

# Healthwatch Oxfordshire outreach at Oxford University Hospitals 2022/23



**March 2023**

## **Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust – hospital stand visits September 2022 – February 2023**

Following the COVID pandemic, our visits to the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) hospitals recommenced in September 2022. We visited each of the four sites (Churchill, Horton, John Radcliffe, and Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre) once, promoting them as an opportunity for people to share not only their experience of attending the hospital sites but of using other health and social care services as well.

Over the four visits **we spoke to 354 people** who were either attending the hospitals for appointments or visiting friends and relatives. The overall feedback from everyone that we spoke to was that once patients were in a clinical environment, speaking to consultants, doctors, and nursing staff, the treatment was good.

### **Themes**

Below are some of the common themes that emerged following our conversations with people during our visits to the four hospitals.

#### OUH

- Parking
  - Finding a parking space
  - Disabled spaces at the Horton hospital
- Excellent care by clinical staff
- Waiting times for appointments
- A&E waiting times at the JR
- Coordination between departments for patients with multiple appointments
- Digital exclusion
- Translated information
- Interpreter services

#### Other health care services

- Not being able to get a GP appointment
- Lack of compassion from GP surgeries
- Lack of NHS dentists

## **Churchill Hospital – September 2022**

This was the first of our OUH hospital visits post COVID and was during a time when the COVID cases were still high. We were situated in the main entrance and spoke to 60 people during our visit. Most people that we spoke to were complimentary of the staff and facilities at the hospital and of their experiences of using the Churchill Hospital.

Maggie's Centre is also located on the hospital site where we spoke to staff and provided Healthwatch Oxfordshire feedback forms and Patient Participation Group (PPG) leaflets.

Comments and experiences from patients about the Churchill Hospital

- *Fantastic experience*
- *A lady and her husband use the bus to get to their hospital appointments which is OK as they have bus passes. This is handy when the gentleman has multiple appointments at the same hospital in one day. They have used their car today as the gentleman had a morning appointment at the Churchill and an afternoon appointment at the John Radcliffe.*
- *One lady said that she wished that not everything medical was done 'online' she doesn't do 'online, and also not always by text - use the landline if that is the patient's preference.*
- *Fantastic experience*
- *Really positive experience today from start to finish - nurse, doctors to everybody they had come into contact with.*
- *Even through COVID nothing was too much trouble for prostate care and surgery – aftercare was top class.*

***'Kindness, efficiency and smiles all rolled into one.'***

Two experiences we heard about below were shared immediately following the visit with Katie Harris, the manager of OUH's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) –Subsequently with permission to share their information the two people concerned were connected directly to PALS.

- *Gentleman raised a concern that he was worried about getting a parking fine. He was parked in a disabled space as he had brought his elderly neighbour in a wheelchair for his appointment - the gentleman in the chair gave up his blue badge a few years ago and the friend who brought him to hospital doesn't have a blue badge for him. He pointed out when they arrived, he couldn't drop the wheelchair patient at the entrance and*

*leave him while he maybe found a space as it wasn't safe and visa-versa when leaving the hospital, he also couldn't leave him outside.*

- *Gentleman said that he had had an awful experience at the hospital He said that he was traumatised (he used this word several times during our conversation) by his experience. He was an inpatient at the Churchill Hospital in March/April 2022 following an operation and due to a reason (he didn't know how to explain it) he couldn't go home for two weeks. The gentleman said that he has sent two emails to PALS but received "nothing back from them at all."*

### **Speaking to staff at the Churchill Hospital**

We also spoke to two nurses who worked in the TB unit. One of the nurses told us about the relationship they have with patients at the TB unit – most of whom are not native English speakers, and that it was sometimes difficult to get translators for them difficulties that they (Tetum is one of the languages that they struggle with). We told them about the translated information that Healthwatch Oxfordshire provides and gave some of the translated material for them to take back to their patients. The second nurse mentioned that the summary from the Healthwatch Oxfordshire Interpreters report was 'really good' and that it would be good to have the back page about 'Your rights' translated.

Both nurses said that they tend to find that many people who don't have English as their first language, would go to A&E as opposed to registering with a GP, because A&E is a generic experience wherever you go, there isn't always an understanding about how to register with a GP.

### **Horton Hospital – October 2022**

We spoke to **102 people** who were either attending appointments or visiting the Horton Hospital. We were located outside the main entrance near to the physiotherapy department. As with our visit to the Churchill, people were happy to find out about the work of Healthwatch Oxfordshire and how to provide feedback as well as to talk to about their experiences of using the hospital. Most were happy with their treatment and the quality of care they receive.

Examples of comments received from patients and visitors.

- *Not enough Blue Badge spaces – lady had to walk from the other end of the car park and said she really struggled.*
- *Gentleman explained that he lives in Northampton and has a rare condition that can only be treated in Oxfordshire. He is under the Churchill hospital for his main treatment. He had received two letters about MRI*

*scans for the month of October – one on the 1st at the Churchill Hospital and one on the 13th at The Horton Hospital. He attended the first one and today was told there was no appointment listed, despite him having a letter. He was really upset as today for the first time he had used Volunteers transport (he said it takes two hours to travel to all of his appointments) and he felt it had wasted the volunteers time – when they could have helped someone else. He can normally claim back his travel for his appointments but was worried that he wouldn't be able to today as the appointment didn't exist (again despite a letter stating it did) . The gentleman was also concerned that he was told that he couldn't have two lots of radiation so close together and shouldn't have a lot at all – he said he has had numerous MRI scans this year and thinks there should be an information leaflet about MRIs and radiation and what is classed as safe.*

### **John Radcliffe Hospital – November 2022**

We positioned ourselves in the main entrance and spoke to 80 people. Patients, visitors, and staff were happy to speak to us about their experiences. Several people made comments about the parking and how difficult it can be to find a space and get parked in time for appointments and that public transport can sometimes be unreliable (cancelled buses).

Some of the feedback received around parking and transport.

- *Parking really difficult – patient had travelled from Berkshire.*
- *Can never park at the hospital, came from Oxford via Taxi was late for appointment as traffic so bad.*
- *Parking really difficult – arrived 1045 didn't find a place until 1120 – always difficult. Brought neighbour from Kidlington, buses from there very limited.*
- *Lady and mother both over 70 from Witney. Parking is appalling, going round and round to try and find a space.*
- *People confused about what to do, where to go – there is no sign informing that the car park is full. So, people keep coming and coming. I have been given option to go to Wantage next time which will do even though cost more money but will have advantage of not worrying about parking.*
- *Buses from Abingdon to JR cancelled so late an took a bus to City Centre and then on. But many older people waiting with no support 'needs to be better'.*

Other comments:

- *Staff are very friendly; appointment wasn't on time.*

- *Repair or replace main door to the welcome centre – remember first impressions count.*
- *Very nice and welcoming staff who are also very understanding – have left the whole family well informed and comfortable.*
- *Physio appointment – given new exercise no long wait.*
- *Outpatient – informative and helpful*
- *Pre -op check – can't fault the speed and urgency family member was seen in and treated.*
- *Ambulatory Assessment Unit (AAU) – apprehensive before arriving but supported throughout the visit with Ultrasound. Dr and staff were clear about treatment and willing to answer any questions.*
- *Some seating for post treatment would be good.*
- *Very efficient friendly staff.*
- *A&E*
  - *Service good? just long waiting times.*
  - *Nursing staff fantastic but waiting times are very long.*

### **Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) – February 2023**

We positioned ourselves in the main entrance and spoke to 112 people. Patients and visitors were happy to tell us about their experiences and to find out about how they can provide feedback of their experiences in the future on the Healthwatch Oxfordshire Feedback Centre. We highlighted the Feedback Centre to staff who were unaware of Healthwatch Oxfordshire and were keen to take copies of the feedback forms to pass onto their patients.

Comments received:

- *Patient visits hospital regularly. Treatment is fantastic, support is great, always listened to – was told to register for speech and language therapy, have been waiting some months now but appreciate that system is busy. Doesn't need any extra support yet at home but will ask when they do.*
- *The NOC used to have a podiatry service – used to see a doctor who helped with referrals, but he has gone and not been replaced so the service has just gone.*
- *Parking is still an issue depending on the time of day of your appointment.*
- *Waiting times can be long but when you get to see doctors and nurses the treatment is really good.*



**Hearing from staff:**

- *Waiting lists – staffing, recruitment, and retention an issue (staff comment)*
- *Spoke to a senior medical member of staff who was waiting for a COVID vaccination delivery, they expressed an interest in the translated material. They want to have a simple single sided leaflet explaining about the flu jab and the benefits of having it translated – we spoke about the companies who are able to do this.*

During this visit we did hear a number of comments about accessing and using other health services.

- *Local dentist wasn't a good experience – didn't feel cared for*
- *Difficulty in getting at GPs for non-urgent issues. Difficult in getting appointments if you're not using online systems. No consistency of seeing same Doctor at Temple Cowley Medical Centre – feels like I'm being fobbed off and not being listened to.*
- *Phoning for a GP is a nightmare – can never get an appointment – online consultation is turned off in the evening and at the weekends – lady said she works so can't always do things in work time.*
- *Veteran feels like his GP is not taking him seriously, old GP treated him with respect, but new GP doesn't understand what it's like being an ex-soldier.*



**Healthwatch Oxfordshire** - our friendly staff are here for you to help answer questions or give you information on health and care services in Oxfordshire. If you need more information or advice, call us on **01865 520520** from 9-4 pm Monday to Friday

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