

# Visit to Minor Injuries Unit Queen Victoria Hospital

East Grinstead Listening and Network Tour September 2016

Healthwatch West Sussex would like to thank everyone who contributed to our day in Queen Victoria Hospital's Minor Injuries Unit. In particular, the people who took the time to complete our short survey and share their views and to those who have entrusted us with their personal stories.

## Information

The minor injuries unit is open daily from 8.00am to 7.30pm so that local adults and children over one can be seen, diagnosed and treated for a wide range of minor injuries and ailments.

This waiting room also has people arriving and waiting to access their appointments to the Hand Clinic, which we were initially unaware of. Patients for this Hand Clinic were coming from several different counties, having been referred from other hospitals.

## Engaging with local people

On Thursday, 22 September 2016 the Healthwatch team spent the day meeting and talking with people in the adult waiting room for the Minor Injuries Unit (throughout the day from 10.30am to 7pm).

Our aim was to encourage people to give feedback on the service they had received and to complete a short survey.

18 people completed a short survey and gave feedback on their experiences. Any further or future feedback can always be given quickly and easily by visiting [www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/feedback/](http://www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk/feedback/)

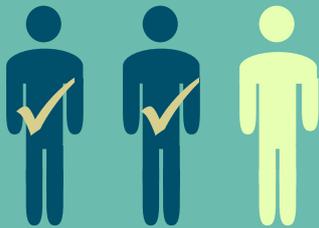
The survey was designed for people accessing the Minor Injuries Unit. We were not able to distinguish between patients for this service and those for the Hand Clinic, until we spoke to them. Out of the 18 people we spoke to, 8 people were attending the Hand Clinic.

The adult waiting area is small and with all the Hand Clinic patients arriving in the morning for assessment, the room became very full in the morning, with people having



to stand. We observed the Hand Clinic patients noting the number of other people with minor injuries being seen and leaving, whilst they remained.

## What people told us about the Minor Injuries Unit



Two out of three people said they had chosen to come to the Minor Injuries Unit

The people who had been directed to come to the unit, had been told to come to the unit by their GP surgery. Where people had made this choice the reasons were a mixture of convenience and confidence the unit would be able to treat them.

Only a few people gave feedback, mainly because we were speaking to people at the beginning of their visit but those who did, were very positive. For example “*The treatment from two nurses and a radiographer was excellent*”.

We asked people if they had experienced any challenges in accessing this service or had any concerns during their visit.

- People told us about parking concerns, which we have raised to the Trust in a separate report (see our Enter and View Report).
- One person told us they had been advised about waiting time but others had not been given any indication. For one person not knowing the waiting time was causing concern as they were a carer for an elderly relative who needed to be collected from a community service.

## What people told us about the Hand Clinic

Some of the Hand Clinic patients we had spoken to in the morning, were still in the waiting room in the afternoon, with a couple still waiting there late into the afternoon. We observed people getting progressively impatient and they choose to tell us how frustrating they were finding the wait and the problems this was causing.

From what the patients told us, it is clear that they were not aware of how the clinic operated. Whilst we appreciate the Trust has created an information sheet (which one patient shared with us). The information sheet states: “*As we see all the patients in the clinic prior to starting the procedures list you may be need to wait to have your operation*”. However, this is on the second page and all of the patients we spoke to were unaware and unprepared for how long they may have to wait.

Bruce\* told how an old-school friend had travelled over an hour to pick him up to take him to hospital which in turn was an additional hour and a half away, so he could attend his morning appointment. We said goodbye to the friend when we left, who didn't think he was going to be getting home much before 11pm.

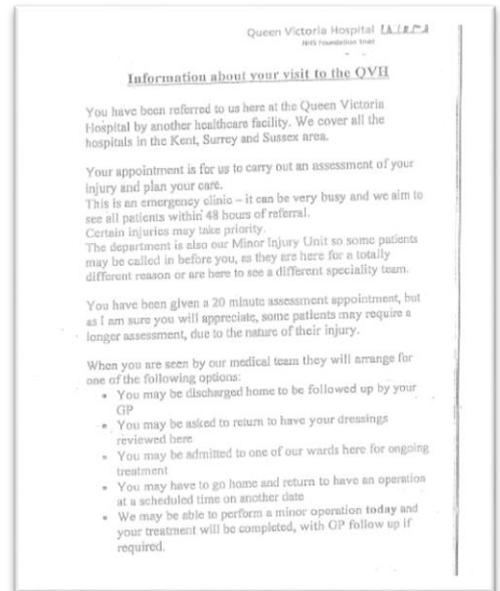
\* Name changed





The information sheets provided in letters that patients showed us looked like they had been taken from a fax or had been very poorly photocopied. Given the availability of electronic resources we cannot understand why these are not just printed directly from the original source.

We know from speaking to patients that poorly presented letters makes some people feel they are not important and we know the Trust would not want to give this impression.



## Recommendations

- Review the assessment process for the Trauma Clinic to identify if there is an alternative to having all patients coming to the hospital in the morning, to reduce the time some patients wait, the volume of people waiting in the Minor Injuries Unit and the demand on parking.
- Review the content of '*Information about your visit to the QVH*' sheet so patients are more prepared and understand the process. Healthwatch would be happy to work with you on this, which could include engaging patients in developing new wording.
- Review the way the '*Information about your visit to the QVH*' is produced, so patients can recognise the importance of the information it contains and it reflects a positive message for the Trust.

## Response from Queen Victoria Hospital

The trust has reviewed this document and suggested amendments have been made.

