

# Enter and View Report

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141 Vicarage Farm Road



Healthwatch Hounslow

Service visited:	Instant Care Solutions
Address:	141 Vicarage Farm Road
Care Home Manager:	Shaun Guranna
Date and time of visit:	Wednesday August 15 <sup>th</sup> 2018 1pm – 3.30pm
Status of visit:	Announced
Enter and View Authorised Representatives:	Diane Wiles, Francis Ogbe, Steven Mayers, Claire Grainger
Lead Authorised Representative:	Claire Grainger
Healthwatch Hounslow contact details:	Healthwatch Hounslow, 45 St Mary's Road, W5 5RG Tel: 020 3603 2438 Email: info@healthwatchhounslow.co.uk

Healthwatch Hounslow has the power to Enter and View services in the borough of Hounslow. Enter and View visits are conducted by teams of trained Enter and View Authorised Representatives.

## **Background to the visit**

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The Health and Social Care Act allows Healthwatch Hounslow (HWH) Enter and View Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and speak to patients, residents, staff, relatives, friends and carers. The visit can happen if people tell us there are concerns, but equally, the visits can take place when services have a good reputation. We can therefore learn from shared examples of what they are doing well from the perspective of the people who experience the service first hand.

Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with the HWH Safeguarding Policy. If at any time an Authorised Representative observes a potential safeguarding concern, they will inform their lead. The lead Authorised Representative will then end the visit. In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Hounslow Council's Safeguarding Team.

On this occasion, four Enter and View Authorised Representatives (three HWH volunteers and one HWH staff member) attended the visit. The Authorised Representatives spoke to residents and staff. Suggestions have been made on how to improve the service and good practice has been highlighted.

HWH liaises with the CQC, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Local Authority (LA) to create an Enter and View Programme, as well as the information that it collects about the experiences of local people. A number of health and social care providers are selected to be visited to provide a sample of different services. We did not have a reason for selecting 141 Vicarage Road for a visit.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Shaun Guranna (Care Home Manager), and the staff and residents at 141 Vicarage Farm Road for making us welcome, facilitating our visit and for taking the time to talk to us on the day.

We would also like to thank Healthwatch Hounslow Enter and View Authorised Representatives: Diane Wiles, Francis Ogbe and Steven Mayers for their contributions to the visit and this report.

## **Methodology**

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This was an announced Enter and View visit. Healthwatch Hounslow approached the manager at 141 Vicarage Farm Road before the visit to find out more about the home and any factors we should be aware of. During the visit, Authorised Representatives spoke to the Manager; members of staff and seven out of the ten residents at the home.

The Enter and View Team used a checklist to collect their observations of the home, which was based on Healthwatch England's eight indicators of a good care home<sup>1</sup>;

1. Have strong, visible management
2. Have staff with time and skills to do their jobs
3. Have good knowledge of each resident and how their needs may be changing
4. Offer a varied programme of activities
5. Offer quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes
6. Ensure residents can see health professionals such as GPs and dentists regularly
7. Accommodate residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs
8. Be an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used

## **Information about 141 Vicarage Farm Road**

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141 Vicarage Farm Road is owned and managed by Instant Care Solutions Ltd (ICS) and offers residential care for 10 men with mental health problems. Instant Care Solutions run another care home and a number of supported housing units in the Heston area of Hounslow.

The home is a large converted house with 10 bedrooms. All of the bedrooms are ensuite, and also have a kitchenette area with kettle and microwave so residents can make drinks and snacks in their rooms if they want to. Communal areas include a lounge with a television and pool table, a dining room and kitchen and two office/meeting spaces. There is a small outside yard area, and residents have access to the garden of the next door property, which is also managed by ICS, for barbeques and other events. As the house is not purpose-built, there is no lift to the upper stories of the house or facilities suitable for wheelchair users. There are four bedrooms on the ground floor, which are available for people who are less able to manage the stairs. The current group of 10 residents are funded by five local boroughs and by both NHS and local authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> 'What's it like to live in a Care Home' Healthwatch England (2017)

## **First Impressions**

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We were welcomed at the door by the manager, Shaun Guranna, and we were asked to sign into the visitors' book. There is CCTV at the front door so that staff can see who is arriving. The hall and communal areas are tidy, clean and bright and painted in pale colours, but there were not many pictures or other decoration, although there were photographs from residents' activities on the wall in the lounge.

## **HEALTHWATCH ENGLAND QUALITY INDICATORS**

### **1. Strong, visible management**

The manager told us that he has been at the home since 2011, starting as a team leader and working his way up to management. He has worked in the care sector since 2005 and has an HND in Health and Social Care, a degree in Health and Social Care Wellbeing Management and a Post Graduate Certification in Adult Support, Protection and Safeguarding. The staff team also includes a deputy manager, team leaders, support workers and an activities co-ordinator. We were told that there will always be at least two members of staff on duty, and that during the day there will be two staff plus a manager and the activities co-ordinator. All staff members receive monthly supervisions and two appraisals per year and there is a regular team meeting. Staff described the manager and deputy manager as being approachable and easy to work with and said that the managers have an open-door policy. Residents were also very positive about the management of the home, one of them described the manager as 'very nice and polite' and that he 'sorts out problems'.

### **2. Staff have the time and skills to do their jobs**

The manager told us that the staff team is fairly stable and that there is a mix of skills and experience amongst team members, with some having NVQ qualifications and others who are less experienced. We were told that agency staff members are never used to provide cover and that the home has a group of ex-members of staff who are willing to come in for occasional shifts, as needed. The manager told us that new members of staff undergo a four week induction period. The members of staff we talked to told us that they had had different lengths of induction, although all described the process of getting to know the house and the residents and the range of on-line courses that they are expected to take. The manager told us that staff members are supported to complete NVQs. The residents we talked to were positive about the staff team, describing them as being caring and interested in residents' wellbeing.

### **3. Staff have a good knowledge of each resident and how their needs may be changing**

We were told that the manager arranges a meeting with all new residents to develop their support plan, that the plan is updated regularly, and that as the staff team gets to know people, they develop a better understanding of their likes and dislikes. All residents have a risk assessment and the aim is not to limit what people can do, but to offer as many opportunities as possible within the requirements of any conditions of their stay at the home. One resident told us that his key worker is helping him with accessing college courses and finding a job.

There is a procedure for handovers between shifts and the policy and flow chart for this was on display in the office. When a care plan is reviewed, this is added to a resident's file and each

member of staff has to sign to say that they have read it. The manager told us that few residents have contact with relatives, but that the home has good links with those relatives that are involved.

Instant Care Solutions has some supported living units in the area which offer 'step down' for people who are ready for less supported accommodation and some of the residents talked about their plans to move on from 141 Vicarage Farm Road. For those residents who are ready and able to move on, initiatives such as supporting people with self-catering, cleaning their own rooms and self-medication help with their preparation for more independence and a number of residents mentioned that they were, or hoped to be, working on these areas.

#### **4. The home offers a varied programme of activities**

The home provides a range of activities for residents and we talked to the activities co-ordinator. She told us that residents are involved with planning the activities and we saw the programme on the notice board. Residents mainly talked about going to the cinema or going bowling, but the programme also includes going to the gym and swimming, and indoor activities, such as playing pool or watching football or a film together. The activities co-ordinator told us that if people are not getting involved in activities, she will meet them on a one to one basis to try and encourage them. She reported that over the summer there are one-off activities, such as boat trips on the river and going to the seaside.

The manager told us that the activity programme is designed to encourage people to go out and about in the community as much as possible, or to do things together in the home, rather than sitting in their rooms. Activities are paid for by the home, so that lack of finance is not a reason for people not taking part. Residents are encouraged to do activities independently and one resident told us that he plays football and another talked about going shopping. They are also encouraged to take advantage of community resources such as the Recovery College and ESOL courses, and one resident told us that he is attending college to improve his language skills.

The home does not employ separate cleaning or catering staff and these roles are undertaken by the support staff. Staff support and, where necessary, encourage residents to clean their own bedrooms and bathrooms and support people to be involved in preparing and cooking their own meals.

#### **5. The home offers quality, choice and flexibility around food and mealtimes**

Residents prepare their own breakfast and lunch with support from staff, and an evening meal is provided, cooked by a member of the care staff. The menu rotates on a four week cycle and there is a summer and winter menu. Residents told us they help to set the menus at the residents' meeting and are given advice by the staff about eating healthily. If a resident does not like the meal on offer, they are offered a budget of £5 per day to buy ingredients for an alternative meal, which they cook with staff support. Most residents told us that they generally have the meals cooked by the staff, and that they enjoyed the food on offer, one said 'the cooked meals are lovely, very nice'. Residents are encouraged to eat in the dining room, but can eat in their rooms if they want to. Meal times are fixed, but if a resident is not at home, their meal is kept warm for them. One resident said that he planned to start to take up the self-catering option sometimes as he would like to move on to less-supported accommodation in the future and so would like to practice shopping and cooking for himself, and others mentioned this as an option. Residents are not able to use their budget from the home to buy a take-away meal, but there is a monthly take-away night, when the meal is provided and paid for by the home.

## **6. Residents can see health professionals such as GPs and dentists regularly**

The manager told us about the positive working relationship the home has with its local GP practice, the Jersey Practice, and with the local pharmacy and dentist, and one of the residents confirmed that he is very happy with his GP. Residents are supported to go to health appointments as needed. The manager also reported that the home has very good working relationships with local mental health services.

Each resident has a locked cabinet in their room for their medication and staff will go to their rooms at the relevant times to give them their medication. Some residents are being supported towards self-medication in preparation for moving on from the home.

## **7. Residents' personal, cultural and lifestyle needs are accommodated**

Most of the residents we talked to said that their time at 141 Vicarage Road was one of the best placements they had had and a number compared it favourably to previous placements. One man told us that this home has been a success story for him and it has been helpful having other men living at the house who are of a similar age to him.

One resident invited us into his bedroom, which was large and well-furnished. He told us that he had chosen the paint colour for his room when he moved in. The room is of a good size and the resident has personalised it with pictures and his own TV, audio and computer equipment. His only complaint about the room is that there are not enough TV sockets and that there was interference with the signal. Other residents told us about personalising their rooms with their own belongings and that this makes visits from family and friends more comfortable.

Residents come and go as they please, subject to any conditions, but are expected to let the staff know where they are and have a fully charged mobile phone with them. Generally they are asked to be in by 9pm, but can make arrangements to come home later. The managers told us that there is not a fixed time for visitors to come and go, and that they try to make it as easy as possible for residents to have visitors, again subject to any conditions. Residents can see their visitors in their rooms or in the communal areas of the house and children are able to visit by arrangement. Generally visitors are not able to stay overnight, but the manager told us about how the home has facilitated overnight visits in a spare room for a friend of one resident who lives a long way away. One resident was supported to go on holiday abroad.

The home does not allow alcohol, cigarettes or drugs on the premises, although residents can go outside to smoke. One resident told us about how the manager had supported him to reduce his use of alcohol.

We were told that people's religious and cultural needs are discussed with them when their care plan is being developed. One resident, who is Muslim, told us that he feels supported in his religious observance and that he asked to cook for himself when he came to the home. He was asked to demonstrate that he knows how to cook and is safe in the kitchen and he now receives a weekly budget to buy and prepare his own food and this suits him very well.

## **8. There is an open environment where feedback is actively sought and used**

The manager and staff told us that they encourage feedback from residents and their relatives and that people are regularly reminded what to do if they want to give feedback or make a complaint.

The manager's phone number is on the wall in every resident's room. We saw a copy of the Service User Questionnaire that is circulated to residents every six months and were told that the results are discussed in the team meeting.

There is a monthly residents' meeting, and one of the residents told us that the discussion topics include meal planning, staffing, and house environment. All of the residents we asked told us that they know how to make a complaint and no one seemed to have any hesitation in saying they would approach the manager or a member of staff if they had any concerns. We asked the manager if residents have access to an Advocacy Service and were told that everyone is made aware of how to contact Voiceability if they want to.

## **Conclusion**

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Our impression of 141 Vicarage Farm Road is of a calm, well managed home, which offers a supportive environment for people with a range of mental health support needs. We particularly liked the opportunities that were offered to people within a care home setting to start to take more responsibility for areas of their lives, such as cooking, cleaning and medication, whether or not they hoped to move on to less supported accommodation. Some of us found the decoration of the communal areas rather plain, but none of the residents mentioned this, and they clearly appreciated being able to personalise their own rooms. We liked the fact that people are encouraged to take part in activities in the community as much as they can or want to, but felt that the range of activities on offer was somewhat limited, particularly for those residents who lack the confidence or capacity to go out and about independently or socialise within the home. All of the residents we talked to were very positive about the management, services and environment of the home and compared it favourably with other services they had used.

## **Feedback from 141 Vicarage Farm Road**

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We shared the draft report with the manager at 141 Vicarage Farm Road and he provided us with updates about the actions that are being taken as a result of our visit:

- The additional TV sockets and interference mentioned by one of the resident are now sorted
- ICS has also issued a survey to all occupants of the building, and some professionals who visit the premises on a regular basis to obtain further feedback on improvement of the communal areas and a budget is in place already to cover the costs for any changes required.
- We are consulting our residents for ideas and suggestions about more indoor activities as suggested by your team.

He said "Thank you again for such a great report, and it motivates us to further improve on what we are already doing."

## **Next Steps**

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The report will be published on the Healthwatch Hounslow website [www.healthwatchhounslow.co.uk/enter-and-view-visit-reports/](http://www.healthwatchhounslow.co.uk/enter-and-view-visit-reports/) and will be circulated to the provider and the commissioners of care home services in Hounslow.

*This report is based on our observations and the views of residents, staff and relatives that Healthwatch Hounslow spoke to on the day of our visit, and we appreciate it does not necessarily represent the views of all the relatives and staff members at 141 Vicarage Farm Road.*