

Residential Care Centres Consultation Phase 3

Healthwatch Birmingham and Solihull welcomes the opportunity to respond to Birmingham City Council's Residential Care Centres Consultation Phase 3. Our key role is to make sure that patients, the public, service users, and carers are at the heart of service improvement in health and social care. In line with our role, we have focused our comments on:

- What we have heard from Birmingham residents
- Our view on the alternative preferred option

Healthwatch Birmingham and Solihull are pleased that the council have gone back out to consultation yet again on this matter. This clearly demonstrates that the council are acting on feedback from the public by reconsidering its position and presenting this new alternative preferred option.

We are pleased to see that this phase of consultation also includes a thorough Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment, further showing their importance as working documents throughout this project.

It is good to hear that the council have been working with an advocacy provider to fully support residents who need advocacy support throughout this process.

Feedback on the centres

Since our response to phase 1 of the consultation we have received additional feedback about the centres.

Most of the feedback was positive

"I was here for respite care and they were lovely. They treated an ulcer on my leg and cleared it up."

"They were good, quite clean and I stayed there for a week and a half. The staff were great."

"Very friendly, helpful and Excellent Care"

"Overall, very happy with the whole experience, my mum and we as a family have received, from the beginning the friendly and professional nature of all the staff has been outstanding. Always smiling, always willing to help, it is obvious there is a lot of care, so very important for those that are vulnerable - Thank you to everyone for looking after my mom."

"Fantastic service, staff very professional and caring."



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"My father is presently at Perry tree care home, hand on my heart I feel the carers go above and beyond, the home is spotlessly clean, and they go out of their way to make him and other residents happy. We visit every day and it's nice to see residents with a smile on their faces not just sitting there it makes us as a family feel relaxed knowing he is being well looked after. I must admit if and I truly hope we never have to move him we will never find a home with the same high standards as is at Perry tree thank you to all staff and management"

However, some people told us about concerns about safety and staffing levels

"My mom was sent to a EAB bed here [...] she didn't even manage a week. She had an unwitnessed fall in the lounge and the care staff did no more than put her to bed they didn't inform me until 24 Hrs later, she was in so much pain and was eventually sent to hospital almost 48 hrs after with a suspected fractured hip, she was in a right state."

"Learned that there are not enough staff to care for all residents. Thus, personal care is compromised daily. Also, notice posted to ask for towels, toiletries, day and night clothes to be brought in for loved ones, black bin bags given to take clothing for washing by family, as supplies are scanty or not available. Bed sores develop [...], as loved one is not being turned according to medical regulations as there are not enough staff to monitor all patients, especially for those who arrived medically fit."

Alternative preferred option

Healthwatch Birmingham and Solihull are pleased that the council have presented this alternative preferred option based on feedback from the previous two rounds of consultation. Whilst it does not immediately meet the council's savings target, it does safeguard these centres as community facilities and ensures that vital services are retained for people in our city. It also supports plans within our local health and social care system for care within communities. We therefore agree with the alternative preferred option.

In our previous responses to phases 1 and 2, we raised areas we feel the council will need to be mindful of when relocating the residents of these care centres. Although this will now apply to a smaller number of people in the alternative preferred option, they do still need to be considered by the council and thought through in the individual transition plans that will be developed. We would like to highlight that if residents are moved from the other two care centres into the Kendrick centre as proposed, that their relatives may need support to be able to travel and visit as often as they did before.



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It is not clear from the documents provided if the Kendrick Centre will now function as a provider of last resort in emergencies (as all three care centres currently do) or whether the council still expects for the care market to fulfil this role.

Our report [Do people feel involved in decisions about patient discharge in Birmingham?](#) highlighted the importance of suitable care following discharge from hospital. The alternative preferred option ensures there are intermediate care beds as an option available within our city for those that need it.

The government has recently published its [Fit for the future 10 year plan for England](#) which features plans for a neighbourhood health service, with more care within communities. The alternative preferred option clearly aligns with these plans. By having intermediate care beds in these areas of the city, it enables people to receive the care they need close to their communities outside of hospital.

We look forward to understanding how these consultations have shaped and influenced the council's decision-making and to seeing the ongoing engagement with the community and stakeholders as the project progresses into its implementation phase.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "sw", likely representing Sarah Walmsley.

Sarah Walmsley

Data and Insight Officer

