

# Enter and View Report

*Mesty Coft Clinic - Foot health*

*Alma Street*

*Wednesbury WS10 0QB*

*Announced Visit*

*Date 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023*

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## What is Enter and View

Part of Healthwatch Sandwell remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Sandwell Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises 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 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, optometrist and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation so that we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Sandwell Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Sandwell Safeguarding Policy, the service manager will be informed and the visit will end. The local authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

## Provider details



*Mesty Croft Clinic - Foot Clinic*

Name: Mesty Coft Clinic - Foot health  
Address of Service : Alma Street  
Wednesbury

## WS10 0QB

Chief Executive: Richard Beeken

Vascular Specialist  
Podiatrist Sapphire Allen

Service type: The Department of Foot Health

The Department of Foot Health cares for a wide range of foot and lower limb problems amongst the population of Sandwell and West Birmingham community, with the primary focus on preventative care to minimise the risk of complications which are associated with, but are not exclusive to, diabetes.

A number of specialist clinics tailored to each Patient's need are provided, including: nail surgery, neurological foot service, biomechanics, diabetic foot care and specialist wound care management, rheumatology, podopaediatric clinics and Peripheral Arterial Disease.

Clinics are run from a number of community locations across Sandwell and West Birmingham, including Mesty Croft Clinic.

Patients can be referred to the Department of Foot Health by any healthcare professional. A GP referral is required to access specialist services, Rheumatology, Neurology, Nails surgery and Biomechanics clinics. Patients can self-refer for core services (general podiatry and foot care) if they fall into one of the following categories:

- Aged 65 or over with a foot problem
- Children up to the age of 16 with a foot problem
- Diabetic with a foot problem
- Pregnant women, nursing mothers or mothers who have given birth within a year with a foot problem
- Registered disabled with a foot problem
- Individuals with a medical condition that puts their feet at risk without treatment
- Patients requiring nails surgery

### **Diabetic foot care**

This service is aimed at preventing foot health problems in Patients with diabetes.

The diabetes foot care service offers:

- Patient information
- Screening for diabetic foot risk
- Treatment of the foot and investigation of the underlying causes of problems
- Referrals to other health professionals where necessary
- Education and training to carers and healthcare professionals

Website: <https://www.swbh.nhs.uk/>



0121 507 2664 - Central Number

## Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Sandwell would like to thank Sapphire Allen her staff team and the visitors to the clinic for their co-operation during the visit.

## Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visit made on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The report does not claim to represent the views of all visitors, only of those who contributed within the restricted time available.

## Authorised Representatives

Anita Andrews, Sophie Shuttlewood and Melissa Elders conducted the visit.

## Purpose of the report

This report will provide an overview of the services at the Mesty Croft - Foot Clinic and will provide patient experience feedback. Where appropriate, recommendations will be made based on the findings of this Enter and View visit and it is anticipated that these recommendations will contribute to improving service delivery within the clinic and in turn improve the service experience for patients.

## Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with Healthwatch Sandwell Advisory Board, Sandwell MBC, Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, the Integrated Care System and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Sandwell website: ([www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk))

## Healthwatch Sandwell details

Address: Walker Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton. DY4 9RZ  
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## Healthwatch principles

Healthwatch Sandwell's Enter and View programme is linked to the eight principles of Healthwatch, and questions are asked around each one.

1. **A healthy environment:** Right to live in an environment that promotes positive health and wellbeing
2. **Essential Services:** Right to a set of preventative, treatment and care services provided to a high standard to prevent patients reaching crisis
3. **Access:** Right to access services on an equal basis with others without fear of discrimination or harassment, when I need them in a way that works for me and my family
4. **A safe, dignified and quality services:** Right to high quality, safe, confidential services that treat me with dignity, compassion and respect
5. **Information and education:** Right to clear and accurate information that I can use to make decisions about health and care treatment. I want the right to education about how to take care of myself and about what I am entitled to in the health and social care system
6. **Choice:** Right to choose from a range of high quality services, products and providers within health and social care
7. **Being listened to:** Right to have my concerns and views listened to and acted upon. I want the right to be supported in taking action if I am not satisfied with the service I have received
8. **Being involved:** To be treated as an equal partner in determining my own health and wellbeing. I want the right to be involved in decisions that affect my life and those affecting services in my local community.

## Purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to observe the environment and explore first-hand with patients their experiences of using the Foot Clinic. This was achieved by observation and talking to patients and staff.

## What we did

Our Authorised Representatives facilitated the visit and spoke to patients and observed the environment on 5<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

A pre-set of questions were asked that covered:

- Patient experience of the service including booking appointments, care by staff, accessibility to the building and information and any suggestions to improve the service.
- How staff meet individual needs of patients including the communication needs of patients who have impairments, handling anti-social behaviour from patients / relatives, how to support patients who want to raise a complaint / concern about the service and suggestions to improve the service.

Observations were made of the environment both externally and internally, that included:

- Signposting, accessibility, lighting, refreshments, cleanliness, parking and transport links.

## Findings

### A healthy Environment

#### External

The entrance to the clinic was signposted on Alma Street. At the entrance to the clinic there is a slight slope which is accessible for wheelchair users.

There is an entrance to the car park at the front and the rear of the building. There is a bus stop directly outside the clinic and another over the road. The nearest main line train station is Bescot Training station (1.5 miles), Tame Bridge (2 miles) and the Metro Station is also 1.5 miles away in Great Western Street Wednesbury.

There is an external buzzer to access the clinic.

The clinic is a relatively old building and is quite dated. However, there are plans to move to a new construction in King Street, Wednesbury in late 2023.

#### Internal

The waiting area had a comfortable seating area which include notice boards with relevant information and display stands.

There were WCs adjacent to the waiting area.



Prior to our visit a poster was sent to the clinic to advertise the visit, this was displayed in the waiting area during the visit.



Mesty Croft Clinic accommodates other services, including the Coagulation Clinic and Community District Nurses. These services collaborate well together.

On the day of the visit, the clinic was welcoming, clean and the décor well maintained. Covid 19 precautions are in place, signs on the floor for social distancing, sanitising hand gel dispensers at the entrance etc.

We were informed that there was no loop system. There were no obvious hazards or health and safety risks. There were no facilities within the clinic to purchase refreshments but during the visit, staff offered patients drinks.

The opening times are **not** displayed externally.

### Essential services

Patients were spoken to in the waiting area. **100%** had waited up to 4 weeks for their appointment, some Patients had regular consecutive appointments booked.

Patients gave extremely positive feedback about the service. **100%** were happy with the service and rated it as '**excellent**' and **100%** were 'very likely' to recommend this service to friends and family.

All Patients found the booking system very easy and knew who to contact with regards to their appointment. Patients described their first impression of the clinic as good and clean.

### Access

Accessibility of the building.

All of the patients had no problems finding the clinic and had received clear directions. The clinic is locked during the working day and one Patient commented that they found the entrance (buzzer) difficult.

Patients appreciated having a car park at the venue.

### Safe, dignified and quality services

Patients described staff as '**excellent, friendly and patient**' They were '**understanding**' and '**showed empathy**'.

### Information and education

The waiting area has a number of notice boards with relevant information, including the imminent move to King Street.





100% stated that all the information received about their appointment was clear and easy to understand. All patients were communicated with by letter and/or text and preferred this form of communication.

### Choice

100% were given a choice which Foot Clinic to be referred to, but preferred Mesty Croft Clinic, as it was close to their home.

## Being listened to

100% felt they have been listened to around their health needs/concerns and that all their questions were answered.

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*“Lovely ...they do more than enough...they listen to me”*

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## Comments and complaints.

50% Patients knew who to raise concerns /complaint and compliments to. There was a suggestion box in the waiting area too.

Those that didn't know stated that they had never had a cause to raise any concerns.

Staff described how they support patients who want to raise a complaint/concern about the service, by talking the issue through and then if it can't be resolved asking them to formalise the issue in writing.

100% had **not** encountered any barriers at this service.



## Being involved

Staff promote patient involvement, by being open and transparent during the consultation.

## Staffing and feedback

The Foot Health team is made up of a wide variety of Podiatrists, Specialist Podiatrists (Diabetes), Foot care assistants, technical instructors and administrative staff.

The team are centralised and visit the various Foot Clinics around the Borough, there are 25 - 30 staff full and part time (approximately).

We were informed that all staff receive ongoing staff development, which includes supervision, where training needs are identified and relevant training provided to meet staff's needs.

Staff also participate in monthly Staff Focus Meetings where the whole team discuss current issues and discuss how to improve the service.

Staff described that one of the positives of working in the service is working in a supportive team.

Staff described how they meet the communication needs of Patients such as those who are: visually, hearing impaired, have learning disabilities and language needs.

This is achieved in various ways:

- the administration team would book a British Sign Language Interpreter
- the appointment letter asks if they need specific assistance during the consultation, so the team can plan for their visit
- carers/support workers are also encouraged to accompany people with a learning disability
- language Line<sup>1</sup> can be utilised
- home visits can be provided too

Staff face a number of challenges, including:

- time management especially when they provide wound care as well as health promotion advice (to improve foot health) during the appointment. There is a set time duration for the appointment. It is also challenging to manage clinical work and administrative work
- Covering staff absences
- On the day of the visit, a number of Patients that were booked did not attend, which was frustrating for staff and it was a waste of a consultation.
- Referral from GPs when the Patient does not meet the specified criteria for the Foot Clinic

Staff occasionally face anti-social behaviour this is mainly due to being on a waiting list for the initial consultation or wanting a home visit. Staff escalate these matters to the Clinical Lead.

## Recommendations

The Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust to consider:

- provide a loop system for hearing impaired patients and advertise this facility (within King Street)
- be proactive in informing patients of the comments and complaints process
- Liaise with GPs with regards to the specified criteria for the Foot Clinic

## Provider feedback

**No feedback was received from the Provider.**

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<sup>1</sup> Language Line is an interpretation service if English isn't a Patient's first or preferred language



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