

Enter and View Visit

Tropical Lagoon

In patient Children's Ward

Queens Hospital



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Report Details

Premises visited	
Children's Ward, Tropical Lagoon Queen's Hospital Rom Valley Way Romford RM7 0AG	
Service provider	
Barking Havering Redbridge Hospital Trust	
Date	Time
Friday 8 th January 2016	12.00pm
Representatives:	
Manisha Modhvadia (Healthwatch Lead) Roman Lakhera Val Shaw	
Was the visit announced or unannounced?	
Announced	
Reason for the visit Purpose of the visit	
To visit the in-patient ward services for children as part of a wider programme of work being undertaken by Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham. To gather the views and experiences of children as patients and their relatives or representatives.	
Healthwatch Contact details	
Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham Harmony House Dagenham CIC Baden Powell Close Dagenham RM9 6XN	Telephone: 020 8526 8200 Email : Manisha@healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk

DISCLAIMER:

This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the staff and service users and visitors who contributed to the report on that date.

What is Enter and View

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham is the local independent consumer champion for health and social care. We aim to give our citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for people in the borough.

Enter & View is carried out under Section 186 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It imposes duties on certain health and social care providers to allow authorised representatives of local Healthwatch organisations to enter premises and carry out observations for the purposes of Healthwatch activity.

Authorised representatives observe and gather information through the experiences of service users, their relatives /friends and staff to collect evidence of the quality and standard of the services being provided.

To do this we:

- enable people to share their views and experiences and to understand that their contribution will help build a picture of where services are doing well and where they can be improved,
- give authoritative, evidenced based feedback to organisations responsible for delivering and commissioning services and,
- are able to alert Healthwatch England or the Care Quality Commission, where appropriate, to concerns about specific service providers of health and social care.

Summary

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham authorised representatives undertook the visit to speak to patients and their families about their experience on Tropical Lagoon ward.

The following were the main areas being looked at

- nutrition
- personal hygiene
- how staff interact with patients and parents
- facilities for children and parents

The children on the ward were young and therefore most of the information came from the parents.

Representatives spoke to children and parents about the choice and amount of food they received. Feedback from parents shows that their children were happy with the choices and the amount of food provided on the ward. They were also offered alternatives if they did not like the food. There was one exception where a parent felt there was no real choice for her child as he needed mashed up food.

Parents were very positive about staff, 14 parents said that clinical procedures are explained to them and only one parent felt it was not.

Furthermore the report highlights that the bathing facilities are adequate on the ward and meet the needs of the patients. Parents were happy with the way staff treated their children and most parents knew that support was available for bathing if they needed it. However one parent felt their child was not treated with dignity and another parent said she was never offered assistance with bathing the child.

There were concerns raised about the temperature on some parts of the ward; parents reported it was too cold. Feedback indicates this is an ongoing issue.

Although there are things for the children to do on the ward, children and parents both commented that some of the televisions were not working. Two older children felt there needed to be more available for teenagers.

Parents expressed they were pleased with facilities available on the ward for families; however some commented on the fact that the beds for the parents are very uncomfortable.

How was this visit undertaken

A letter was sent to Lesley Mackay, Interim Head of Children's Services Child Health, on 23rd December 2015 outlining the intentions of the visit and a response was received from her, acknowledging the advance notice of the proposed visit and providing the appropriate contact information.

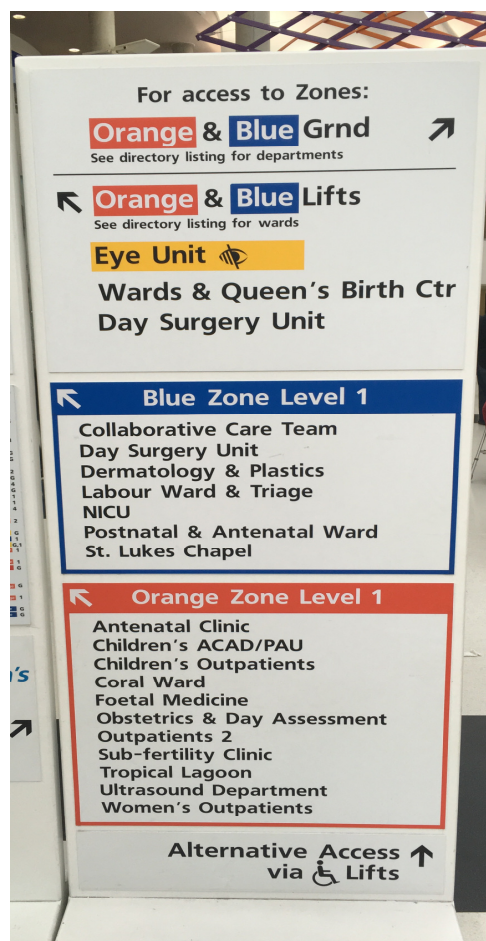
On arrival to Queens's hospital, Healthwatch representatives noticed a board with directions to all the wards. This was helpful and made it easy to find the ward.

The entrance to Tropical Lagoon has two sets of doors, one is open and you walk straight through, the second set only opens once you have used the buzzer and the nurses let you in.

We were asked for our identification badges by the ward manager. This is a normal procedure to ensure safety of the patients and staff.

Representatives had the opportunity to speak with the manager and ask questions about the provision on the ward. The manager also showed the representatives around the ward.

Once the representatives were shown around, they spoke to the parents of the children who were patients and a few children.



Introduction to the Ward and facilities and services

Tropical Lagoon is a 30 bedded ward. The ward is spilt up into:

- Four, four bedded bays, which have one toilet and one bathroom.
- Six full cubicles which are en suite
- Eight half cubicles, which are rooms on their own with a sink. There is one shared bathroom and toilet between the half cubicles.

Staffing arrangements:

The staff have long shift days.

- **Morning:** 7.30 am to 8pm : 7 Qualified Nurses and 1 Health Care Assistants
- **Evening/Overnight:** 7.30pm to 8am : 6 Qualified Nurses and 1 Health Care Assistants

Facilities on the ward:

- Children's play room

There is a children's play room based on the ward itself. Children can go to the room and play with the toys. There is an outdoor play area which can be accessed through the play room.

- Family facilities

The family room is based on the ward. There is a kitchen equipped with a fridge, microwave and tea and coffee making facilities. There is also a room with a sofa and a TV and a shower room for parents.

- The school

There is a school on ward.

- Play therapist

A part time play therapist is based on the ward, Monday to Friday from 8-4. She provides play therapy to children.

Sensory Room

There is one sensory room on the ward, which seems a good size. The manager explained that the sensory room is not open all the time and the parents have to ask the staff if they can use it, this is for health and safety and also hygiene reasons.

Additional information

Language barriers

The team can call on translators if needed; they do not rely on the family to translate. Language line is used.

Meal times on the ward

The wards have also implemented a 'protected meal' policy.



Menus

New menus are currently being worked on and the ward will soon have electronic menus for children.

Learning Disability Nurse:

Healthwatch representatives meet the Learning Disability Nurse who has been working across the hospital and has just completed a final version of the Learning Disability Passport for children. The passport will consist of information about the child and therefore parents will not be expected to

repeat information to professionals. This has worked with adults who have a learning disability.

Visiting times

Visiting times are from 11-7.30pm, but not during protected mealtimes. Parents can visit anytime.

Parents staying overnight

One parent of each child can stay overnight on the ward with their child. However if a situation arises and both parents need to stay, the ward staff deal with this on a one to one basis.



Food

Parents are allowed to take food for their children, however the ward do not encourage parents to bring in items that need to be re heated, this is to prevent and reduce the risk of infection.

Findings

Nutrition

Healthwatch representatives were not looking at nutrition on the wards from a Dietician's perspective, but from the point of view of the patients. The questions asked were centred on patients getting enough to eat and drink, whether they can choose the food they eat and if it is of good quality.



Are you given a choice of food?

There were three parents who were unable to answer this question as their child was on baby milk. From the twelve parents who were able to answer the question, eleven parents said their children were given a choice. However one parent felt that children were given choices, but as her child needed mashed up food, the options were not adequate.

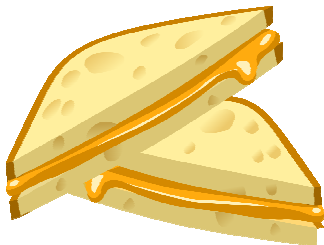
Comments from parents and children

- Child: "My favourite is fish chips and burger"
- Child : " Yes
- Parent: "Yes - children are given preferences "
- Parent: "If your child can eat normal food, then yes there are choices, in the case of my child, there are not many choices. He needs me to mash up food for him, because he has ulcers because of his treatment. There is not enough choice of food that I can mash up for him"

Do you like the food? If not, are you offered an alternative?

Most parents and children who were able to comment said they liked the food. However there was one parent who said that their child did not like the food. Three parents did not comment as their children were on baby milk,

- Child: "Yes"
- Parent: "Offered multiple choices"
- Parent: "Yes, my child is very picky though so I usually bring food in."
- Child: "My favourite is fish chips and burger"
- Child: " No do not like the food"



Are you given enough food?

Most parents highlighted the fact that their children are given enough food, with the exception of one parent, who felt their child was not given enough. Furthermore another parent felt that if a patient is able to eat normal food, then the quantity and the amount of times this is offered is enough, however if you need something different like she does for her child then the options are not adequate.

The three parents whose children are on baby milk did not comment.

- 🍌 “Yes”
- 🍌 “More than required”
- 🍌 “Happy with food”
- 🍌 “Fairly big”
- 🍌 “Good”
- 🍌 “For children who eat normal food, the food would be enough, but for my child who needs mashed up food, there are not enough options and so there is not enough food”

Comments from children

- 🍌 “ I have enough food here”
- 🍌 “ The food is enough, I don’t feel well enough to eat it all”

Can you bring in prepared food?

Most parents were aware they could bring in prepared food, three parents did not comment as their children were on baby milk.

If you need pureed food, what’s your experience of this?

One child needed food mashed up and the mother felt that if the child needs mashed up food then the options are not adequate.



How often are you offered drinks?

Parents were more than happy with the amount of hydration being offered to their children.

Comments from parents

- “Couple of times only a day”
- “Always jug of water”
- “As many times as you can ask”
- “Every hour / quite happy”
- “Yes 7 times a day”
- “Yes really good, there is a drink station provided”

Comments from children

- “There are drinks here, my mum brings some drinks for me too”

Breast feeding and bottle feeding mothers

There seemed to be discrepancies between mothers who are breast feeding and those who are not. Representatives were told by parents that they were unsure why this was. There were three mothers we spoke to about this and the comments are below.



- “ I do not breast feed my child, I bottle feed, I receive no food from the ward and have to provide my own food, however there are other parents who breast feed and they are provided with one meal per day, that’s what I have heard.”
- “I don’t breast feed but I have been provided with a meal per day as my baby has been really unwell””
- “ My daughter is older, so she eats normal food, but i breastfeed my baby who is here most of the time with me and I do get a meal per day”

The trust need to be clearer about which mothers will be provided with a meal and the reasons behind this. It was obvious that it’s unclear to parents.

Personal Hygiene

Healthwatch representatives found that parents were happy with the bathing facilities available to their children and the assistance they received. Below are a set of questions that were asked and the responses.

Are bathing and showering facilities available to children when they want them?

Most parents said there were bathing and showering facilities available to their children when they needed them. There were three parents, who used a baby bath, they were all aware that it was available. One individual had not used the facilities as of yet and therefore did not comment.

One parent also commented that she was not sure that if she could get assistance with a bed bath for her child.



Comments from parents

- “The baby bath is available on a trolley, staff bring in the water”
- “Baby bath is available but due to the medical wires on my son, he cannot have a bath”
- “Very convenient”
- “Not really in use due to condition”
- “We use the baby bath and its always available when we need it”
- “Yes very good”

Comments from children:

- “ I can use the bathroom when I need to”
- “ The bath is close to my room”

Do patients get help if they need it?

From the 15 parents spoken to, 11 said they would get help to bath their children if they needed it, one parent was never offered or told she could get assistance and one said if the nurse is free then help is offered.

Furthermore two parents told Healthwatch representatives that the nurses helped them bath their young children.

Comments from parents

- 👉 *“Haven’t offered but maybe because my daughter is able to bath herself”*
- 👉 *“Don’t know”*
- 👉 *“Yes”*
- 👉 *“Yes nurses visits every 10 minutes”*
- 👉 *“Pretty quick to help”*
- 👉 *“I do it myself first staff helped with bathing with child being so poorly”*

Are patients treated with dignity?

Parents (11) told Healthwatch representatives that their children were treated with dignity, the three parents who had babies had also said that the nurses were very good with them. One parent felt that the care was poor but did not given any information about what they were unhappy with.

Comments from Parents

- 👉 *“Yes”*
- 👉 *“Very poor”*
- 👉 *“Absolutely”*
- 👉 *“Dignity”*

Comments from children

- 👉 *“ Nurses are nice”*
- 👉 *“ They ask me if I am okay”*

Are patient’s personal and religious needs taken consideration?

Healthwatch representatives asked parents if their child’s personal and religious needs taken consideration, 11 parents replied saying yes, two did not know and two parents said that they did not have any religious needs.



- 👉 *“Don’t know”*
- 👉 *“Could be”*
- 👉 *“Yes”*
- 👉 *“ My child does not have any religious needs”*

Can patients choose the gender of the person that supports them?

Parents were asked if their child can choose the gender of the person that supports them, 7 parents said their children did not mind if the nurse was male or female as long as they were nice to them, five said they would be able to choose but were happy with who was treating them and 3 parents indicated that they did not know but the care was good and therefore it did not matter.

- 👉 *“Happy with treatment (gender doesn’t matter)”*
- 👉 *“Yes hope so”*
- 👉 *“Don’t know”*

Environment

Parents and children were asked how they felt about the general environment on the ward. The themes that emerged are set below:

Temperature is an issue in the half cubicles at the far end of the ward.

Three parents mentioned that the temperature was very cold during the previous night and felt it was too cold for their children. One parent mentioned that they were provided with extra blankets however felt this was not good for their child and that the temperature should not be so cold on a children's ward.

Parents appreciated that staff on the ward, were doing what they could in regards to the temperature and understood that the ward do not control this, however overall feedback was that this was not good enough and the hospital should be doing more to sort this problem out.

Furthermore two additional parents said that when they have stayed in the half cubicles at the end of the ward, they had complained of the cold and the staff moved them, however this is not always possible when the ward is full.

The manager told Healthwatch representatives that the issue has been reported to the relevant department, and they have been to check the problem however they could not find anything wrong. Staff told Healthwatch they try their best to move families into other cubicles, but this is not always possible.

Healthwatch appreciates that this is an ongoing issue on the ward. The hospital need to resolve this matter and deal with it as urgent.

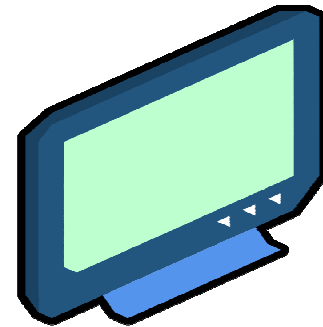
- “It was too cold in here last night, the nurses gave me extra blankets, but if I could feel the cold my grandchild was certainly feeling the cold, even the staff said it was cold in this room. The staff told me they do not control the temperature and did try and help, but it was still very cold”
- “The temperature dropped in the ward last night, especially these rooms, it was really cold.”



- “Previously I have stayed in the half cubicles and they are pretty cold, the staff have moved me and baby, when there are cubicles free, but this is not always the case. It’s something that the hospital think they can leave because the staff on the ward say they don’t manage the heating/ac and tell the maintenance people, and they say nothing is wrong and so we continue to have to be cold. Someone needs to deal with the matter ”

TVs do not work

Parents and children told us that some of the TVs do not work in the bays. Healthwatch representatives were also told that TVs in some of the cubicles were not working.



- “The TV does not work, I get bored”
- “ Why does the TV not work”
- “ The TV does not work, the nurse said she has called someone, but nothing has happened”
- “I feel so lonely as a parent, the thing I have is the TV and that does not work”

Chairs for parents

There were five parents who mentioned that the chairs that they use to sit and sleep on are uncomfortable. This does not help them to get rest when they have been at the hospital for more than a few days.

- “These seats are not good for me, makes your body ache!”
- “Really need to get something a bit more comfortable then this seat!”
- “Everything is good, apart from the chairs”
- “Not enough to do TV’s don’t work too well”

The nurse in charge told Healthwatch Representatives that funds have been secured through a charity and new chairs that turn into beds will be arriving soon.

Additional information

There were a number of other comments which were made by parents and children these have been listed below:

Comments from parents

- 👉 *“Draughty windows.”*
- 👉 *“Ward is very clean ”*
- 👉 *“Happy with the environment”*
- 👉 *“Clean ”*
- 👉 *“Good”*
- 👉 *“Play lady brilliant”*
- 👉 *“Really nice friendly”*

Are there things for the children to do?

Eight parents told us that there were things to do for the children and spoke of the play room. Healthwatch representatives were told there were DVDs and a play station, toys were available and the school is brilliant. However it was also noted that there seemed to be a cut in the hours for the play therapy worker.

- 👉 *“Yes and there is a play area, DVDs and a play-station”*
- 👉 *“There are toys on the ward”*
- 👉 *“Yes a play room”*
- 👉 *“play therapists hours seem to be cut over the years”*
- 👉 *“Yes could do with computer room for teenagers”*
- 👉 *“Yes playroom/ tv”*

Furthermore two older children highlighted that activities were aimed mainly at the younger children.

Interaction with staff

Healthwatch representatives wanted to explore the experiences that patients and relatives had when interacting with hospital staff. By speaking with patients, we wanted their views to find out if they had been treated with respect and dignity during their stay; that the staff responded to requests for assistance in a timely way and whether patients understood why they were in hospital and the treatments they were being given.

Are the patients treated politely and with respect and dignity?

Whilst speaking to parents and children, it became evident that they were happy with the service the staff on the ward provided. Parents and relatives spoke very highly and positively about the staff including doctors, nurses and healthcare assistants. All 15 parents said that their children are treated extremely well. Furthermore all the parents said that staff attitudes were pleasant.



Comments from parents and children

One parent commented *“I was here a few months ago with my daughter, in the evenings you would notice that slight change of attitude in night staff, they were not like the day staff, but upon my return I have noticed no such thing and it seems to have been resolved. I did raise this with the manager at that time and I am happy to see a change”*

One child said *“the nurse is always nice to me. Another commented *“I was really scared, but the lady helped me not to be”**

- *“Good and friendly”*
- *“Very helpful and friendly”*
- *“Absolutely amazing words can’t explain they are really good /fantastic”*
- *“Really positive”*
- *“Lovely really nice always try to solve problems go out of their way”*
- *“Yes personalised”*
- *“Really attentive with babies could not be more attentive”*
- *“Nurses are fantastic, no problems at all help clean nappy because granddad does night shift”*

Clinical Procedures

Overall parents were generally happy with their experience of staff and the interaction whilst explaining medical procedures. From the 15 parents we spoke to, 14 said they understood the clinical procedures and these are explained to them in a manner that they understand. One parent said they were not given any information and did not understand what was happening medically with their child.

- 🎯 *“Really good like that, nurses and doctors explain”*
- 🎯 *“We know what’s going on as it’s ongoing, but whenever we do need to ask questions, they are always answered.”*
- 🎯 *“Yes the doctors on the ward are fantastic.”*
- 🎯 *“Doctors are good and take on parent feedback; it’s a two way dialogue.”*
- 🎯 *“Nurses and doctors are very good at explaining.”*
- 🎯 *“One doctor is unbelievable, she explains every little thing and is just brilliant”*
- 🎯 *“No , they don’t explain”*



What response do patients get from staff when they use the buzzer system - do they respond quickly?

All parents who have used the call button were happy with the response. Parents mentioned that during the night it takes a little longer than day time for nurses to respond and felt this could be due to less staff being on duty.

- 🎯 *“10 minutes last night”*
- 🎯 *“Quick no problem”*
- 🎯 *“Really quite good”*
- 🎯 *“Not used any time just walked to the desk when required”*

Parent facilities

Parents have a sofa which turns into a bed in the cubicles or bays. There is a separate kitchen for the parents and a separate bathroom.

The majority of parents were satisfied with the bathing and showering facilities available to them, one parent commented *“the facilities are good but when you need to get to work first thing in the morning from the hospital, there is sometimes a queue”*

Parents also found the kitchen useful and a few parents commented that there is always tea and coffee available. This was particularly useful for those parents who did not want to leave the ward as their child was extremely ill. Parents commented on how the kitchen and showering facilities on the ward made a positive impact for them.



Comments from parents

- ☪ *“Yes comfortable, its good basic facilities”*
- ☪ *“Yes always milk and tea coffee”*
- ☪ *“Generally happy.”*
- ☪ *“Yes parents room is clean and you can shower and watch TV in there”*
- ☪ *“ There is always tea and coffee in the kitchen”*
- ☪ *“ You have what you need, the staff are good to the children and the facilities for me are fine”*

Sleeping facilities for parents seemed to be an issue. This has been highlighted previously in the report.

Additional Information

Do children have a named Nurse and is this continuous?

Majority (12) of the parents said their child had a named nurse. There were two parents who were unsure and 1 parent said *“there is no named nurse but all the nurses were very nice and happy to help.”*

- 🍎 “Yes three nurses introduced themselves”
- 🍎 “Named Nurse - but you can call any of the nurses, all very helpful”
- 🍎 “Yes, due to feeding tube”
- 🍎 “Yes - but all the nurses are really good. Always good”

When parents and children were asked what would make their stay better, a few themes emerged:

- 🍎 Children felt that their experience would be improved by having TVs that work and the remotes for these as they get bored without the TV.
- 🍎 It was highlighted that where children need counselling services for ongoing health conditions, the waits are too long and therefore the child is left with nothing.
- 🍎 Warmer temperature in the cubicles- This was highlighted in the environment section of the report, where some parents felt the temperature of the room was too cold.
- 🍎 Bigger comfortable bed for family- This issue was highlighted the second time round in this report. Parents found the sofas to be uncomfortable to sleep on.

Recommendations

In terms of caring the feedback was very positive, parents felt their children staff were very good and any clinical procedures were explained in a way parents understood.

The general feedback about nutrition was mainly positive, there was enough food and drink provided for the children and most children liked the food. In regards to having a choice of food, most parents felt their children did have choices, however it was felt there is no real choice if your child needs food mashed up.

There were no major concerns raised in regards to personal hygiene, feedback shows that there is adequate facilities available to patients. One parent did highlight the fact that they did not know and were not asked if their child needed any support with bathing.





Parents highlighted that the temperature on the ward was cold especially in the half cubicles.

Some children commented that their TV was not working and having them in working order would make their experience more pleasant.

The sleeping facilities for parents were deemed to be uncomfortable.

Children who have long term conditions and need counselling services are having to wait long periods of time to be seen and therefore are left without any support.

Taking into consideration the feedback received from the visit, Healthwatch recommend the below:

-  *The catering manager and management of the ward need to consider more food options that can be easily mashed for children who may need this option.*
-  *The temperature issue seems to be on-going, senior management of the hospital need to get involved and make sure there is adequate heating available for those cubicles that are cold.*
-  *Staff need to ensure that all parents are aware that they can ask for help, with bathing their child.*
-  *Although parents highlighted that there are issues with the sleeping facilities, management notified Healthwatch during the visits that actions are already in place to solve this, therefore no recommendation is needed.*

- *Signpost parents to other counselling support services that may be available if they are waiting to see a counsellor but the wait is too long.*
- *Ensure all the TVs are in working order.*

In addition Healthwatch would be grateful if the trust could clarify their policy around meals for mothers, whether breastfeeding or not.