

The views and experiences of care homes: The relatives and friends perspective

January 2016



Introduction to Healthwatch

Healthwatch Hampshire is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in England. Healthwatch's function is to engage with local people to seek their views about locally delivered services, signpost service users to relevant information and to influence the design of local health and social care provision. Healthwatch Hampshire is part of a network of local healthwatches across 152 local authority areas that launched in April 2013, to ensure that local voices are heard and enable them to influence the delivery and design of services.

What we have done

-  A questionnaire was promoted throughout social media, Hampshire County Council and various care homes for the people who live in the county of Hampshire and have a relative or friend in a care home. 61 people responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was either completed online or on paper and the individuals chose whether they wanted to enter into a draw for £50 worth of shopping vouchers.
-  We found that many individuals agreed that the staff were appropriately skilled to care for their friend/relative but many felt that the staff didn't have enough time to meet their friend/relative's needs. We found that many individuals felt involved in their friend/relative's care and 21 out of 62 participants stated that they felt that the staff took the concerns raised by the residents regarding their health seriously.
-  We also visited two care homes and carried out an 'Enter and View'. We spoke to the staff and residents of the care homes to find out what they thought about the care home particularly focusing on communication, complaints procedure, likes and dislikes, food, personal care and activities.



When we visited the two care homes we found that many residents felt that the staff were caring and listened to them with two of the residents stating that the staff were good but were very rushed and there weren't enough of them. The residents we spoke to stated that they all had a choice in what they wanted to eat and where they wanted to sit at mealtimes. The staff members that we spoke to stated that they enjoyed working in the care home(s) but felt that the staff could be less task orientated as they felt under pressure to get everything completed. One staff member stated that handovers take too long and trying to balance the job role and paperwork was difficult.

And then:

- We have written a report on our findings. We have reviewed and checked the report for accuracy ourselves.
- We have not included the care homes that were named in the questionnaire in this report. The two care homes that we visited are on our website and you can read their full report(s) here: <http://www.healthwatchhampshire.co.uk/enter-and-view>
- We have shared our report publicly on our website and additionally have sent a copy to Hampshire County Council as per agreement with our ethical approval



Below are some of the responses by relatives and friends of a care home resident in the county of Hampshire.

(For a full list of responses, please contact us for a copy of the full report).

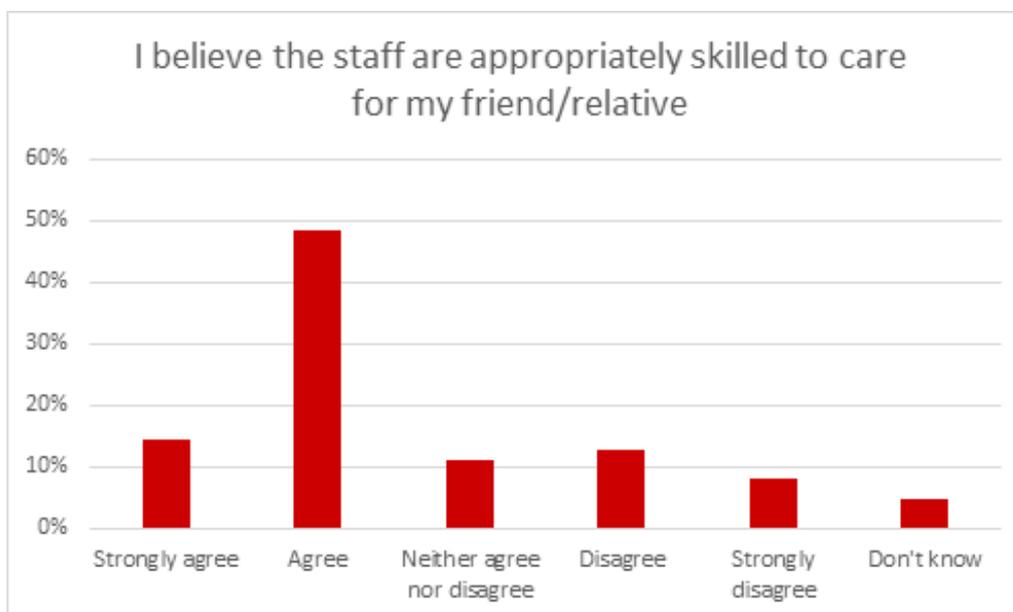


Figure 1: Shows the percentage of the participants who agreed or disagreed that the staff are appropriately skilled to care for their relative or friend.

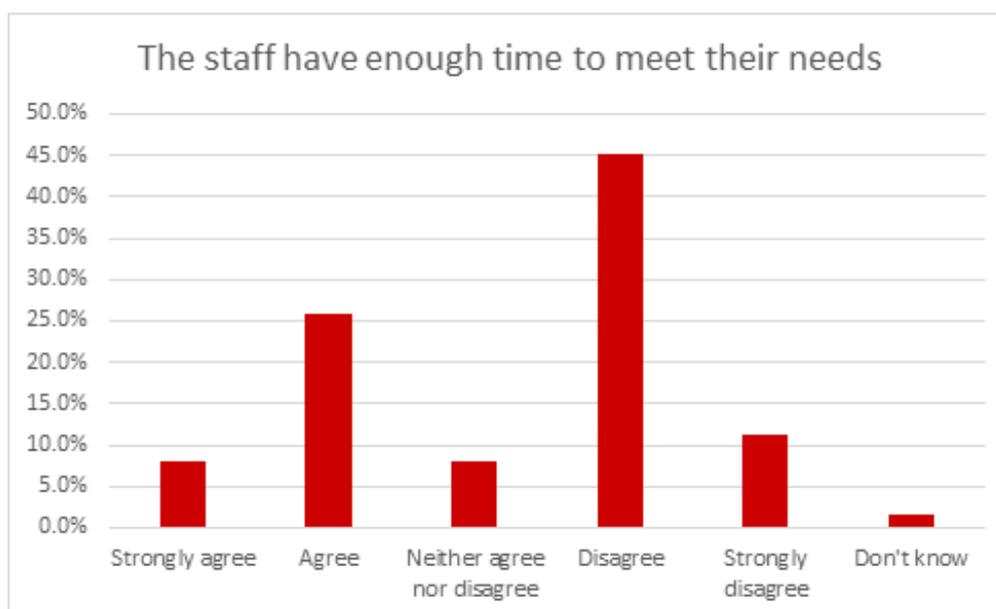


Figure 2: Shows the percentage of the participants who agreed or disagreed that the staff have enough time to meet their friends or relatives needs

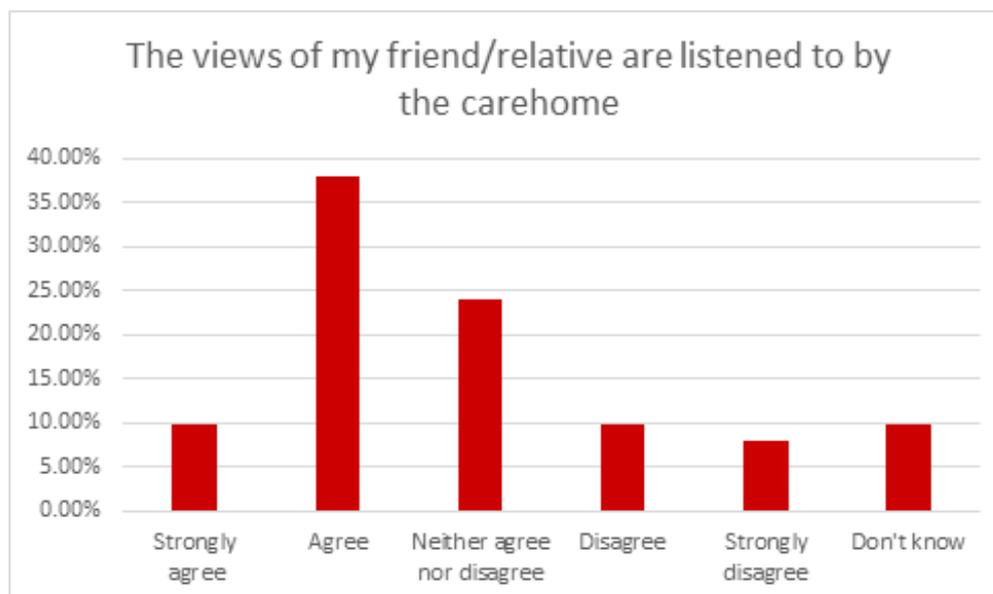


Figure 4: The responses as to whether the care homes in this research met the resident's expectations of care and whether their views were listened to.

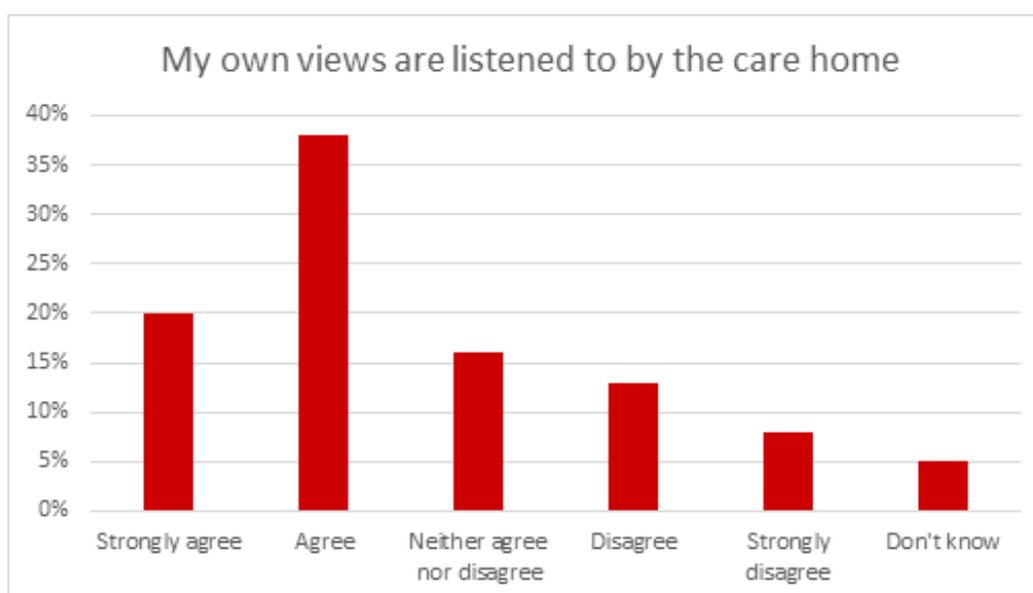


Figure 5: The responses as to whether the care homes in question meet the relatives/friends of the care home resident's expectations of care.



The conclusion

This research project set out to understand the views and experiences of individuals who have a relative or friend in a care home through the use of a questionnaire. It has been established that although the data is useful in identifying new themes and gaining a more in depth understanding of individuals experiences; participation was low. It was identified that the beginning of this research project that 150 responses would be needed to gain a significant difference that would be generalisable across the population. However, despite this the data was useful and has been directly interlinked within our Enter and View reports.

When we spoke to the residents as part of our Enter and View visits they felt that the staff were caring but were concenered that they were under pressure and rushed. The staff stated that they enjoyed their job roles but felt that they needed more staff members.

It should be noted that the methodology of this research had limitations and this particular population were difficult to identify. Therefore, this has been reflected in the findings and should be taken into consideration should the research findings be used as evidence. Additionally there are no recommendations for the care homes that were named by the participants who filled in the questionnaire due to the nature of this report.

It can be concluded that although the findings were not representative of a population, they are useful for other aspects of Healthwatch Hampshire projects including the Enter and View reports. The identification of this population was challenging and this has allowed Healthwatch Hampshire to reflect on the use of this methodology for future research.

Thank you and acknowledgements.

Healthwatch Hampshire would like to express great appreciation to the individuals who took time out of their day to fill in our questionnaire and to those who helped promote the questionnaire especially through the wider audience; Hampshire County Council's Older People's Wellbeing Team for allowing us to present the research project, the care homes who placed the questionnaire within their homes and Winchester Radio for promoting the questionnaire through their social media account. Healthwatch Hampshire would also like to thank the two care homes involved in the Enter and View report and the staff and residents who took time out of their day to talk to us.



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