be bothered and don’t get a consequence. I feel as though I am not respected as a team member by certain seniors. However, I do enjoy working with some members of staff because they involve me in the team”.*
- *“I love working here. It is clean for our residents and our manager is great”.*
- *“I love the home, I’ve worked here for 14 years and will continue to give my life to the home”.*
- *“The home is a very friendly homely environment with a high level of care to the residents. I enjoy being in this environment”.*
- *“I love my job and enjoy working here and hope I will be here a long time”.*
- *“Overall the home needs refurbishment and staff training improved”.*
- *“I’ve observed high staff turnover. Inadequate qualifications for certain requirements for residents (e.g. moving and handling). Improvement on quality of food standards, particularly desserts. Overall since working here, the home has improved; there have been incidents that have been resolved efficiently. We have had new staff join our team over the last couple months, which are training up for various roles within the home”.*
- *“I enjoy working here and always look forward coming to work. It’s like one big happy family where everybody gets on with one another and enjoy spending time with the resident and encouraging them to do activities”.*
- *“All residents get respected as individuals and given 100% care for their needs. Treat all as you would your own family. 100% love and care, respect”.*
- *“For my employer to keep up the good work and this care home to continue to be a very good care home”.*
- *“Only been here over a year and noticed we have great support from our home manager and our deputy manager. They are very supportive of staff*

*but are very customer focused and like to keep great standards when providing assistance, support and care to our residents here, which I believe is great for our residents”.*

- *“This care home is a very nice home to work in and we have some good staff and great residents and families. There is a lot going on and residents are treated with respect and dignity”.*

### Healthwatch Darlington Observations

This third report has followed very much the same as the previous two reports with residents being very happy with the respective homes they live in and relatives feeling that their family member was looked after. Observations noted that interaction between residents and staff was very kind and caring.

Each of the homes were very welcoming, with the manager or senior member of staff greeting us and introducing us to the environment, staff, visitors and residents.

The cleanliness of all the homes was very good, on entering we were also pleased to see that all the homes were displaying our information of the visit, in the communal areas and on notice boards. Some of the notice boards displayed the menus for the week along with activities that would be taking place during the week.

In some of the homes there were dementia memory items for residents to use and play with, hairdressing in another home had residents chatting about hair cut's and what they were planning to have done.

*“The atmosphere in each of the homes I visited seemed cheerful, they were clean, bright, with staff asking if people are ok and chatting”.*

*“I was present at three of the visits, it was great to be able to chat to residents and listen to their comments. Staff were welcoming and it was lovely to see the care and understanding they showed to their residents”*

*“As a volunteer I was very pleased by the friendly reception I received from staff. The atmosphere was very warm and welcoming during the visit and if I were a resident, I believe I would be very confident I would receive a very high standard of care”.*

*“I continue to be impressed by the care homes I have visited. The staff are very committed to ensuring the residents are cared for to a high standard”.*

## Recommendations

- Promote ratio of staff to number of residents so that the staff delivering the service, the residents receiving the service, and relatives of residents visiting understand the requirements set out by the Home regarding the number of staff per number of the residents.
- For staff to spend more time with residents where possible, giving a better 1 to 1 service.
- For residents to be given the opportunity to get out doors in the fresh air more, either in the garden or by trips out.
- Being aware of small housekeeping and meal time issues as these can make a big difference to residents if rectified.

## Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch Darlington team of staff and volunteers would like to thank all residents, family, friends and staff for their time in completing the surveys and talking to us. All the homes were very welcoming, open and honest during our visit and is very much appreciated. Our report will be shared with the Care Homes involved as well as the Care Quality Commission, Darlington Borough Council Commissioning Team and the public.

## Control Sheet

Date Draft Submitted	7 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
Date Response due	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
Date Response Received	30 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
Follow up actions	N/A
Published	2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2019



