

Enter and View Report:



Date of visit: 28th March 2019

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Background

What is Healthwatch Warrington?

Healthwatch Warrington helps the residents and communities of Warrington to get the best out of local health and social care services. We gather the views of local people and make sure that they are heard and listened to by the organisations that provide, fund and monitor services.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View (E&V) visits. Local Healthwatch representatives, who are trained volunteers, carry out E&V 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 (2012) allows local Healthwatch representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, opticians and pharmacies. E&V visits can happen if people identify a problem. Equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation; enabling lessons to be learned and good practice shared.

Healthwatch E&V visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. If safeguarding issues are raised during a visit, Healthwatch Warrington safeguarding policies identify the correct procedures to be followed.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to the findings observed on the specific date of the visit. This report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users / residents and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time. Wherever possible, the report below is in the words of the E&V team members present at the time of the visit. The report has been collated by Adrienne Roberts as the visit lead and some of the text has been formatted to allow for easy reading. The essential facts of the team's reports have not been altered.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Warrington would like to thank everyone at The Frailty Assessment Unit for their welcome, and in particular, Amanda Thomas, Consultant Nurse who made time to share information with the team and answer questions.

Purpose of the visit

The Frailty Assessment Unit (FAU) is a ‘Warrington Together’ led partnership, aiming to redesign services for older people. The unit provides care closer to home where appropriate, reducing Accident and Emergency (A and E) attendances, reducing admissions to acute services, and providing care in a more person-centred and efficient way. The service has been fully operational since June 2018 and it is reported to have significantly reduced the number of admissions of patients living with frailty. Data suggests that in the first seven months, the FAU avoided 235 admissions.

Healthwatch Warrington decided to visit the FAU to observe how the unit operated, look at the new facilities and seek the views of patients, family/carers and staff.

The team was asked to seek additional feedback in the form of a short survey, which is intended to collect patient experience, and will be carried out alongside the Friends and Family test.

Details of the Visit

Details of the Service

The FAU is a new service, which opened in June 2018 and is situated on the ground floor of Warrington Hospital, close to the main A and E Department. The unit can accommodate up to four patients and is operational between the hours of 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Most patients undergo full assessment and diagnostic tests on the same day and are discharged home. If a longer period of assessment is required, and admission to an

acute bed is not necessary, the patient can be transferred to Brampton Lodge, where two additional beds are funded.

Direct referrals are received from A and E, General Practitioners, North West Ambulance Service and Community Matrons.

Location, Date and Time

Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

The Frailty Assessment Unit

Ground Floor - Appleton Wing

Warrington Hospital

Lovely Lane

Warrington

WA5 1QG

28th March 2019

Time of visit - 1.00pm - 2.40pm

Panel Members

Adrienne Roberts - Healthwatch Warrington, Enter and View Visit Lead

Clare Screeon - Healthwatch Warrington, Enter and View Authorised Representative

Provider Service Staff

Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Spotlight on Values - support, involvement and partnership working

The Frailty Assessment Unit information leaflet for patients and their relatives, states that *'we will work with you to assess your needs, connect you with services that can help you make daily tasks easier and prevent unnecessary hospital stays where ever possible.* The team recognises that a hospital is the most suitable environment for some patients who are acutely unwell; however for some patients this can be distressing and cause a deterioration in their ability to live independently.

The unit works on a 'Home First' philosophy. This means that when it is safe to do so, patients go home with the appropriate support they require to continue their normal activities.

The Enter and View visit will aim to observe if the service operates in the way that it is designed to, and that patients and carers are satisfied with the care and treatment that is offered.

Results of the Visit

First Impressions

The visiting team approached the FAU from the rear entrance of the hospital. Once inside the building, the unit was well signposted and there was no difficulty in finding it. There is a large sign above the double entrance doors and direct access is available when the unit is open.

Entrance and Reception Area

On entering the FAU, there is a waiting area immediately to the left of the door with a reception desk alongside. The reception area was bright, clean and tidy. The unit was quiet and calm, and a member of staff stated that it was their intention to maintain a calm environment whenever possible.

There was a coffee table and six chairs, plus a large reclining chair. All items of furniture had 'I am clean' tags attached to them and these indicated that they had been cleaned the previous day.

The team was greeted by a member of staff and invited to sit in the waiting area. They were informed that Amanda was expecting them and that she would join them as soon as possible.

There were several information leaflets on display on the coffee table; including an information leaflet for patients and their relatives on the purpose of the FAU. There were also several 'Thank you' cards on display.

Amanda spoke to the visiting team about the function of the FAU and how it is being further developed to introduce a frailty service in the community.

The visiting team was shown around the unit and was given the opportunity to speak to patients, carers and staff members about their experiences of the FAU.

Food and Refreshments

Drinks and snacks are available throughout the day. On the day of the visit by Healthwatch Warrington, a member of the team spoke to one patient who was accompanied by her daughter, and who had brought her mother to the FAU and remained with her throughout the period of assessment. Both had been offered drinks and snacks and at lunchtime the patient was offered a sandwich. The patient is diabetic and prefers to eat a vegan diet; however, there was no vegan food available and she ate an egg sandwich.

The staff team has access to a large kitchen which is shared with the Medical Records Department. The room is located directly outside the FAU and there are facilities to store and prepare food, and a seating area. One member of staff stated that the facility is ideal; however, there is little opportunity to take a break off the unit.

Cleanliness, Environment and Infection Control

Everything on the FAU looks new and is in very good condition. The unit is clean and tidy throughout and is designed in a Dementia friendly way, with contrasting colours on doors, doorframes and floors.

There was evidence of furniture and equipment being cleaned daily or after use. Chairs are covered in wipeable material

The four treatment rooms are fitted with air conditioning. They have trolleys in the rooms, not beds, and this limits transfer from trolley to bed when being taken to other hospital departments for tests and investigations. The FAO always has a porter based in the unit, who is available to quickly transfer the patients between departments.

There is a large assisted toilet which is decorated in orange with bright blue toilet seat, grab rails etc. The room was clean and tidy and had a supply of handwash and paper towels.

Assessment

The FAU works on a 'Home First' philosophy. This means that when it is safe to do so, patients go home with appropriate support.

The FAU uses a Clinical Frailty Scale to determine suitability for the unit. Most patients are assessed in A and E and the target is to offer this within one hour. If patients score between 4-7 on the Clinical Frailty Scale, they are referred to the FAU for a comprehensive assessment and Multi-Disciplinary Team review. A copy of the Clinical Frailty Scale was made available for the visiting team.

Patients referred by their GP or other community professional, bypass the A and E Department and go straight to the FRU if they meet the criteria.

Patients who are frail often present with complex symptoms and conditions; however, age is not an exclusion criteria and it was reported that the youngest patient to attend the unit was in the forties.

The visiting team was informed that in the unlikely event that a patient requires admission to hospital, the FAU team supports the patient during their stay and liaises with community support services when discharge is being planned.

Staffing and Staff Training

The FAU team is made up of a range of health and social care professionals and staff are all permanent. Amanda describe this as a consistent staffing model, with the same staff being included in the team.

The staff team based on the FAU includes: Therapists, Support Workers, Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Assistant Practitioners, Geriatrician, Physician. The Geriatrician attends the unit on a sessional basis.

One relative described the staff as *'doing a really good job and they go out of their way to make you feel comfortable'*.

Many of the staff have extended skills, including tests and specific assessments.

It was reported that the Assistant Practitioners from the FAU are involved in setting up the frailty service in the community.

Privacy, Dignity and Treating People as Individuals

All interactions between patients/carers and members of staff were respectful. They were described as very caring by one of the patients.

The treatment rooms have a supply of information for staff to share with patients and carers. They included information on Age UK and Advanced Care Planning.

The clocks on the unit were dementia friendly and in addition to telling the time, they had the day and date.

Other Comments

The environment and atmosphere in the FAO is very calm, quiet and pleasant. It is ideal for frail and vulnerable patients and can only benefit the patients who would otherwise be waiting in the main A and E Department.

All members of staff that were on duty at the time of the visit, were friendly and helpful.

The unit is designed, painted and furnished in a Dementia friendly way.

Recommendations

1. **Snacks:** It is recommended that the FAU has access to snacks that meet the dietary requirements of all patients.

Distribution List

This report has been distributed to the following:

- Warrington Council
- Warrington CCG
- Care Quality Commission
- Healthwatch England
- FAU Manager



Appendices

Appendix A

Response from provider

