



healthwatch
East Riding
of Yorkshire

Virtual Care Home Engagement Project



Report

Kirkella Mansions

June 2021

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire
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Overview/Background

Kirkella Mansions is a residential Care Home that provides personal and nursing care to service users aged 65 and over. Kirkella Mansions is registered to take care of individuals with Dementia, mental health conditions, physical disabilities, substance misuse, sensory impairment, and old age.

A detached property within its own grounds and parking in the centre of the village of Kirkella. It accommodates 25 people in single bedrooms, has three lounge areas, a dining space and a passenger lift. There is lifting equipment available to staff and some people have their own personal mobility equipment. Some bedrooms have en-suite facilities. There is a garden/court yard area for people to access in the warmer weather.

Methodology

We began engagement with Kirkella mansions the week commencing the 27th of June 2021. We gave notice to the Home that we would be conducting the virtual engagement, this consisted of a letter for the manager explaining the days and times of the engagement, posters and flyers to distribute to staff and residents, advertising the purpose of our visit, and paper questionnaires that could be completed by staff and residents if they chose to. They were also given Healthwatch's freepost address to send material to.

We advertising the engagement via posters & flyers in the home and an email to inform relatives/friends that we would be visiting and attaching a link to the survey Monkey Questionnaire, so they would have the opportunity to give us their views.

The Activities Coordinator was contacted in order that we could make supported appointments for residents so that they could discuss their experiences with Volunteers at mutually convenient times during the weeklong engagement.

Managers section

The Manager, Jeff Donnelly, has been the manager of Kirkella Mansions in the year 2000, 2008 and 2012- to date.

Jeff said that their CQC rating accurately reflected the level of care provided, but stated that he felt that although their care rating has been consistently good, systems to provide evidence have let their other CQC ratings down.

Kirkella Mansions currently has 16 residents with 24 beds available, 11 of these rooms have en-suite facilities and there are 2 additional shower rooms, 4 toilets and a specialist bathroom with a moveable hoist facility.

There are 11 full-time members of care staff and 7 part time, 4 staff work from 7am-2pm, and 3 work from 2pm to 8pm. Two staff members work on the night shift whilst 1 member of staff is on call. Staff absences are covered by care staff managers and proprietors working additional hours.

There are three housekeeping staff, two cooks, a maintenance person, a finance administrator, an activities coordinator and an assistant manager.

Maintenance and repairs are dealt within the setting, and are managed by the in-house maintenance staff and independent contractors.

Kirkella Mansions has a food hygiene rating of 5. Residents' food is cooked and prepared on the premises by the home's 2 cooks. The menu is reviewed every 4 weeks driven by residents' choices and input. Meals are freshly made daily on site with fresh fruit and veg, and with produce from the local butcher. Dietary requirements are also catered for, residents who are diabetic or have additional nutritional needs are assessed and given supplement diet and fluids, through fortified nutrition. If the residents have any problems eating or swallowing a dietician and speech therapist would become involved. A food menu is clearly displayed outside the dining room on a large notice board with the daily choices (this is also in picture card form also for residents with advanced dementia). Fruit juice is available in three flavours as is fresh chilled water. Residents can have drinks, hot or cold, at any time.

Resident's weight and fluid intake is monitored every month, if they have a low BMI range this is increased to weekly/fortnightly. The home refer to the dietician if there are any concerns. Additionally a daily nutrition and fluid chart is used to record and monitor input.

Health care

The residents have their hearing tested through a referral to audiology (Castle Hill Hospital) or in a private appointment. This is done annually, though this has been on hold due to COVID unless there is an urgent issue. For residents that do have a hearing issue and a hearing aid, this can be managed locally, and there is a private facility who visit the home. The residents also have their sight checked annually by a company called Vision Clear. Some families like their loved ones to use their own opticians, however the majority are happy with Vision Clear or they can use the prescription to get glasses from a different optician.

The Manager praised the homes local GP service, explaining that they have been very good in giving regular visits to the residents. Every Wednesday morning, Jenny, a fast response paramedic/nurse, will come and do ward round checks to all residents.

The residents have foot care every 8-10 weeks. This is facilitated by NHS Podiatry and the homes practitioner unless the resident has a preference to use another service. This is recorded in the daily report notes and care plan.

There have been no issues accessing most healthcare providers. However, they did have some negative experience with hospital discharge. Jeff stated that discharge can be fragmented and unreliable, with little communication, and things like the residents 'just turning up' back at the home, and lack of COVID testing has been an issue.

“When we get the call from hospital now I have more confidence, we ask if they have been tested but often results haven't come back. We isolate residents for 14 days on arrival. We have to vary this according to resident's needs and abilities. One resident who is very confused was challenging to keep in their room due to their confusion. We've managed this successfully.”

Staff are trained and can have additional training when needed, both of which is provided in house and externally via an online service. This training is refreshed annually, and additional training is driven by looking at the client needs and identifying gaps.

Although the home did provide day care/ respite care, none is being provided at the moment.

Some residents do have end of life plans in place, this is where applicable and with residents who have capacity. This is discussed with families to enable choices to be made. Care plan and risk assessments are personal to the individual. Reviews take place every three months or sooner dependant on change and a formal review takes place annually, with the resident, their family and the local authority. Independent advocates may also be involved in the process if necessary.

“The pandemic situation this has really increased their levels of skill and responsibility. We can now test urine, monitor oxygen saturation and blood pressure. This has been really good for the staff to be given the trust and responsibility of this. Enabling the staff to do this has been very uplifting for them. I'd like more formalised training so that this can continue”.

Communication

The resident's friends and family are kept informed of their relatives care and activities through frequent email updates, Zoom or Teams calls and face to face discussion for families not able to visit. Local relatives can come to the home to receive updates.

Residents meetings are usually held every 3 to 4 months but the home has been providing regular information via easy read on the current pandemic and discussion.

Relatives meetings are held every 6 months however the home has been communicating with relatives via email weekly/fortnightly to keep them informed of the homes activity and verbal discussions individually on the telephone.

The home does normally provide external trips for its residents, weather permitting, however this is currently postponed due to the pandemic.

“There is a dynamic resident risk assessment for each resident. We find out what people would like to do and will do this if it can be done safely on any particular day. We have to arrange the rota to enable us to do this safely. This is the dynamic part of it”

There are measures put in place to ensure residents feel connected to their local community. The home has links with local schools, churches and community centres, who can visit when applicable. The home manager is passionate about providing the best service possible for the residents to ensure their wellbeing. When a new resident comes into the home they have a detailed assessment. The staff consider where best to suggest the resident may wish to sit during the first few days of settling in, for example with another resident with shared interests, that they are likely to form a friendship with. Staff are also nominated to observe and engage with residents to develop a relationship with them.

Information gathered during the assessment process helps to determine the person's religious and cultural background and how this has been pursued prior to admission. Staff

can provide support in the community to continue this practice or arrange and facilitate visits to the home.

The Complaints policy is displayed on notice boards and information provided in easy read format. Copies are provided to residents and families on admission along with the homes statement of purpose and information pack.

COVID

The home has kept up to date with current COVID guidance and has been offering visiting whenever possible, it has not restricted visiting at all. However, they are strict with their process and infection control. The layout of Kirkella mansions allows for garden access to the home without incurring footfall throughout the building.

There has been an adequate supply of PPE and all other COVID related essentials throughout this time and there has never been a situation where this has been an issue.

“During the pandemic we followed guidance with visiting. One of the challenges was the difference between national guidance, which was in the media, and local guidance. Locally guidance may be that you couldn’t allow visiting yet”

The current visitation rules within the home is in accordance with the current local guidance as given by the local authority and public health. This means that two nominated visitors are allowed to have an internal face to face visit or can organise a trip out with their loved on in an outside space. Other visits occur in a screened room and with an appointment only policy. Essential carers and end of life visits can also occur within the home.

“The challenge was around understanding of families arriving testing appointments etc. Families have to book a visit. There are 2 visiting rooms, 1 room with a screen and another visiting room with no screen. Visitors can also visit in garden we can accommodate more than one visit out here. Visitors can be outside and resident in their room so social distancing. No one size fits all”

The vaccination process has also happened smoothly, and the staff take up rate is around 80%. The management continue to engage with staff not yet vaccinated to ensure they have accurate information and encouragement.

The plans for the future to keep everyone safe is that they will continue to monitor and research the latest guidance and follow regulation and legislation provided by local authority and public health and the homes regulator. The home will also continue to maintain infection prevention and control.

Support

The Manager stated that there has been excellent support from the local authority, and the infection control teams for advice.

The home does not usually have any difficulties with staff retention and recruitment. The home advertises on the new local authority employment portal, and staff retention has always been good. There had not been any staff difficulties throughout this time, as staff will cover each other and the management and proprietors offer support and cover where necessary.

The staff meetings were typically held quarterly, however during the pandemic the home has introduced a communication hub where all information is displayed and updated to keep everyone informed. Jeff and the staff also hold 'mini meetings' in order to update.

Regarding Quality Assurance Systems, Jeff stated that the home has a yearly plan of Quality Assurance activity covering all aspects of the home, this looks at different areas of the home practice and monitor and feedback results to always improve practice.

“This has been a very demanding year with increased pressures of constant change of regulation and guidance”.

Residents section

Living in the home

The longest staying resident had lived at Kirkella mansions for seven years, the most recent resident has lived there for 18 months. All the residents we spoke to said that they found the home to be homely and nice to live in and most found the staff to be very friendly and got on with them well.

“On the whole yes they are friendly. Just the odd one. Most are very pleasant and helpful”

“The girls make it nice to live here. Everybody’s jolly. There’s a good atmosphere here”.

“I am quite happy here. I have all my own things and an iPad and TV”

“Some are really nice, some aren’t as sociable. Most are OK it’s just the odd one. The one who got me up this morning was a bit grumpy”.

Residents were asked what they do not like as much about living at the home. Although some residents answered that they struggle with not being able to go out much, most stated that there is nothing really that they do not like living at Kirkella Mansions.

The residents talked about hobbies and interests they had before moving into the Home. They stated they loved to go out with their families, travelling, baking, sewing and gardening. Looking at what the residents are able to do now they are living at the home, some residents said that they join in with most home activities like dominoes and other games, crafts and drawing, armchair exercises, reading, using the iPad and engaging with the local church. We asked residents what they missed, and mostly residents answered that they missed their family and having trips out.

The home used to put on entertainers for the residents however this has been put on hold due to COVID restrictions. However the home does put on themed evenings, for instance a Hawaiian afternoon with themed foods. Similarly, residents explained that they have not been able to go on their usual trips due to the pandemic, but they have still been able to use the garden facilities.

There is an activities board which informs the residents what activities are happening and when.

The residents said that they have a variety of options at meal times and were fairly happy with the food are provided. None of the residents we spoke to have any dietary requirements, however one resident was a vegetarian and answered that their preferences were catered for. Similarly the home offers plenty of drink choices to the residents, with tea, coffee, water and juices being available whenever the residents want them.

“It's very good really. There is always something else if you don't like what's on”

“Sometimes people don't like what other people like. There's always a choice or they'll do something else for you”

“Ask for them when I want, no drink stations, girls bring round can get a snack if ask”

“If you want extra you can have it. I like cereals. I love Weetabix”.

All the residents we spoke to answered that they felt both safe and content within the home. All the residents liked their room, and had the option of having most of their own things around them, like pictures, postcards and televisions. The residents also said that the bed in their room was comfy and answered that they are warm enough within their rooms and whilst in bed. Most residents we spoke to liked their view from their window and had a view of the garden and courtyard area. All the residents answered that they felt their room is fresh and clean.

“Yes, happy and content, well looked after, girls friendly”.

“You never see a spec in the whole place. It's so clean. I don't know how they keep it so clean”.

All residents said that the staff responded to the buzzer promptly, though they understood that if there is a delay it is because they are dealing with someone more urgent. All residents stated that the staff are pleasant, friendly and helpful. None of the residents we spoke to said they had a keyworker, suggesting that the home have several staff members responsible for each resident. Every resident we spoke to answered that they felt supported by the staff, that they felt listened to and knew that if they wanted or needed anything that the staff would put it in place for them.

“Its different people (who look after me). Someone gives me a shower or a bath and I can have my hair done”

“Yes well looked and after listened to. Nothing to bother about, calm and relaxed”

All the resident knew who they would go to in case they had a question or felt unhappy about something, with most answering that they would speak to Jeff the manager.

We asked residents how they access healthcare services, such as GP or Opticians, when necessary. The residents answered that if they wanted to make an appointment with a health care service, they would either let one of the staff members Jeff know. The home also has regular visits from healthcare staff, such as podiatrist and opticians, both private and NHS. The nurse practitioner also comes to the home every Wednesday if needed. According to some residents, the dentist also used to come and visit the home occasionally.

Although some residents explained that they do have visits to the Audiology department at Castle Hill, some residents we spoke to said they are currently struggling with their hearing and expressed an interest at having their hearing checked.

“We've been to audiology recently at Castle Hill”

“No I haven't. I would like to have it done. I did have it done before I came they said I had a perforated ear drum and can't hear properly with the other. I don't have a hearing aid. I would like to see someone about my hearing”

Visiting

We asked residents if their family and friends are now able to come into the home and visit them. The residents explained that yes, they are now allowed regular visitors by appointments. Some residents are still mainly using non face to face communications with their loved ones, using the internet, on platforms like Zoom, or telephone, due to their family living far away. The residents understand the visiting procedure to be an hour long appointment within a designated visiting room, or families can visit the residents out in the garden or gazebo and in that setting they can stay for as long as they want to.

Relatives

Relatives of the residents were asked how they found the staff to be, and they all answered that they found the staff to be extremely friendly and polite without exception. Similarly the relatives that we heard from answered that, from what they have seen, they believe all interactions between residents and staff are positive and friendly. All relatives also answered that the staff are available when their loved one needs them and said that their loved one speaks positively about the home and about their carers.

The relatives/friends we heard from said they have been involved in their loved ones care plan.

We then asked how Kirkella Mansions communicated with them. Mostly commonly this is done via phone, email or face to face. All relatives said that they have been invited to attend meetings regarding their loved ones care, however due to COVID this is now mostly in the form of calls or emails.

One relative said their loved one enjoyed things like watching TV, listening to the radio and to music, taking part in Bingo and quizzes, reminiscing about the past, birdwatching, drawing and colouring and gentle exercise. Relatives said that their loved ones do get involved with the homes activities when possible, engaging in communal conversations, feeding and watching the birds, using the iPad and watching TV. All relatives answered that their loved one are encouraged to take part in the activities, and the activity coordinator gets the residents engaged and involved.

Most of the relatives we spoke to felt that their loved ones room reflects them and have been able to make it their own with their own furniture and photographs. However some relatives were unable to say as they have not seen their loved ones room due to COVID restrictions. Relatives who had said they were happy with the cleanliness of their loved ones room are similarly happy with the cleanliness of the home with many stating that it is very clean.

All relatives we heard from said that they are now able to visit their loved ones in person, however this is with precautions in place. The relatives explained that they must have pre-visit testing, have their temperature taken on arrival and full PPE if necessary, depending on the type of visit. The home has designated rooms, or the visits can take place in the courtyard. Some relatives said that they have also recently been able to take their loved one out in the car.

“I am very happy with this care home at this time”

“Kirkella Mansions is a well-run, friendly place. My mother is very happy there”

“Mum went in the home as she hated being on her own after her husband died. She has loved it they are caring and the owner is fantastic with people any worries are dealt with and we are often given calls to keep us posted with things”

We asked relatives if they knew who to speak to if they wanted to make a complaint and all said that they did, with most answering that they would speak with the manager. All the relatives of the residents we spoke to said that they are extremely happy with the quality of care their loved one is receiving.

Conclusion

To conclude, we found that the home has been adequately supplied with PPE and all other COVID related essentials, and is managing well with the current situation and under the ever changing guidance. The Manager feels supported in their role, having had consistent support from the East Riding of Yorkshire council and the infection control team for advice.

Residents said they found Kirkella Mansions homely and a nice place to live. Residents liked their rooms, found their beds comfortable and thought their rooms were fresh and clean. All residents we spoke to explained that they felt safe and secure living in Kirkella Mansions. All the residents knew who they would go to in case they had a question or felt unhappy about something, with most stating that they would raise anything with The Manager.

Relatives said they found the staff to be extremely friendly and polite, and believe all interactions between residents and staff are positive and friendly. All relatives we heard from also answered that the staff are available when their loved one needs them and said that their loved one speaks positively about the home and about their carers. Relatives all said they knew who to speak to if they wanted to make a complaint, most answering that they would speak with the manager. All the relatives of the residents we spoke to said that they are extremely happy with the quality of care their loved one is receiving.

Recommendations

We would recommend that the home:

1. Introduce yearly hearing tests for all residents. Residents with hearing aids should be having these checked every 6 months by an Audiologist.
2. Introduce a key worker system.

We would further recommend that there is consistency and clarity of information coming from Public Health England & Local Authorities. Further that the Government should ensure that Local Authorities and care homes be given time to implement changes such as changes to visiting rules.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire would like to thank Kirkella Mansions, Jeff Donnelly the registered manager, and all the staff at the home for their help and involvement with the virtual engagement. We would also like to thank all the residents and relatives for their participation. Thank you to our Healthwatch East Riding volunteers who helped us facilitate the project.

Distribution

This report has been distributed to the following:

- Healthwatch England
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- East Riding Clinical Commissioning Group
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- the Healthwatch Humber network