

# 15 Steps Review

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# Introduction

Keech Hospice is located just on the outskirts of Luton and provides free, specialist care for adults in Luton and south Bedfordshire, and children from Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Milton Keynes.

The service provides nursing care to adults and children, many of whom may be experiencing physical disability, life limiting conditions and or terminal illness.

Keech Hospice care supports adults and children to live pain and symptom free, to spend untroubled time with their family and friends, to understand what is happening to them and to stay out of hospital, making the most of the remaining time they have.



Keech Hospice also offer visitors the chance to attend for the day or to stay longer, having regular support, or just 'one offs'. The community teams can also offer support in patient homes.

Keech Hospice provides the following facilities:

- Bereavement support
- A Hydrotherapy pool
- Art therapy

- Music therapy
- Complementary therapy
- Emotional and practical support
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy

Healthcare staff at Keech Hospice sent a request to Young Healthwatch (YHW) Central Bedfordshire to ask if they would like to review services offered to young people. They wanted to assess what young people needed when visiting older relatives and friends, as well as if they were to have treatment themselves. They wanted to 'bust the myths' about hospices.

Young Healthwatch volunteers were keen to visit and arranged a date in August 2022. During their visit, volunteers collected feedback from staff and patients, and conducted a general observation of the wards, reception areas, accommodation, patient bedrooms, the cafeteria, and information posters displayed, designed to understand the value placed on the experience of patients and visitors.

This report provides insight into how services are delivered within the Hospice, as well as a summary of feedback from patients, Carers/parents and staff, about their experience, written from a young person's point of view.

# Preparation

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter & View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out 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 2012 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.

To prepare for this visit, all YHW volunteers completed their 'Enter and View training' to ensure they were fully trained and felt comfortable when visiting the hospice. YHW volunteers carried out the 'Enter and View' visits using the 15 Steps Challenge which focuses on seeing care through a patient or Carer's eyes and exploring their first impressions. The Challenge is a simple way of making sure we listen to users of services and see things through their eyes so that services can be improved. The 15 Steps Challenge toolkits are aimed at adults, but it's important that children and young people have a say in how care areas could be improved too.

The 15 Steps Challenge was inspired by a mother, who regularly visited a hospital with her daughter and said, "I can tell what kind of care my daughter is going to get within 15 steps of walking onto a ward"<sup>1</sup>. In response to this feedback, a national project was launched, which sought to gain a greater insight into the care patients received within health and social care services, through the patients' eyes.

A survey was subsequently developed using the '15 Steps methodology', with questions based on the principles of the original programme and Enter and View training<sup>2</sup>.

The volunteers also made observations regarding the physical environment; asking staff and parents/Carers for their thoughts, issues and concerns when receiving, or providing care.



<sup>3</sup> NHS England, '15 Steps Challenge' last updated 2017, [www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/15-steps-inpatient.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/15-steps-inpatient.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A for a full list of all the questions



# Methodology

On 3rd of August 2022, five Young Healthwatch volunteers visited Keech Hospice Care to undertake an 'Enter and View' visit which lasted approximately 3.5 hours.

They were welcomed by the Clinical Director, Deputy CEO and the Head of Quality and Governance for Keech Hospice.

Young Healthwatch volunteers spoke with patients and staff members using surveys specifically designed for each cohort of people. Each interview lasted approximately 10 - 15 minutes. The areas visited were as follows:

- ◆ Adult patient bedrooms
- ◆ Child patient bedrooms
- ◆ Reception areas
- ◆ Relatives' accommodation
- ◆ Children play areas inside and outside
- ◆ Garden for adults and young people
- ◆ Art room



Each volunteer was given a lunch provided by the Hospice which they chose from the patient's menu. The volunteers wanted to make notes on the type of menu offered to patients and family members, to sample the food, and to determine if any improvements were needed.

YHW volunteers also carried out general observations which included observing posters on the walls, emergency exits, signposting etc.



# Summary of key findings

## Staff

Young Healthwatch volunteers asked staff general questions about their role, training and length of time at the Hospice.

Two staff members had been working at Keech Hospice for 2-3 years, one employee for 3-4 years, one for 6.5 years and another for over 20 years. All confirmed they had regular team meetings, however, the majority of staff spoken to all had concerns about staffing levels in general as they felt they were inadequate and, *'more staff were needed'*.

On the day of the visit however, it is worth noting that three staff members in particular felt current staffing levels, were *'good'*, others rated it as a *'mixture; some people are leaving so it unsettles people,'* and, *'variable, at times very good, but sometimes people struggle'*.

However, staff were unanimous in saying they felt valued and part of their team, and the wider Hospice team.

Staff explained to the volunteers that there was a broad range of ways staff supported patients, who had difficulty communicating, as follows:

- ◆ *'They bring in their own ways of communicating'*
- ◆ *'Use Google translate'*
- ◆ *'Use pictures'*
- ◆ *'Relatives speak on their behalf'*
- ◆ *'Understanding what communication is needed and then adapting.'*

All staff were clear how communication was used effectively; one staff member said, *'yes, collected and gone through on a regular basis,'* whilst also informing the volunteers that, *'good feedback is rewarding'* and they received thank you cards.

Every staff member spoken to indicated they felt they had sufficient training. However they did have some ideas for additional training to help support them in their role, as follows:

- ◆ *Giving IV's*
- ◆ *Professional development*
- ◆ *Keeping up to date with current treatments*
- ◆ *Communication for different scenarios*
- ◆ *Ongoing training as things change*
- ◆ *Access to more communication skills*

All staff mentioned they did feel comfortable requesting training for their role.

Staff confirmed they had received safeguarding training and were aware of Keech Hospice Safeguarding Policy.

Finally, staff were asked what changes they felt could be made to improve the patient experience, comments as follows:

- ◆ *Asking patients what they need constantly and being there for them*
- ◆ *More spaces for older children (10 years up)*
- ◆ *More face-to-face opportunities for feedback*



## Patients

One patient interviewed was very complimentary about their experience at Keech Hospice. They were very satisfied with the length of wait for their treatment and discussions about their care, they said, *'great communication'*. They felt very informed and added that the staff, *'always asked before doing anything'*.

Crucially, the patient felt treated with dignity and respect and knew how to contact someone if they needed to, saying it was *'very easy'*. They had also received physiotherapy during their stay. Other comments included, *'large room, able to move. Very accessible for any level of mobility'*.

During the visit there was a very limited number of patients available to speak to due to the nature of their conditions and workings of the Hospice, so Young Healthwatch volunteers look forward to visiting at a future date to speak to more patients and parents/Carers.





## Food

Young Healthwatch volunteers were given a choice of meals from the full menu in the cafeteria, which is the same as patients are offered at various meal times throughout the day. The food was available between 12:30pm-1:30pm for lunch and around 5.30pm for dinner, but these times were quite flexible.

A good variety of both hot and cold food was provided which was nutritional. This included a salad bar, and a warm food menu. A children's menu was also available but this was quite limited. A range of meals were provided containing meat, vegetables and pastas, jacket potatoes and rice, along with desserts. However, the volunteers felt there were not many fruits on offer or a big meat selection. In addition although they did see vegetarian options, they did not see vegan, halal or kosher food on offer.

Hot food was not available for visitors during the evening, however, vending machines were available outside of main food periods. The Hospice was not within walking distance of any shops or eateries.

The option for patients and their family members to eat outdoors was also welcomed, and menus were made available in patient's bedrooms.

The Young Healthwatch volunteers all enjoyed their lunch and were very pleased with the quality of food provided.



## Bedrooms/Accommodation

The adult patient rooms appear to be a homely place for patients, with a TV, music players, drawers, chairs and beautiful landscaping outside.

In some adult bedrooms, the bathroom was shared which may make some patients feel vulnerable, but they had a dual locking system to help protect their dignity.

The children's bedrooms were large and practical and allowed for different bed options dependent on the age and medical conditions of the child. Young Healthwatch volunteers noticed that some of the electrical sockets were not protected, so they would recommend adding some socket covers in the children's bedrooms.



The children's lounge and bedrooms blended well with the aesthetics and were visually intriguing with lots of sensory activities. However, the bedrooms for both children and adults felt very formal and carried strong bleach smells.

The bedrooms were very clean and the young volunteers were happy to hear that staff can bring toys into the bedrooms for the children, when required. Different lighting options in all the bedrooms helped to create a relaxing environment. Free Wi-Fi in each room and air conditioning and heating were also easily accessible.

The Young Healthwatch volunteers felt that streaming platforms could have been more accessible in all bedrooms, such as the ability to watch Netflix or connect to the patient/visitor's device, and as all of the bedrooms were quite plain in decoration, they could have benefited from more colour in the room.

A family room was available for relatives when staying which also had access to a bathroom, living room and a small amount of entertainment. However, volunteers felt that the living room within this space could have been organised better with clearer activities and how to use them.

In all rooms you could easily contact staff when required and in addition, all bedrooms allowed for a lot of natural light and access to their own patio.

## Art Room

The Art room was a fantastic addition to the Hospice allowing for art therapy and escapism for the patients. Situated in the heart of the Hospice, it allowed patients to receive therapy through art.

The table in the room was adjustable for all different heights and levels of accessibility. The doors can be locked for safety and large doors also lead to the garden. However, the young volunteers noticed that there did not appear to be any Wi-Fi available in this room which might be beneficial if any residents wanted to follow an online course.

In addition, the clock on the wall was incorrect which could cause some confusion, walls were white and plain, with little artwork displayed, so this could be a welcome addition, to brighten the room and show residents what other people had been working on, to help inspire them.

There were many clearly labelled supply boxes and volunteers were informed that a member of staff will always be in the room with users.

The room did not display a map of the building which it would be helpful to have.





# General Observations

## Within the building

Keech Hospice radiated positive values in its services and demonstrated a caring environment. It was evident they paid close attention to detail for the optimal well-being of patients, giving due consideration to the families of patients as well as the patients themselves.

On entering the Hospice, the Receptionist in both the main and children's area was friendly and approachable. The areas felt calm, quiet and clean. Clear signage was provided to different service areas, however limited information leaflets were provided within reception, only 'Volunteering for Keech' leaflets.

There appeared to be very limited activities for children while they waited to be seen and the children's reception area could have differentiated from the adult reception area, with a change in wall colours and more lively decorations. However, it was welcoming to see pictures from different events on the walls.

The children's communal play areas were bright and colourful with enchanting decorations on the wall. The children's building also had a room which was more suitable for teenagers and volunteers said they looked forward to exploring this facility in more detail on future visits. A sensory room provided amazing stimulation for younger children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), but could have benefitted from a larger area for more movement and equipment.

In general, the friendly colour schemes and approachable staff complement the Hospice's relaxed atmosphere. It was heart-warming to see giant teddy bears for example, but the Hospice could display more artwork around the building, potentially sourced from those made in the Art Room.

Free Wi-Fi was available through the communal areas and the clinical staff had clear yellow name badges which replicate hospital staff.

Some building maps were available however the volunteers felt there could have been more to make it clearer when moving around the Hospice. Fire exits were clearly signposted and medicines were kept in locked rooms and cabinets.

Overall, the Hospice is a welcoming place for different age groups, from playgrounds to lounges, bedrooms to bathrooms.

## Outside the building

The outdoor area proved to be an attractive place for patients and their relatives. It consisted of several different small playgrounds, a woodland, benches, a view of the hills, and a pond that enhanced the landscape.

It was refreshing to have such a large outdoor area for residents and visitors to use. Accessibility was possible for wheelchair users and residents often had dogs, and even horses, visit them.

The volunteers felt there could have been more equipment available for older children to play on, for example larger sized swings. Perhaps outdoor exercise equipment could be installed for residents and visitors to use. Unfortunately the pond did not smell very inviting so it was difficult to use the benches situated next to it.

The closest bus stop is one hour away but the Hospice can provide transport to pick up relatives, friends etc from the bus stop, which is a very welcome benefit.





# What worked well

Young Healthwatch volunteers were impressed with the staff and service provided at Keech Hospice and listed below what they felt worked particularly well:

- ◆ Staff were very friendly and approachable
- ◆ Staff treated patients with dignity and respect
- ◆ Staff felt valued and trained
- ◆ Good variety of food for patients available at flexible times within the lunch/dinner time period
- ◆ Options to eat food in the cafeteria or outside
- ◆ Sensory room in the children's area
- ◆ Very clean
- ◆ All bedrooms had access to a lot of natural light and their own patio
- ◆ Art room for therapy
- ◆ Free Wi-Fi throughout
- ◆ Good lighting options in the bedrooms
- ◆ Large garden with good accessibility





Adult IPU ↑







# Recommendations

Young Healthwatch volunteers felt there were some areas of the Hospice that could benefit from improvements and would like to recommend the following:

## Staff



- ★ Improve staffing levels where possible
- ★ Develop and enhance staff training to include suggestions by staff, as follows:
  - ★ Giving IV's
  - ★ Development
  - ★ Keeping up to date with current treatments
  - ★ Communication for different scenarios
  - ★ Ongoing training as things change
  - ★ Access to more communication skills , e.g. sign language or braille
- ★ More spaces for older children (10 years up)
- ★ More face-to-face opportunities for feedback



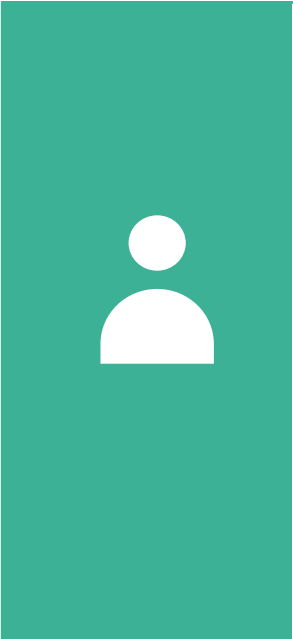
## Food



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- ★ More variety of fruit
- ★ Larger meat selection
- ★ Vegan, halal or kosher meals
- ★ Larger children's menu
- ★ Hot meals for visitors for the evening


## Bedroom/Accommodation



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- ★ Reduce bleach smell in accommodation
- ★ Make streaming platforms easily accessible
- ★ Closed or protected sockets in children's bedrooms
- ★ More decoration and colour in the bedrooms
- ★ More organised living room activities in family accommodation


## Facilities



★★★★★

- ★ Artroom
  - ★ More artwork displayed on the walls
  - ★ Wi-Fi for accessing online courses
  - ★ Correct time on the clock
- ★ Sensory room
  - ★ Consider a larger room with more resources


## Main Reception



★★★★★

- ★ More activities in main reception for children, such as books or toys
- ★ More information leaflets in main reception about support services available in their local area

## Children's Reception



★★★★★

- ★ Child friendly colour scheme in reception
- ★ More information posters and age appropriate leaflets for parents, children and teenagers to read in the reception area. For example, include QR codes that can be easily accessed on mobile phones
- ★ More lighting with warmer tones in reception

## General



### ★ Inside

- ★ More artwork displayed around the Hospice, possibly from those produced in the art room
- ★ More building maps located around the Hospice

### ★ Outside

- ★ Greater selection of outdoor activities for older children
- ★ Address the strong odour in the pond in consultation with an expert to look into treating with, or applying, chemicals
- ★ Look to provide outdoor exercise equipment





# Thank you

Overall, it was a positive and refreshing experience for the Young Healthwatch team of volunteers. The staff appeared happy in their role, were very welcoming and friendly and the volunteers all enjoyed visiting the Hospice, and observing behind the scenes, to see how everything comes together.

They would like to express a huge thank you to everyone at Keech Hospice for giving up their time and for showing them around the Hospice. Comments from Young Healthwatch volunteers, following the visit, included the following:

*"I enjoyed visiting Keech because I used to be a patient when I was a child and I don't remember much. I wanted to see what (if anything) had changed or been improved over the years."*

**Molly, YHW volunteer**

*"Such kind and welcoming staff, who really made you feel welcome. Walking around you worry that you are intruding or shouldn't be there but no-one ever made you feel that way. The patients themselves were so happy with the care and treatment, as well as the amazing staff. The place is full of open-minded people and lovely places to go to or to take care of someone."*

**Ava, YHW volunteer**

The Head of Quality and Governance at Keech Hospice also gave feedback on the visit from the YHW volunteers, as follows:

*"At Keech Hospice Care we pride ourselves on how we listen to people and use their feedback to improve our facilities and services. We were very excited this summer when we had the opportunity to work with Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire.*

*We invited a group of 6 volunteers to come and assess our services based on the '15 Steps' Challenge. It was really important for us to hear what the young volunteers had to say about our services and to hear their thoughts and views about how we can improve and develop our facilities to make them more welcoming and inviting for young people who come to visit in the future.*

*The young volunteers who visited us were absolutely amazing; they were professional and really engaged with the task at hand, we really look forward to receiving their feedback."*



# Appendix A

## Questions

### Reception Area

1. Was I greeted when going in to Keech Hospice?
2. What can you see, hear and smell?
3. Is this space welcoming for young people and children of different ages?
4. What is the atmosphere like?
5. Are the staff friendly?
6. Is there clear signage for different places within the Hospice?
7. Is there any literature for young people to read in reception to take away?
8. Is there anything for young people of different ages to do while they wait in reception?
9. Is the lighting soft and welcoming?
10. Are there feedback forms for young people in reception?

### Inpatient Adult, Children and Family Accommodation

1. What can you see, hear and smell?
2. Is this space welcoming for young people and children of different ages?
3. What is the atmosphere like?
4. Are there clear signs for different places in the Hospice/ map of how to get to different areas?
5. Would you know how to contact a staff member in an emergency?
6. Do you feel safe in this room? What could make you feel safer?
7. Is the room clean? If not, what could be improved?
8. Is the lighting soft and welcoming?
9. Is there Wi-Fi and is it easily accessible for all to use?
10. Are there feedback forms for young people to fill out to let staff know if there is anything that can be improved?
11. Is there anything for young people of different ages to do while they visit their friend or relative?
12. Can you easily work the television and is there access to shows you would like to watch?

## Art Room

1. Is the lighting soft and welcoming?
2. Is there Wi-Fi and is it easily accessible for all to use?
3. Are there feedback forms for young people to fill out to let staff know if there is anything that can be improved?
4. Do you feel safe in this room? What could be better?
5. Are there activities for young people of different ages to do while in this room?
6. Do you think there are any activities you could add to this room?
7. Would you know how to contact a staff member in an emergency?
8. Are there clear signs for different places in the Hospice/ map of how to get to different areas?

## Review of food

1. Is there a choice available for young patients? Are there different choices for different aged young people?
2. Do you feel the food is nutritional and balanced?
3. Did you enjoy the food?
4. What are the timings of the main meals and are these flexible?
5. What is available to eat outside of the main meal slots?
6. If you had any dietary requirements, was it possible to receive an alternative?
7. Were the staff friendly and approachable serving you?

## General Observations






YHW marked these as present (yes) or not present (no) with any supporting comments by observing the external and internal general areas of Keech Hospice.

1. Is Wi-fi available in general areas?
2. What is the atmosphere like?
3. Is there clear sign for different places in the Hospice/ map of how to get to different areas?
4. Would you know how to contact a staff member in an emergency?
5. Do staff members have clear name badges on?
6. Are staff friendly and approachable? And easily identifiable?
7. Are the communal areas clean and tidy?
8. Are there clear fire exits?
9. Does the Hospice have wheelchair access throughout?
10. Is public transport available to the Hospice?
11. Is there air conditioning and good ventilation?

12. Is there a garden patients and visitors can use? Is there anything in these gardens for young people of all ages to enjoy?
13. Is the lighting soft and welcoming?
14. How are medicines/ liquids managed on the ward? Are they kept locked away so that accidents don't happen?
15. What are the noise levels like in the Hospice?
16. Are there clear signs to the toilet?
17. Are there any posters for young people?

## Patient Questions

YHW volunteers asked these questions to patients with the scoring system below using smiley faces, (unless stated differently) to make it more user friendly for younger patients.

Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very satisfied
 1	 2	 3	 4	 5

1. Are you satisfied with the length of wait for treatment to be seen today?
2. Are you satisfied that staff have involved you in discussions around your care and treatment today?
3. Are you satisfied with the information available about your care and treatment today? E.g., do you know what you are waiting for (triage, blood tests, X-ray, admittance to ward)?
4. Are you satisfied that staff have explained what your care and treatment plan is and that you understand it?
5. Are you satisfied that staff ask your consent and explain when they carry out care and treatment?
6. Are you satisfied that you have been shown how to contact /call staff for assistance whilst waiting for treatment?
7. Are you satisfied that you have been treated with dignity and respect during your visit today?
8. Were you spoken to by a Keech 'play consultant' today? E.g., what activities, toys, games were available to you? Was it suitable for your age group?
9. How would you rate your overall experience of this service?
10. Any other comments you would like to share today?
11. Gender: Male, Female, Transgender, other, prefer not to say.
12. Age: under 12, 12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18-30.
13. Ethnicity: please state or 'prefer not to say'.

## Staff Questions

The volunteers asked these questions to staff at the Hospice:

1. How long have you worked in the Hospice? Up to 1 year / 2 – 3 years / 3 – 4 years / 4 – 5 years / Other (specify)
2. Do you have regular team meetings? If so, how often?
3. Do you feel the current staffing level is adequate?
4. How do you support patients who have difficulty communicating?
5. Do you know how feedback is collected and then used within the Hospice?
6. Do you feel you have been offered sufficient training for this role? If not, why not?
7. What other training do you feel you or other members of your team would benefit from?
8. Is today's staffing level usual for the Hospice?
9. Are you able to take your breaks as scheduled?
10. Do you feel part of a team within the Hospice?
11. Do you feel valued in your role?
12. How would you describe current staff morale within the Hospice?
13. Are you aware of the department / wards Safeguarding procedure?
14. What changes do you feel could be made to improve the patient experience?
15. Is there any other feedback you would like to give?





Exit



Please  
here

# YOUNG healthwatch Central Bedfordshire

Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire exists to make health and social care services work for the people that use them, especially young people.

Our role is to ensure that local decision makers and health and care services put the experiences of young people at the heart of their work.

We believe no one should be afraid to speak up .... because our opinion is as good as anyone else's.

Our volunteers have received appropriate 'Enter & View' training and are keen to put their learning into practice by visiting health and social care services such as hospital wards, surgeries and care homes. The young people will then be able to report their findings from their unique perspective. If you would like a group of Young Healthwatch volunteers to visit your service please contact [eleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:eleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk).

There is a lot more information on the Young Healthwatch website, <https://healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/young-healthwatch>, including the great achievement of one of our volunteers who has secured a fantastic apprenticeship with Cancer Research UK.

If you are under 25, why not consider becoming a member of Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire? Get in touch for more information, email [eleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk](mailto:eleanor.ryles@healthwatchcentralbedfordshire.org.uk) or call **0300 303 8554**.



## **Do health and care services know what you really want?**

By sharing your ideas and experiences you can help services hear what works, what doesn't, and how care could be better in the future for Young People and the current challenges they face.



it starts with  
**YOU**

**T. 0300 303 8554**

**[www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk/  
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