

Details of visit

Worthing Hospital
Announced visit: 8 June 2017

This was a visit largely to survey patients who use Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services - this work will be reported separately. Whilst doing this we also sought feedback on peoples' experience at the hospital.

Authorised Representatives:

Team of trained representatives from Healthwatch West Sussex: Chris McCrory, Sue Morton, Kevin Harmer, Hilary Church, Alagu Nachiappan, Virginia Wood

Local Healthwatch contact details:

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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch West Sussex would like to thank the hospital's management, its patients, visitors and staff for their contribution to this Enter and View visit.

Disclaimer

Please note this report relates to findings observed on the specific dates set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients, visitors and staff, only an account of what was observed and was contributed during the visit.



What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View activities. Local Healthwatch representatives undertake these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if a safeguarding concern arises during a visit it will be reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policy. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything they feel uncomfortable about, they are required to inform their lead who will inform the service manager and the visit will be ended.

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) where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.



Purpose of the visits

As part of our programme of engaging with local people we have a schedule of visits to hospitals across West Sussex. The purpose of this visiting programme is to:

- Speak to patients and their families to gain insight into their experiences
- Make general lay observations of staff and patient interactions, the care environment and how health and care is being provided locally.

Strategic drivers

Experience of care, clinical effectiveness and patient safety together make the three key components of quality in the NHS. Good care is linked to positive outcomes for the patient and is also associated with high levels of staff satisfaction.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/>

As the independent watchdog for health and care in West Sussex we want to gather personal accounts from people who are currently receiving treatment, care and support. This in turn will enable us to help local NHS organisations to better understand their patients lived experiences to improve the health and wellbeing outcome for future patients.

Methodology

We have created a co-ordinated, announced programme of independent hospital visits. Each visit involves a team of trained authorised representatives. Our representatives are tasked with approaching patients; visitors and staff, to introduce Healthwatch and our role in supporting health and social care organisations to deliver the right quality of care. We invite people to share their personal experiences, good and bad. These are captured using our standard feedback form and then entered on our secure database.

Representatives are required to note their observations and to complete a summary sheet together, immediately after completing the visiting activity.

Where we have previous insight from local people, this may inform the areas we visited.

We spoke to people in the hospital's outpatient and pathology departments, A&E and eye clinic. We captured **13 personal accounts** and completed a number of surveys.

Our sharing of anonymised information here contains examples and/or quotes to amplify peoples' voices. The names used are ones we have given and not actual names.



Summary of findings

- From the small number of personal accounts we heard during our visit, most patients were happy with the quality of care and support they had received at the hospital
- Parking problems add to patients stress levels
- Observations of the Patient Services suggest this is an area the Trust needs to look at.

Results of Visit

A member of our team remained in the main reception area promoting Healthwatch, whilst our Authorised Representatives spoke to people about their experiences.

Observations

The new Costa Café is open 7 days a week (7am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm at weekends). We observed the café staff being friendly and helpful to visitors, giving directions and information about the hospital and service locations. The Café area could benefit from having a clock.

There are only two unisex and accessible toilets in the reception area, which were in constant use and often with queues.

There is a free taxi phone available in this area and appeared in frequent use.

There appears to be good TV screen information displayed in in foyer, with lots of graphics and statistics on a rolling display, as well as some short videos with subtitles (no sound) which are mainly about the Trust and NHS.

The reception staff appeared welcoming and helpful and we observed the desk being manned throughout our visit. In contrast, the 'Patient Services' area (located next to reception but with its own small enclosed waiting space) looked unused and did not look welcoming and inviting. There were no leaflets, posters or signs in this area. The door and adjacent 'hatch' to Patient Services was not used or opened during our five hour visit.

We heard lots of people openly moaning about the car parking arrangements, mainly about the lack of spaces, cost and difficulty in getting out of the car park when they had not been able to find a space after driving around for a while, having to pay to exit. Where people chose to speak to us about the parking, they all commented on how this added extra stress to an already stressful situation.

Patient feedback

I'm very happy with the services provided by NHS and the pathology unit is excellent!

This comment came from *Paulette* (who is under 60) who has experienced hospitals services in another part of England, and she said that by comparison, she rated Worthing Hospital very highly.

Another patient (who described herself as a regular visitor), also spoke positively about the pathology service and referred to her hospital visits as something of a day out. This patient said she takes advantage of the restaurant facilities, having a lunch after each appointment. She did say she was disappointed that the WRVS café had closed in the North Entrance foyer but was pleased that it was being redeveloped into a new café area.

Patients spoke positively about the Outpatients staff and one person (who is also a regular hospital user) commented on how the Outpatients environment has improved since it moved from the area where the emergency floor is now located.

A&E

From the patient comments of A&E during our visit, we understand it was not as busy a day as we know staff have experienced earlier in the year.

Surprisingly, the department wasn't overly busy and we were seen immediately by a triage nurse. It was quick and efficient. An excellent service.

An elderly patient who is visually impaired, was delighted to have been guided by a nurse to the treatment area and was very happy with the good care he had received in A&E.

Eye clinic

Our team got lost going to Ophthalmology and commented that the signage was poor. We would like to thank the Trust's ambassador (a handyman) who was really helpful and left his tools to escort our team to where they needed to go. Having observed this, the eye clinic has since relocated to Southlands Hospital.

Our team observed an exchange between a patient and a member of the eye clinic reception team. The patient had come along for their appointment, only to discover it had been cancelled. The patient advised the staff member that they had not received any notification of the cancellation. The receptionist said that a letter had been sent on 7th, which was the day before. It should be noted that for some West Sussex homes, post does not arrive until later in the day and it was not clear whether the letter was posted first or second class.

The people who shared their experiences of using the ophthalmology services spoke positively about the service and its staff, apart from the waiting times.

I think the health service, in general, needs more money and more staff. At present they do a fantastic job in difficult circumstances. I have experienced very long waiting times, which makes for a less than positive experience.

One person raised concern about the service moving to Southlands Hospital, having heard that there were issues with parking. Staff had advised them to take public transport, rather than drive.

Additional findings

Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service

We combined this visit with a Sussex-wide programme of surveying patients who use the non-emergency patient transport service, now delivered by South Central Ambulance Trust.

The report on this work will be published over the summer.

Recommendations

From our findings we would make the following recommendations:

- A clock should be visible for customers of Costa Coffee
- The Patient Services office should be redesigned to be more welcoming and informative - if it not used or accessed by patients and carers then it should be removed.

- Good signage and clear routes to wards and departments is really important. With the Eye Clinic relocating to Southlands we recommend that careful consideration be given to signage and that patients are invited to comment on and contribute to the plans
- A review of car park access and the geography of the car park would be useful - if this is possible, patient involvement in this would be essential

Service Provider response

The trust has reviewed this document and the following was provided by Katrina O'Shea the Matron for Patient Experience, for Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Many thanks for sharing this report. I have gathered some information from our Director of Estates and Facilities, as well as our customer care team.

We were please to read the patients mostly positive feedback.

Car parking

The Trust can confirm that in the coming year we are in the process of building over 80 new spaces across Worthing Hospital, which will improve patient parking and notably disabled parking. In addition to this, we are looking to completely modernise the parking barriers and pay machines in the next months.

Clock

The Trust is speaking to Compass Group, the operator of Costa Café, to request that a dementia-friendly clock is installed in the café area.

Wayfinding

A wayfinding pilot scheme is being introduced by an improvement team, who have interviewed patients, visitors and staff, walked the routes and even visited Gatwick Airport. The pilot is using a principle called *Progressive Disclosure*, which aims to give people the bare minimum of information they need at any point in their journey to get them to the next point.

For example: at Gatwick Airport the first two signs you see are 'Terminals' and 'Toilets', what else do you need to know at that point. As you continue, the signs break down into 'North Terminal' and 'South Terminal' and then 'Departures' and 'Arrivals'. This system continues, gradually leading people with more details to where they wish to go.

In many ways, a hospital is very similar to an airport. We have large numbers of people trying to get to a certain point, at a certain time, often feeling a bit stressed in a busy environment. Our aim is to make navigation as easy as possible.

The wayfinder pilot will take place on the ground floor of Worthing Hospital only where new signs will start to replace current signage, within the next couple of weeks. The language used is being simplified and new icons and colours will also improve the way finding for our visitors.

The wayfinding pilot is designed to be a learning experience and we are asking for both positive and constructive criticism, in order to refine and improve this before using it more widely throughout the hospital.

Patient Services Office

The patient services office is beyond the small waiting area that you saw adjacent to the main reception. This small waiting area is used infrequently and only if someone arrives unexpectedly at the same time that another family are receiving confidential information. Members of the public are always asked to present to the main reception staff first so that they can be welcomed and shown where to wait in the first instance should the need arise.

Patients wishing to ask a question, raise a concern or a complaint are directed to the PALs Service which is friendly and welcoming and located on the corridor that serves as an entrance from the public carpark to the restaurant and inpatient wards.

We are sorry that Healthwatch feel the patient services office looks abandoned and our estates team has been asked to look at this again.

Further Healthwatch comments

We are pleased to learn of the car parking development and have emphasised the need for the Trust to involve current users of the hospital in the design of the parking payment system.