PRESS RELEASE

13/12/2016

**Healthwatch Isle of Wight Launch Residential Care Report**

Throughout the course of 2015, Healthwatch Isle of Wight received increasing amounts

of feedback from members of the public, expressing concerns around the quality of

care provided within a significant number of residential and nursing homes on the

Island. Quality of Care was subsequently identified as a priority workplan topic as a result of the annual prioritisation survey, and targeted engagement work began. This along with an analysis of our feedback identified several themes and trends that informed this work. We felt it was important not just to listen to people`s experiences of care and nursing homes, but to reflect on why some homes are performing better than others and what can be done to support those homes that are failing. There were three strands to the workplan: The collections of people’s experiences, a survey for registered managers and planned enter and view visits to a range of residential care and nursing homes.

We found a vast difference in the quality of care provided in nursing and residential care homes across the Island. Some homes had a clear vision and strong leadership which contributed to a culture of continuous quality improvement and a desire to improve the quality of life of the vulnerable people they support. Other managers and their staff seemed to be drowning in a wave of bureaucracy, paperwork and staff shortages leading to an inevitable drop in standards and a poor quality of care. Basic requirements, such as ensuring that residents were supported to wear prescription glasses and hearing aids, were not followed. Misconceptions were made about one person’s cognitive ability because he could not recall what day it was - it was not considered that this may be difficult to comprehend when there is no daily paper, clock or calendar to refer to.

Most homes offered a range of activities for their residents, but the quality and

quantity of activities offered varied enormously amongst the homes and not all

managers demonstrated an understanding of the need for meaningful stimulation and

the effect this can have on a person’s quality of life. Lack of stimulation and lack of meaningful activities was an issue that meant people’s skill levels deteriorated and increased their dependence on others.

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Several relatives we spoke to were unwilling to make a complaint in case it adversely affected the care of their loved one and were unsure about who else they could go to for advice and support. They felt that more information from the care home manager (such as an information booklet or leaflet explaining the rights of residents and their relatives/friends, following admission to a care or nursing home) would be useful.

We asked managers how they felt they could be more supported in their role and a significant majority of managers felt that needed more support from the local authority.

There were 10 comments with negative feedback about registered manager’s relationship with the local safeguarding service. One individual stated: “There needs to be feedback following a safeguarding incident with the outcome”.

Many of the staff that we observed at work were committed, compassionate and

caring, working hard to support people with very complex needs. However, the difference in quality, delivered within local care and nursing homes is staggering. Some homes are well led and promote a positive, inclusive and welcoming environment, where staff are ‘enablers’ rather than just ‘care workers’. Quality of life is central to the ethos of the home and staff are nurtured and developed to ensure the highest standards are maintained. Links with the local community have been used to

promote wellbeing and a sense of identity, whereas in other homes, staff are under such pressure that they have become task focused, concentrating on achieving the tasks to hand, thus creating a sense of dependence and loss of dignity for the people they support.

Healthwatch have made 7 recommendations for the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Local Authority and 3 for Care Providers. The Clinical Commissioning Group and Local Authority have issued a joint response that can be viewed alongside the full report and recommendations by visiting [www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk). Hard copies of the report are available upon request.

All 7 recommendations have been fully endorsed by the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Sub Committee who thanked Healthwatch Isle of Wight for the report and commended the action taken by Healthwatch to address inconsistencies in quality of care on the Island.

Anyone who wishes to share their experiences (good or bad) of local health and/or care services with us can do so by ringing 01983 608608 or by emailing [enquiries@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk)

**Ends.**

**Notes to Editors:**

**About Healthwatch Isle of Wight – Local voices improving local health and care:**

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion set up by statute to gather and represent the views of the public, comprising a consortium of three partners: Community Action Isle of Wight (formerly the Rural Community Council); Help and Care (former hosts of the Isle of Wight LINk) and the Isle of Wight Citizens Advice Bureau.

At a local level, Healthwatch Isle of Wight is helping Islanders to get the best out of their local health and care services. Whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow. Find out more at [www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchisleofwight.co.uk)

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