

# Parkside Care Home, Reading: a Healthwatch Reading visit report

**Where:** Parkside House Nursing Home, Parkside Road, Reading RG30 2DP

**When:** May 22nd, 2018, for 2.5 hours in the afternoon and May 31st, 2018, for 2 hours in the morning.

**Who:** 32 residents spoke with trained Healthwatch Reading staff members. We spoke to 23 women and 9 men. Of these, 2 residents were aged 55-64, 4 were aged 65-74, 3 were 75-84 and 20 were 85 or older. All but one resident described their ethnicity as: White British (27), Indian (2), Other White (1) and Mixed (1).

**Why:** Healthwatch Reading is visiting local care homes to:

- Give older, frail, or unwell people a chance to have their say about their care
- Make observations about the general 'feel' of homes, how they meet individual needs and how their staff interact with residents
- Understand residents' access to health professionals
- Collect any experiences about residents being admitted to hospital from the care home, and/or discharged from hospital to the care homes.

**How:** Healthwatch Reading has statutory 'Enter and View' powers to visit care homes but arranged all visits with care homes in advance on a pre-agreed date, to allow staff to plan and understand the visits.

## How residents describe living at Parkside:

- The majority thought staff were good and helped them to wash and dress, one stating that the staff were very patient.
- Most residents said they had access to a GP and that staff would arrange. One person saw an optician at the home whilst others went out to see an optician and dentist.
- Some residents felt that they were included in discussions about their care.
- Residents mentioned that they enjoyed activities, mentioning musical and animal bingo, going out to a local café, bible reading and quizzes.
- A number of residents told us that they enjoyed sitting in the garden, one stating 'it feels countryish'.
- One resident explained to us that she had made a lot of friends since she had come to the home.

## Residents' comments: what they like

*'Excellent, food on the whole good. Activity sheet, I join in, staff look after me really well. The carers do a good job.'*

*'I like living here, the food is good, the staff do a good job.'*

*'Everything is good as far as I am concerned. Excellent care and all the staff do a good job. Visitors come as they choose. Lots of activities, I join in.'*

*'I cherry pick what I eat, I tend to choose health breakfast. They do their best, lots of tea. The staff are good, do their best. Visitors come and see me. Carers are good but stretched. Niggly things, TV not working.'*

*'I like everything, I am happy here. The food is good. The staff are lovely and wonderful, can't fault them.'*

*'All the staff very good. Food very good and get choice. Join in activities, bingo, dancing and going to café. Have visitors anytime.'*

*'Nothing to complain about, very happy. Staff very good. Food quite good and get choice. Don't get up much but happy with that. Visitors can come anytime.'*

*'Food not bad, get choice. Activities - bingo nearly every day. Visitors can come anytime. Security staff good. Don't join in much with activities, go out sometimes.'*

*'Everything is done for you, shopping, washing. Food - average. Visitors - open door policy. Join in musical bingo and animal bingo. Go out to cafe and go to church on Readibus.'*

*'Food good. Staff are good. Use hairdresser. Like activities, especially singing, bible reading and quizzes.'*

*'The food is edible. The staff all do a good job. Good activities - I have a timetable in my room. We go to local café.'*

*'Everything is always the same. Visitors come and see me but have to rely on transport. Join in activities - like musical bingo. Been out to YMCA café, that was good.'*

*'Everything is good. Food very good. Staff good. Join in with bingo.'*

*'Garden good, visitors can come anytime. Food good. I like the activities.'*

*‘Alright here, some days better than others. Staff good, but sometimes forget me. Everything good - food good. Staff caring. Not keen on joining in with activities.’*

*‘Get looked after. Staff very kind. Food OK, like soup and puddings. Not able to join in activities yet as not well.’*

*‘It’s a good home. Food is quite good, what you expect. Manager runs an open-door policy. Visitors can come anytime. Activities very good, is hard to keep everyone entertained. Like going to YMCA café. Staff are good, [I’m] old, don’t like being woken early.’*

*‘Surprised how good it is. They are very good at finding things for us to do. Really good staff, very patient. Very good with personal care.’*

*‘I enjoy my food, curry is favourite and roast dinner is good. I join in activities, throwing ball game, exercises, gets me out of my shell. Staff are lovely, they put up with my untidiness. My relatives can visit anytime.’*

*‘We play bingo, dominoes, quizzes and memory games, which I enjoy. Very good staff.’*

*‘Activities really good, but nothing at the weekend. Staff look after my relative with dignity.’*

*‘Miss living on my own, don’t like living here, food good. Activities - like exercise class. Go out with family. Staff work hard.’*

*‘Well looked after. Well fed, food ok, get choice. Carers good, I join in some activities and have visitors.’*

*‘Pleasant, like sitting in garden. Food very reasonable and get choice. Staff generally ok but 1 or 2 are sometimes unhelpful. Join in some activities, like exercise class.’*

*‘Feels countryish. Made a lot of friends. Staff very good. Food good and have choice. Activities ‘join in some’.*

*‘Looked after well. Carers very good. Food very good. Activities - I don’t wish to join in. Visitors can come anytime.’*

*‘Everything is great. Food excellent, carers and staff very good. Had outing to local cafe, enjoyed. Has visitors - ‘they can come anytime’.*

**Residents' comments: What is care like? Is it discussed with residents? Are they listened to about their care?**

*'Only on a few tablets, but they come and tell me. I was in another home, doing well in gym and no physio here.'*

*'I can wash and dress myself. The staff come and talk to me about my care.'*

*'The staff talk to me or my relative.'*

*'It took a long time to get physio. Only staying here short term.'*

*'Sometimes [they talk to me] when they wash and dress me. The staff do their best.'*

*'The staff did not tell me, had my medication changed. I had to ask to get help with washing and dressing.'*

*'Staff help me to wash. They do talk to me, I know what tablets I take.'*

*'I get help with washing and dressing, staff considerate.'*

*'I can clean and wash myself and put myself to bed. When you ask them they do not discuss, they avoid the question. The nurses never tell me anything and wasting their time.'*

*'Communication could be improved.'*

*'They have done in the past.'*

*'The staff always ask if I am happy or need anything different.'*

*'Staff help me to get dressed and they speak to my family.'*

*'Relative is independent - staff do talk to me if any concerns.'*

*'Carers help when needed. Staff give me my tablets and talk to me about what they are for.'*

## Residents' comments: what they say could be improved

*'They need more staff and pay them more. The food could be better, more variety on menu, cook needs to do better.'*

*'Honestly don't know.'*

*'Not sure what else they can do.'*

*'Suits my needs. Short staffed, run ragged. Had to push for physio.'*

*'I need my wheelchair back, it will take 3 weeks [not to do with Parkside]. Locked in this room without my wheelchair.'*

*'To have the windows more open, the room gets hot'*

*'I'd like to go out more often e.g. zoo or animal type places.'*

*'No happy as is.'*

*'No, quite happy.'*

*'Menu fine, but product doesn't meet expectations, don't always get what is on menu. Would like to go out more, e.g. garden centre, Prospect Park.'*

*'The food could be better, not an awful lot of choice, soggy mash.'*

*'Sometimes ask for specific requirement, but don't get.'*

*'Would like to go out.'*

*'Miss some of the staff where I was before.'*

*'Would like to go out when feeling better.'*

*'Need to listen to residents and understand, everything we say is never taken into consideration. They think I am stupid.'*

*'Food needs to live up to menu.'*

*'Difficult question, no it's a lot better than you expect.'*

*'Food could be better.'*

*'Menu - fresh vegetables, more choice. Feel they are short of staff.'*

*'Happy as is.'*

*'Do a tidy job.'*

*'No, all ok,'*

*'It's a good home, but short staffed. The staff are overworked and not enough pay. Food not bad, but need a good chef, you don't get what's on the menu Family visit. I get on well with staff, they are very good'*

*'Nice home. The staff are very good, sometimes they are overstretched. My relative comes to visit. Variety of different food.'*

*'Ring the bell, you have to wait, they are busy. They get irritated when I ring the bell. Food - insipid, tasteless - use herbs, parsley, mint. No salt and pepper. No chicken or lamb, miss my spice. Very good activities, arts and crafts, quizzes, spelling, animal bingo.'*

*'Food not very good, spoilt in the cooking, too many cooks for 3 floors.'*

*'Food could be better, no fresh veg, mostly tinned. Noticed peas get left on plate. Do get a choice.'*

*'Not keen on activities as lady is not very nice to me.'*

*'Carers help me to wash but they are busy in the mornings.'*

## **Healthwatch Reading observations**

- Large, purpose-built building with bright entrance and big windows
- Three floors all named after flowers.
- CCTV in the entrance, with reception staff, signing in book with spacious seating area.
- Notice board in reception containing menus as well as a list of activities for what is going to happen and events or activities that have happened.
- Residents can bring their own furniture and pictures, manager stated that he always asks the family to come a day before so that they can make the room look more homely.
- The care home has underfloor heating.
- On the dining room tables there are menus with choices, and, in the evening, they have a light meal. They have 'light bites' for residents if they get hungry during the night.
- A nurse or a member of staff is usually at the desk of each section of the home.
- The garden is large, some residents have patio doors in the bedroom that lead into the garden.
- The manager works with external services such as RRaT Team (Rapid Response and Treatment) and physio.
- The home appears organised and the manager knows all his residents by their names and their families.
- We were told that agency staff are not used at the home and generally any vacancies are filled by word of mouth.
- Some residents are there for end-of-life care.

- The carers appeared to be very attentive, making sure that the residents had their hats on when outside in sunshine and asking whether they wanted a second helping of cake or tea in the afternoon.
- The residents seemed to socialise and have friends within the home and are encouraged to socialise with other residents.

### **Residents' suggestions for improvement - summary:**

- Residents wanted to go out more to e.g. garden centres, 'animal places'
- Food was mentioned by a number of residents, with suggestions that that it could be improved
- One resident mentioned that it would be good to have activities at weekends
- Some residents mentioned that they would like staff to be less rushed and they feel that communication with residents could be improved.

### **Other information**

#### **Parkside House Care Home**

Parkside House Nursing Home is run by BUPA Care Homes and can accommodate up to 75 people in single rooms which are ensuite.

Parkside House was last inspected by the Care Quality Commission on April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and rated as good. The report is available online [here](#).

The CQC checks if care homes are: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led. It has legal powers to order improvements at any NHS or care service, when needed. The CQC usually asks the local Healthwatch for any public feedback it has collected on care homes it is due to visit.

A [CQC survey](#) carried out in early 2018 showed that the top three most important factors for the public when deciding on a care home, are:

- the care home's ability to meet the needs of the person
- the feel of the home
- staff being caring.

A care home's quality rating is also important and 65% of people read the CQC's report on the home before they choose.

## Hearing from care home residents about quality of care

Healthwatch Reading launched its care homes project to ensure that the voices of older Reading people who live in care homes are heard. This group includes people who are vulnerable because of the effect of aging or illness on health.

Residents in care homes have views that they wish to make known, as our interviews illustrate. They wish to be kept involved in and informed about matters that affect their wellbeing and health, including how their home is run.

Reading organisations responsible for planning, funding or running NHS or social services, have launched a variety of care home initiatives in recent years. These will be summarised in the further report drawing together themes about the care home sector across Reading that we mention below.

The following organisations highlight the need to listen to care home residents:

- Healthwatch England - [‘what it’s like to live in a care home’](#)
- NHS England [People and Communities Board](#) (working with National Voices)
- Social Care Institute for Excellence, in their practical [‘how to guide’](#) introduction to co-production with service users and a [link to 12 short films](#))
  - National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), see box, below:

*‘...service providers should consider using a range of approaches to gather views and experiences (for example, focus groups, interviews or observation in addition to surveys), and use evidence from a range of sources. This could include:*

- *the lived experiences of people who use services*
- *information from voluntary organisations that represent people who use social care services - for example, Healthwatch*
- *existing sources of information, such as complaints.’*

*‘Service providers should seek the views of people who use services about the extent to which the things that are important to them are being addressed. This should be done in such a way that the person feels safe to express their views, even if these are critical (for example, a care home resident may not want to give feedback directly to the manager).’*

NICE, [Guideline NG86](#), February 2018 (1.6.4 and 1.6.7)

## Healthwatch Reading visit conclusion:

- Based on comments about the food, residents could be consulted about the food, menu and have more variety and fresh vegetables.
- Staffing could be reviewed, a number of residents stating that they felt, although carers were good, they seemed rushed
- Activities were generally well received but several residents would like to go out more often
- We noted that most residents were not familiar with the idea of a care plan, though several told us that staff do talk to them about medicines and their health. It is a right under the NHS Constitution for people to be involved in planning their NHS healthcare, and good practice in residential care to involve people in their care plan. We concluded that communicating this in a way that residents can understand and relate to, and involving them more, could be one area for developing existing good practice at Parkside.

Healthwatch Reading will produce a separate report in the future, drawing together themes about the care home sector in Reading, when we have completed our series of visits across the borough.

## Response from Bupa Parkside

*May I take this opportunity to thank the Healthwatch team for coming to the home and delivering a thorough and informative report of life at Parkside today.*

*I have digested the residents' suggestions for improvements and hope the attached will make the home an even better person-centred home to live in.*

*In response to residents wanting to go out more and attending places of interest, the home has always struggled to organise sufficient transport for these occasions as the uptake is always beyond what transport is available in Reading. We have countered this to a degree by bringing the events they like to the home and have had zoos and just recently alpacas visit the home, thus all residents benefit. The home is very focussed on getting the relatives of families involved and with that in mind we will try and put together an activity programme with external events as I know how important it is to all.*

*The feedback we received on our food and presentation was very important and in consultation with the residents, Parkside has now set up a catering forum for residents and the catering team to attend quarterly meetings, whereupon we can discuss menu's regional variations and what looks good and not!*

*Weekend activities: Bupa is very positive about the - day week and not the working week albeit the activities we provide at the weekend are not the same as we tend to find external entertainment difficult in provision at the weekend. I have passed on the concerns of the residents to my activity team and I am sure with our Autumn and Winter (Xmas) programmes, there will be a better selection for all to participate in.*

*Finally, communications: Parkside has regular resident meetings, resident and relative meetings and if we need to re-double our efforts to improve our communication in relation to care plans etc, it will be an objective for my team over the next quarter.*

*Thank you again for sharing this report and I hope whoever reads this review will be assured that Bupa Parkside is a home where you would not hesitate to place your loved ones if they were in need of nursing care.*

*Paul Vincent  
General Manager*

## Acknowledgements and other information

Healthwatch Reading thanks residents for giving their time to share their views. We also thank the home's staff for their assistance. Enter and View findings are only a 'snapshot' of services on a day/s, so they are not a comprehensive judgement on the overall quality of the service. Healthwatch Reading is an independent charity with some statutory powers. We can take your feedback in confidence, help you make complaints, and refer serious concerns to other agencies.

Phone us 0118 937 2295, email [info@healthwatchreading.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchreading.co.uk), visit our website [www.healthwatchreading.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchreading.co.uk) or visit us on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ.

Contact Healthwatch Reading on 0118 937 2295 if you do not have internet access and would like help accessing any online information referenced in this report.