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# Belgravia Care Home Report

December 2015

Healthwatch Blackpool

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*Resident's voices - a Healthwatch Blackpool Review*

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Details of visit

Details of visit:	
Service Address	Belgravia Court, Blackpool. FY1 2LB
Service Provider	Belgravia Care Home
Date and Time	15/12/2015 @ 10:00 HRS
Healthwatch Representatives	S Garner, S, Vickers
Contact details: Healthwatch Blackpool	333 Bispham Rd, Blackpool.

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution and for facilitating us to carry out our consultation.

## 1.3 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time. |

The views expressed in this report are primarily from those who reside in the home. It is acknowledged that some of the participants in our studies may suffer from conditions such as dementia or other memory impairments which do not enable them to give fully balanced and reflective views. However we feel that it is essential that every voice is heard and recognise our duty to all who receive care in Blackpool. In order to allow for this to happen we request feedback from the care home for clarification of the issues that are raised.

## 2 What is Healthwatch Review?

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Part of the local Healthwatch Blackpool programme is to carry out regular reviews and visits to health and social care services. Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorized representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Our visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch reviews are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

### 2.1 Purpose of Visit

To gather information about the experience of living in a care home in Blackpool directly from those who reside in them, including quality of life factors such as activities and choices. Also to look at homes from the perspective of "would I wish for my relative to live here?"

### 2.2 Why did we do this?

Many of our elderly people in residential care have no one to speak on their behalf. Working alongside the CQC (Care Quality Commission) and Blackpool Council, Healthwatch Blackpool contacted, by letter, 14 Residential Care Homes in Blackpool in December 2015. We asked if we could come into their homes and speak to the residents. We wanted to know if they were happy about the levels of care that they were receiving.

## 2.3 What were our aims?

Our aim was to allow the residents to have a voice and a say in the care that they were receiving. Were they living in comfort, did they have privacy, did they receive 1 to 3 home cooked meals daily, was their housekeeping and laundry services met and was there a plan in place to manage their medication needs etc. To do this we needed the help and the cooperation of not only the residents but also the care homes, their staff and the families/carers of the residents. By collating this information we were able to evaluate the quality of care within each care home we visited.

## 2.4 Methodology

It was decided beforehand that we did not want to perform an enforced Enter and View visit to any Residential Care Home in Blackpool. We felt that to be invited to attend the home would give us a more balanced view and encourage openness and co-operation with the care home. To do this we wrote to every care home we intended to visit, outlining our intentions and the purpose of the visit. We also provided every home with a full colour poster confirming the date and time of our visit and its aims. We asked that each care home place the poster in a prominent position where staff, residents and resident's families / carers could read it. A few days before each visit we telephoned the care homes to confirm that they were aware of our visit, the date and time of the visit and the intentions of the visit.

On the day of the visit all Healthwatch representatives wore identification badges. Before speaking to any resident we explained fully who we were and the purpose of our visit. Those residents that were happy to speak to us were asked a series of open ended questions about what they liked most and what they felt could be improved. We confirmed that their name would not be linked with anything that they told us and that they were free to end the conversation at any point. We made observations throughout the visit and made notes of what we saw around the home.

## 2.5 Summary of provider

Belgravia is a mid-sized care home situated on Blackpool's coast. Parking facilities are available at the front of the home. The home cares for 15 individuals. There is a ramp access to the home for people with mobility problems.

Entrance to the home was through a secure locked door, the manager greeted us on arrival and we were asked to sign the visitor's book. The residents were free to move around the home as they pleased. On the day of our visit we met with the manager who made us feel welcome and facilitated us while we conducted our visit.

## 2.6 Results of visit

### General

Many of the residents praised the location, food and staff of Belgravia. *'There is always someone available to help'*. The activities such as pantomime visits and being able to walk on the sea front were important to the residents we spoke to. There was also a strong social aspect of the home which residents told us about.

There were a few issues with some residents feeling isolated and in their words 'bored'. Individuals told us that they were excluded from some activities due to their medical conditions. One told us they felt the home was not fit for purpose due to leaks and the number of repairs they considered needed attending to.

### Food and drink

All the residents we spoke to told us they felt the food at Belgravia was varied and that they all get a choice. 2 told us they didn't like the food and one said they 'couldn't get used to it'. Around half we spoke to enjoyed the food and in particular liked the biscuits and tea. We were told by one individual the home accommodates their dietary needs. In conversation with the kitchen staff we discovered there was a 4 weekly rota of food, with choices available to the service users for other options.

### Activities

Some of the residents were able to leave the care home independently and occasionally chose to go to Blackpool town centre, or for a walk on the prom - other walks were organised. The home had recently taken all of the residents to the pantomime theatre production. Also in the past they have had singers in the home. Taxi rides were available for shopping and visiting family members. However other residents felt there was not much to do except watch TV in the lounge which overlooked the promenade. Others stay in their room to watch DVDs as they do not like the lounge and communal areas.

Whilst we were visiting there was an activity being held in a downstairs room, in

which 5 residents were colouring in a Christmas tree on flipchart paper with a member of staff. All the residents appeared to be enjoying themselves and each others' company. There was also another downstairs room available with a bar for additional activities. There is also a board in the main lounge complete with information and feedback from service users.

### Staff

All but one of the people we spoke to told us they felt the staff were either good or very good. In the main we were told staff were polite and respectful. One resident told us they like the fact they were helpful with medication and supporting them to do as they please. One resident told us that despite the staff being helpful to them they didn't like the fact they have to wait to be taken and supported for personal care. They told us sometimes it can be discomfoting to wait but other than that they felt the staff adequately supported their needs. One resident had several complaints about the staff and felt they were not supportive and competent enough in relation to their needs.

Most residents explained that staff were respectful, capable and very understanding of the needs of the residents. The residents were mostly extremely content and felt the carers could do the job that was required. When Healthwatch arrived we found the staff to be professional and supportive of our review.

### Involvement in key decisions around their care

None of the residents indicated to us that they felt they were excluded from making decisions towards their care. Overall people were happy with the way things were run. No one felt the need to suggest changes toward the way they're consulted.

### Concerns & Complaints

Belgravia operates a key worker system and assigns a member of staff to lead on residents care. The majority of the individuals we spoke to felt if they had a problem they could speak to their keyworker and their issue would be addressed and dealt with. A few residents told us they would ask their family member to convey their concerns. Only one person we spoke to told us they didn't know who their keyworker is, they did say that they would inform staff and something would be resolved.

However, one resident did tell us that despite knowing who their key worker was, they felt they were very busy and didn't have time for them.

## 2.7 Recommendations

This report highlights the practice that we observed and reflects the feeling that residents felt about the care and support that they were receiving. While it was not our intention during this visit to make recommendations. It was our intention to talk to residents and ask if there was anything that they felt would improve their quality of life within the care home. Residents felt that the following areas could be looked at for improvement:

### Activities

Residents felt that there were not enough activities available during the day

### Food

Residents were evenly split between enjoying the food and not liking it.

## 2.8 Service Provider response

Belgravia Care home was given 28 days to respond to this report but we received no official response from them.