

Healthwatch Cheshire West Enter and View Report

Enter and View Visit to	Countess of Chester Hospital (COCH) Chester CH2 1HJ Department: Sexual Health and HIV Unit (SHU)
Date	13 th January 2015
Authorised Representatives	Richard Berry, Caroline Jones
Service Provider Staff	Dr Colm O'Mahony and the SH Team - all were very welcoming and helpful throughout our visit.
Background	<p>The Countess of Chester is a 600 bed, single site hospital. The SHU delivers health advice and treatment for sexual health issues, including, pregnancy and contraception (including vasectomy).</p> <p>Services are delivered from COCH and the following outreach clinics - St Martin's, Chester; Stanney Lane, Ellesmere Port; Blacon Clinic, Chester; Neston Clinic and West Cheshire College, Ellesmere Port.</p> <p>All clinics accept self referrals and in the region of 14,500 new service users are seen on an annual basis plus around 25% of these being existing service users.</p> <p>A microbiology lab facility is housed within the SHU and other tests are sent to the lab based in Bromborough.</p> <p>The SHU also works closely with the West Cheshire Abortion Service.</p>
Overall Impression	<p>Welcoming, efficient and effectively run. The atmosphere was calm and supportive and all members of the team were approachable and discreet.</p> <p>Service Users treated in a discreet and friendly manner. A ticketing system was used to ensure the anonymity of the service users.</p>
Any ideas or suggestions for improving service?	Service Users expressed the view that they would value the ability to book appointments on line. We understand this has been considered but put "on hold" as the service contract is due to change to Macclesfield Hospital in early February 2015.

Welcoming

Authorised Representatives were warmly welcomed by all staff who were happy to talk and share information and knowledge. We talked to/met a Professor, Consultant, two Doctors, three Nurses, the “in house” laboratory technician and support/admin staff. **Representatives noted that this welcoming attitude was also reflected in all contact with those patients using the service.**

Safety

We would judge this to be of the highest order - safeguarding is essential to the service as some service users are under 16 and many over 16 would be judged potentially “vulnerable”.

Caring and involving

We found the atmosphere to be caring and Service Users were furnished with all necessary information both before and during the visit. Service user feedback was welcomed via ‘Comment Cards’ left on seats, with the feedback comments then available under ‘Latest Patient Comments’ www.chestersexualhealth.co.uk. Any negative feedback was followed up with an example case being provided. We talked to 12 service users across two separate clinics during our visit - they were happy to share experiences and answer pre-set questions (*Appendix 1*). As can be seen from the results, service users judged the services to be exceptionally good. Results also confirm that information on the web pages relating to KPI’s are accurate e.g. outsourced test results are back within ten days etc, Service Users seen within 48 hours. Service Users particularly valued the use of the telephonetics results service which enables negative results to be automatically uploaded from laboratory software. Geographically, Service Users originate from many areas across the North West - 30% are from Wales and others were from as far afield as Manchester and Liverpool. From comments received, we judge this to be due to the SHU receiving a good reputation throughout the client group.

Staffing -
Historically staff turnover has been very low throughout the team of around 50; however, five staff have recently left the unit. Representatives understand this to be due to uncertainty around changes to the service following changes to delivery arrangements.

Well organised and calm

The department was well organised, exceptionally clean, quiet and calm. All examination rooms were well equipped and we observed the Service Users’ journey throughout the various processes and procedures to be handled with efficiency, understanding and professionalism. One example during our visit was a Service User attending the clinic, tests taken and diagnosed (within the Unit’s microbiology lab) and treatment undertaken all within an hour. The Service User expressed the view that they were most impressed.

Additional Comments

The strengths of the SHU include:

- Service Users clearly felt very comfortable and (from *Appendix 1*) valued the service, judged by them to be exceptional.
- Access to a “one stop shop” on all sexual health and related issues. Information posters clearly displayed on a variety of sexual health matters and leaflets were readily available.
- SHU has a close working relationship with Body Positive Cheshire & North Wales (www.bpcnw.co.uk) who provide charitable support services to people affected by HIV, sexuality matters and improving access to better sexual health services.
- Service Users valued the card given at end of consultation which gave them contact information if any matters arose.
- Integration with other areas of the hospital - e.g. during our visit a surgeon visited the SHU requesting advice relating to appropriate medication for a “joint patient”.
- Safeguarding procedures - essential with potential for under 16’s and the Service User group in general.
- The SHU provides training for F2’s (Foundation Year two) - usually a four month term - this provides training and offers a good grounding in sexual health, especially helpful for Doctors intending to enter general practice.
- A supply of all necessary medication is available within the SHU so staff are able to diagnose and prescribe “on the spot” thus negating the need for Service Users to visit either the hospital pharmacy or their local pharmacy.
- At COCH three clinics are held on a daily basis, supported by three Doctors - Service Users are able to request “same sex” Doctors and, from our observations, were seen within minutes of arriving at the Unit.
- If a clinic is fully booked, no Service User is turned away if they present at reception. They will be asked to wait till the end of the clinic to be seen.

At the time of our visit having discussed with and questioned staff it was not clear whether the following elements of the current service would be provided post 1st February 2015:

- Access to Service User records - these are currently paper based.
- The microbiology service housed within the current SHU.
- The “in house” pharmacy facility.
- What the procedures for safe-guarding under the new service contract were.
- Whether the training facility for the F2’s would still be offered.
- Whether existing staffing levels would be mirrored throughout the clinics.

Authorised Representatives recommend a revisit of the service during the next 12-18 months, to compare and contrast the new service.

Appendix 1

Questions which require Service users to judge their experiences will be scored:

1-5 with

1= dissatisfied

2= poor

3= ok

4= good

5= excellent

1. Is this your first visit?
2. If yes, did you self refer?
3. How long did you wait for your appointment?
4. Was this your first choice of venue?

If the answer to 1 above was no the following questions were asked:

Can you score your experience of:

5. Relationship with Dr/Nurse.
6. Wait period for tests.
7. Wait period for diagnosis.
8. Was the condition explained clearly?
9. Were the next steps explained clearly?
10. Did you feel able to ask questions?
11. If so, were they answered to your satisfaction?
12. Was any necessary medication explained - side effects etc.?
13. If you needed a procedure the length of time you had to wait?
14. Please score your experience of the procedure?
15. Are you happy with the frequency of any follow up appointments?
16. Are you happy with the venue?
17. Are you happy with the environment?
18. Were you offered a "same sex" counsellor?
19. Are you happy with how confidentiality has been handled?

Analysis of Responses from 12 Service Users

Question No.	Service User											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N
2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	GP	Y	Y	Y	Y
3 (Days)	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1
4	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5		4		5	5	5		5	4	3	4	5
6		5		5	5	5		5	5	3	4	5
7		5		5	N/A	5		5	5	3	4	5
8		5		5	N/A	5		5	5	2	5	5
9		5		5	N/A	5		5	5	3	5	5
10		5		5	5	5		5	5	3	5	5
11		5		5	5	5		5	5	4	5	5
12		N/A		5	N/A	5		5	5	4	5	5
13		N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	5	N/A	N/A	5
14		N/A		N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	5	N/A	N/A	5
15		N/A		5	N/A	5		5	5	N/A	5	5
16		5		5	5	5		5	5	5	5	5
17		4		5	5	5		5	5	5	5	5
18		Y		Y	N	Y		Y	N	Y	Y	Y
19		5		5	5	5		5	5	5	5	5

A number of the repeat Service Users were using the SHU screening services with negative results negating the eligibility of certain questions asked.

Comments by Service Users

Service User	Comments
1	Self Referral - Chose Venue via NHS Choices. Aware of other venues available.
2	Self Referral - Chose venue because knows somebody who works in hospital who suggested it as venue. Service User - Liked the little card given at end of consultation with contact numbers if any concerns arise.
3	Self Referral - Chose venue online.
4	HIV+ patient who highly valued the current care he got from the existing service.
6	Excellent service - have been attending clinic 10 years. Has serious concerns about the service changing with the new contract. Really hopes the staff stay the same.
7	Contraceptive advice sought. Venue is very convenient.
8	Thought the venue was good and discreet service. Grateful for quick turn-around, was worried and would have been stressed out if they had to wait for a GP appointment.
9	Liked the integrated service aspect, thought it was a quick response and very discreet service.
10	COCH is geographically close to where this Service User lives.
11	Liked being able to self refer as the Service User felt embarrassed if they had to attend GP.
12	Excellent service, people approachable, expert and non-judgemental.

Feedback from Provider of Service

This was an unplanned visit so all of the staff were surprised when Healthwatch Cheshire West turned up as they weren't familiar with their role and process. I imagine it is difficult to strike a balance between warning a clinic that they are due for a visit and turning up unexpected to see what it is like in the real world. Once it was explained what the visitors were doing it was all fine. With this clinic being so personal there could have been issues asking patients' opinion in an open waiting room, considering the nature of the problems patients had. The professionalism and charm of the two health watch personnel easily reassured even the most reticent patient. Also, in this large clinic we were able to find a separate room the visitors could use occasionally and I think this helped for some of the more embarrassed patients. So I can safely say that the staff here were surprised but accommodated the visitors and the process efficiently.

Personally, I was delighted with the visit as I was certain our clinic pathways and systems were excellent and the vast majority of patients who pass through the clinic think it is exceptionally good. Having read the report I am really pleased to see that it is reflected in here. I am particularly impressed that yet again the consideration, compassion and caring nature of all our staff here was commented on so positively. Most of our patients are upset to be here and this caring attitude is essential for them to feel welcomed and not judged. It was a pleasure to show the visitors around the facility and note they understood perfectly how useful it is to have the lab on site and the ability to treat

patients immediately by having all drugs in the clinic. Young patients have a very poor record of turning up at pharmacy!

It is all the more poignant that this very service in the CoCH will close completely in a few weeks. This huge clinic with multiple consulting and examination rooms, offices, phlebotomy, reception, laboratory, health advisor counselling rooms and nurse led consulting rooms will close for ever. This huge service will be forced into a small area in the new GP complex in Chester. Older patients in particular who find the CoCH easy to access and park will struggle, they will be embarrassed to have to sit in a waiting room packed with teenagers waiting for contraception etc. Note in particular the visitors commented on the “service being well organised, exceptionally clean, quiet and calm”. I doubt we can achieve that in the new infinitely smaller location.

In conclusion, staff here were very happy to accommodate the visitors, would welcome them back anytime and will appreciate seeing the final report. - **Dr. Colm Mahony**

26/01/15