

15 Steps Review

Bedford Hospital – September 2023
Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

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Introduction

Bedford Hospital was opened in 1803 and is a district general hospital with 400 inpatient beds. On 1st April 2020, Bedford Hospital and Luton & Dunstable University Hospital merged to form Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Although the two hospitals have collaborated to form the Foundation Trust, they still remain as two separate hospitals. The trust serves a population of approximately 270,000 across Bedfordshire and surrounding catchment areas. The main site of Bedford Hospital, known as South wing, is situated in the Cauldwell area in Bedford.



The services Bedford Hospital currently provide includes the following:

- ◆ Accident and Emergency (A&E) department
- ◆ Pathology
- ◆ Inpatient wards
- ◆ X-ray
- ◆ Oncology services
- ◆ Outpatient's services
- ◆ Maternity
- ◆ Pediatrics
- ◆ Neonatal

Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire volunteers (YHW) were invited to visit Bedford

Hospital on Tuesday 1st August 2023, to inspect and review several departments; Accident & Emergency, Pediatrics, Neonatal Wards and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

Young Healthwatch volunteers had previously visited the hospital in October 2019¹, so this subsequent visit also allowed our young volunteers to ascertain if any of the previous recommendations, given in our 2019 report, had been implemented. YHW volunteers had also visited Luton and Dunstable University Hospital in August 2022², as part of their review of the Foundation Trust, and the final visit in August 2023 to Bedford Hospital completed their programme.

During the visit to the Children's Wards at Bedford Hospital, YHW volunteers interviewed a number of staff and relatives to hear about their experience of working on the wards. The volunteers also made several general observations, which included facilities and information available for young people.

YHW volunteers began in Cygnet Ward and then proceeded to various locations which included the Emergency Department, the Neonatal Pediatric Wards (Riverbank) and Outpatients. The volunteers covered the whole of Riverbank Ward and were able to make observations as well as speak to a variety of people and patients.

The purpose of this report is to provide an insight into how services and amenities, currently available in the wards visited by YHW volunteers, are managed.

Feedback gathered will help to inform recommendations for service improvement, both for patients and staff.

¹ Bedford Hospital 15 Steps Report - Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk)

² Luton and Dunstable 15 Steps Report - Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk)



Preparation

Part of the 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 the visit, all young volunteers completed in-house 'Enter and View training' to ensure they were fully trained and felt comfortable when visiting the hospital.

Young Healthwatch volunteers used the premise of the 'Enter and View' visits to carry out this review however, all the young people who took part felt that by using the 15 Steps methodology, this would create a suitable platform to evaluate and explore the wards from their point of view.

The 15 Steps Challenge 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 services can be improved. The 15 Steps Challenge toolkits are generally aimed at adults, however the toolkit has been written for children and young people to use as well, to ensure their views and contributions are heard and valued too.

The 15 Steps methodology was also used when YHW volunteers visited Bedford Hospital in October 2019 and Luton & Dunstable Hospital in August 2022.

In addition, a survey was developed using the '15 Steps methodology', with questions based on the principles of the original programme and Enter and View training³. The volunteers made observations regarding the physical environment; asking staff and parents/Carers for their thoughts, issues and concerns when receiving, or providing care.

During the pandemic, YHW reviews of healthcare services were moved online, however, in person visits to health and care services have since resumed, with some social distancing, masks and hand sanitising still being required in the hospital setting.

Specifically, this review seeks to provide helpful feedback on:

- ◆ Ward accessibility and conditions
- ◆ Inclusivity of hospital services
- ◆ Staffing
- ◆ Patient care
- ◆ What works well
- ◆ Identified improvements

All feedback gathered was provided by children and young people during their visit.

³ See appendix B for full list of questions



Methodology

On Tuesday 1st August 2023, eight Young Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire volunteers met at Bedford Hospital to carry out observations and interviews for the review. This was a very successful and informative visit that lasted for approximately four hours, by which time, all volunteers felt they had sufficient feedback and had managed to inspect all relevant areas.

YHW volunteers were met in the entrance to Cygnet Ward of Bedford Hospital South Wing by a Pediatric Matron. All volunteers were welcomed and introduced to several healthcare staff who would be supporting the visit, as follows:

- ◆ Paediatric Matron, Bedford Hospital NHS Trust
- ◆ Head Nurse, Children's Services
- ◆ General Manager, Children's Services

YHW volunteers were split into two groups and shown around the Pediatric Wards separately. Each group visited the Emergency Department (ED), Neonatal, Pediatrics and Outpatients and were able to speak with many different staff members. For example, in the ED, volunteers had the opportunity to interview a Pediatric Phlebotomist and a Nursing Associate, and in outpatients, volunteers spoke to Play Specialists and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) professionals. The volunteers were therefore able to speak to a diverse range of people who undertook different roles within the Trust.

Volunteers toured the entirety of the children's hospital units, speaking to staff and relatives, to obtain an insight into their perspective and personal experience of patient care and treatment, and whether they felt satisfied with the quality of service delivered by healthcare staff in each department. Volunteers used surveys covering a range of questions for staff and relatives, each with approximately 15 questions. For the young patients, volunteers used survey questions with a score range of 1-5, shown with 'smiley faces' to put children and young people at ease when talking to the volunteers. Each interview lasted approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

Volunteers were also provided with a complimentary lunch by the hospital, previously chosen from the patient menu for that particular day, with the aim of being able to review the food available to younger patients.

Whilst reviewing different wards, volunteers also carried out observations on communal areas, looking at information posters, hand sanitising and hand washing stations plus emergency exits, and to determine whether other relevant amenities were easily accessible throughout their visit.



Summary of Key Findings

Relatives/Patients

Across the paediatric department, YHW volunteers spoke to a total of 10 relatives of children and young people admitted onto the wards. All who participated in the questionnaire were mothers of those receiving or awaiting care. Unfortunately, volunteers were unable to directly engage with patients on the wards visited, due to the type of emergency treatment associated with those particular wards and age of children involved at the time of the visit. However, volunteers look forward to revisiting the hospital in the future to speak to other patients.

When asked what was the main reason for choosing Bedford Hospital, the majority of relatives spoken to said it was *'convenience'*, which is unsurprising as the vast number of participants lived in Bedford, or the surrounding area. Seven parents mentioned they had, *'used the services before'* for either the young person currently at the hospital, or one of their siblings.

Two out of ten parents spoken to called NHS 111 prior to attending the hospital, one parent confirmed an ambulance was requested which had arrived quickly. A parent whose child had additional communication needs was asked by NHS 111 staff over the phone if an interpreter was required. A further two people said that they, *'came straight to the emergency department because they thought that calling NHS 111 would be too long a wait'*. However, those who said they had called NHS 111 confirmed they had been answered quickly.

It was noted that many parents confirmed they had had a very positive experience with the reception team, in which they said staff had been really helpful and informative in the majority of cases. Two sets of parents each remembered specifically how the front desk team at the Emergency Department had been *'very supportive and came over to help with my child'*.

From feedback given the majority of waiting times varied from 30 minutes to one hour, with parents generally feeling their young person's treatment plan had been, *'communicated well and regularly updated.'* However, one person complained they, *'were not told when their child's appointment time was and had to wait for several hours to book an appointment for the next day.'* A lack of communication for one parent regarding visiting times resulted in their relative being turned away very late at night.

Seven parents confirmed their children had been offered activities to do whilst in the hospital. The play area seemed to be regarded very positively, with four parents saying there was a *'nice range of activities for all ages.'* However, when asked, not all of the parents spoken to knew about the Play Specialists and their role in interacting with the children, should any additional support be needed.

Four relatives ate food supplied by the hospital, and another relative, who was offered food, declined. Overall, many reported that the standard of food, *'was higher than expected,'* although one parent observed less variety in the menu in comparison to the Luton & Dunstable Hospital. Despite this, another mentioned she had coeliac disease and was, *'pleasantly surprised that there was gluten-free cereal available in the hospital to eat in the morning after my daughter's admission onto the ward.'*

One suggestion received for improvement with regard to the food was a shorter waiting time between ordering and receiving food. In addition, one parent complained, *'whilst my son who was admitted onto the ward had been given food, the youngest who had come with her had not, and it took a long time after the issue had been raised for the meal to arrive.'*

Five parents had stayed overnight and all said that their stay, *'had been warm and comfortable.'* A mother who had been staying overnight on the maternity ward noted a good handover between staff, and said she, *'really appreciated being able to come over and see my baby on the neonatal unit, as both wards were on the same floor.'*

When asked about general improvements relating to their experience at Bedford Hospital, three adults spoken to mentioned shorter waiting times and better communication of visiting arrangements, if, for example those parents who need to look after multiple children but are restricted by the 'two visitors' rule. Nothing pressing came to mind for the remainder of the parents who participated in the survey. Positive comments included referring to their visit to the hospital as *'really great,'* or *'amazing.'*

From feedback given, YHW felt that the difference between a 'normal' and 'satisfactory' experience was personal care. They gave examples such as *'seeing to it that family members were looked after,'* and *'communicating all information to visitors clearly,'* or *'recognising when relatives/ Carers need that little bit of extra attention with the patient.'*

YHW volunteers who undertook the review agreed, from all the feedback and observations undertaken, this would suggest that Bedford Hospital provides excellent care for patients whilst keeping them comfortable and providing necessities at a higher standard than expected. The staff are very attentive and ensure that both patient and parent/Carer are well informed about additional or ongoing treatment.

However, there is room for improvement, and communication about additional support from Play Specialists was needed, plus clear information about visiting hours and numbers allowed, should be made available.

It was felt that relatives and Carers were pleasantly surprised at the quality of care and support they received during their stay at Bedford Hospital and have continued to praise staff for their incredible work.



Staff

Young Healthwatch volunteers asked staff general questions about their role, training and length of time at the hospital. One staff member said, *'As a member of staff in the paediatric department, I am glad to say we have a dedicated team that provides excellent care to our young patients. Our doctors and nurses are skilled and compassionate, ensuring a comfortable and safe environment. We strive to create a child-friendly atmosphere with colourful decor and toys. We also have specialised equipment to meet the unique needs of our patients. We continuously work to improve our services and prioritise the well-being of every child who comes through our doors.'*

When asked about staffing levels, some of the staff felt this could be improved, one staff member said, *'staffing levels are adequate; however, some days are better than others'*. Members of the play team explained there are only three Play Specialists in the entire hospital which makes it difficult to provide their services. Some days it could be just one Play Specialist expected to provide service to the whole hospital.

The staff confirmed they feel, *'highly valued in their role and well respected'*. Additionally, members of the play team also stated they feel extremely valued in their role. However, they did add that sometimes around the hospital they receive strange looks from people wondering who they are and what their role in the hospital is. On occasion people will approach them and ask, *'What do you do? I've never seen this uniform before?'*



Members of staff also explained that regular monthly team meetings are arranged. A member of the Neonatal team told us their meetings used to be monthly but during Covid, this changed to once every three months and has remained as such. During these meetings feedback is given relating to 'what has been going well' and 'what may need some improvement'.

The staff confirmed that all training is arranged and paid by the hospital. Furthermore, if staff want to request training that they feel would benefit their role they can speak to their manager, or place a request through their online system, and it will be added to the hospital budget.

Staff mentioned there is a *'high morale'* within the department, explaining that everyone is *'really friendly,'* and it is a comfortable atmosphere to work in. A member of the Outpatients department said that staff outings are often arranged, such as Christmas parties, to address a work/life balance.

An 'open door' policy is in place where staff can openly express their concerns to address any challenges that arise in the department. In addition, the department have sign language cards pinned to the walls for easy communication, to address challenges related to language barriers. Google translate is also sometimes used to aid in communication, however challenges remain as it can be difficult with many different languages spoken.

Overall, despite any challenges faced, staff members are clear that they work together to try and provide excellent care to young patients.

Food

Before YHW visited Bedford Hospital, each volunteer was sent the same menu from the Hospital that the patients would receive on the day.

The volunteers noted there were limited options available and no menu for people with dietary requirements. However, staff confirmed that if a patient with dietary requirements was staying at the hospital, then someone would discuss what options they have available for them.

Hot or cold food was available; hot options included macaroni and cheese, chicken à la king with rice or minced beef and potato pie. The hot meals came with a side of vegetables or potato, along with a pudding. The options for cold food included a cheese, ham, tuna or egg sandwich on brown or white bread with a variety of extras including a piece of fruit, a cheese snack, a fruit yoghurt and a carton of juice.

However, the volunteers did feel that the layout of the menu made it very difficult to understand what you were getting with your chosen order.

A few of the volunteers had macaroni and cheese for lunch. They noted that the food arrived only 'warm' which initially was okay, however, as the food got colder, the quality decreased rapidly. The volunteers felt that the 'Chicken à la King' was indistinct as this did not include any information as to what it included. Volunteers were therefore surprised at the content when received. The cold foods and minced beef and potato pie all tasted good and were very filling. The food was also accompanied by hand wipes and tissues.

Unfortunately, some of the volunteers felt that the quality of refreshments was poor. Particularly the orange juice. However, the orange juice that came with the sandwiches was found to be nicer than the one from the jug.

Overall, YHW feel that food is a key part to a good recovery for all patients, and there were some enjoyable options, however improvements can be made to ensure an even better experience.





General Observations

Outside

The condition of the external building was well maintained and clean. Hand sanitiser and masks were also available throughout the hospital.

When volunteers initially arrived at the hospital, they could not locate a map and had to ask for staff assistance, who were very welcoming and friendly.

Inside

Volunteers felt it was easy to navigate around the hospital as clear signage was placed internally throughout the hospital's premises to help patients and visitors quickly locate crucial areas within the hospital.

Clear wheelchair/pushchair accessibility was observed on the first floor.

Internal decoration was colourful and friendly within the children's area's which is a pleasure to see as hospitals can be overwhelming for children and young people, especially those with extended stays.

To alleviate stress and provide a sense of normalcy, interactive play areas are integrated into the Paediatric section. One area was equipped with age-appropriate toys, games, books and interactive displays that encourage creativity, cognitive development, and social interaction among young patients. Small tables and colourful chairs to sit at made this a welcoming space. In the vibrant play area, tailored for young children, a pair of attentive supervisors engaged in playful activities while maintaining a watchful eye, ensuring a safe and enjoyable environment for the children.



Another part of the children's area was clearly suitable for older children, and decorated as such, so they could watch films while they waited to be seen by a doctor. A series of captivating posters served as informative guides, skilfully explaining the blood testing process and other processes. Through a clever combination of arrows and charming characters, these visual representations offered patients a clear understanding of certain procedures.

Improvements suggested included:

- ◆ Place more decoration on the ceilings to help distract patients in the Paediatric rooms as they were quite plain.
- ◆ At the entrance to outpatients, a journey to show the path to the waiting area, and from there to the consulting room, would make it fun and interactive.
- ◆ In the waiting area, provide smaller chairs for younger children so they feel recognised and more comfortable.
- ◆ The consulting room could be more colourful so that children are more engaged when being seen by Doctors.



Volunteers felt the staff were friendly and approachable which is really important as children will feel more comfortable and relaxed, and it makes it easier for parents to communicate their concerns. In addition, volunteers noted that the whole department was very well lit which can help to ensure children feel they are in a safe environment.



It was noted there is a lack of information provided in diverse languages, leaving patients with no choice but to rely on Google Translate for communication. This approach can pose serious issues, as important medical nuances and accuracy could be lost in translation, potentially compromising patient care and safety.

The volunteers noted a payphone was not available and, although many people possess a mobile phone, some do not and a payphone is essential in providing a reliable means of communication, ensuring that patients and visitors can quickly reach out for support to family and friends when needed. In addition, hospitals can have limited mobile phone reception due to the building's infrastructure or medical equipment interference, and payphones therefore offer an alternative means of communication when needed.



What Worked Well

Young Healthwatch volunteers enjoyed their visit to the Paediatric wards at Bedford Hospital, meeting relatives, patients and staff, and particularly noted the following they felt was working well:


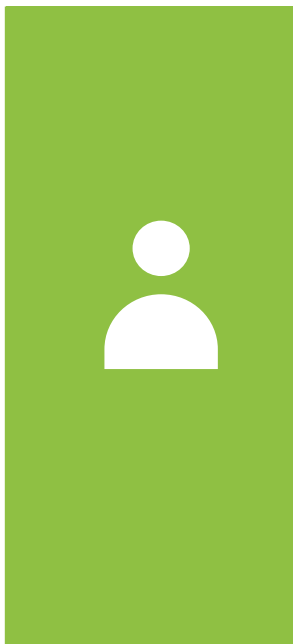




Recommendations

Following their observations and analysis of all feedback received, Young Healthwatch volunteers would make the following recommendations to help improve the patient, relative and Carer experience of visiting the children's departments at Bedford Hospital:

Food




- ★ Allow siblings to order food if staying for a longer time period
- ★ Shorter waiting times for food
- ★ Increase variety of meal options for patients
- ★ Create allergy menu
- ★ Create 'easy to read' menu options (layout)
- ★ Add a brief description of meals on the menu
- ★ Create consistency in drinks available
- ★ Create portion sizes based more on age of child

Patients/Carers



- ★ Shorter waiting times to be seen by a doctor
- ★ Improved communication regarding visiting times
- ★ Better communication on future appointments
- ★ Promote Play Specialists more widely around the hospital, particularly in children and young people areas for patients


Staff



★★★★★

- ★ Improve staffing levels
- ★ Recruit more Play Specialists
- ★ Promote awareness of Play Specialists to staff

General



★★★★★

- ★ Easy to see and find 'hospital maps'
- ★ More decoration on the ceilings in the Paediatric rooms
- ★ Payphone, or similar, in Paediatric ward
- ★ At the entrance, a journey to show the path to the waiting area, and from there to the consulting room
- ★ In the waiting area, smaller chairs for younger children
- ★ The consulting room to be more colourful
- ★ Clear Internal signage
- ★ More information in different languages

You Said, We Did

Following our previous visit in October 2019, colleagues at Bedford Hospital have confirmed changes already made as a result of our previous report and recommendations, as follows:



- ◆ Recruited more nursing staff; are now fully staffed for nurses across the unit
- ◆ Created a post for a senior Mental Health Nurse to work with young people and are training the nursing staff so they have additional skills when supporting children and young people with mental health conditions
- ◆ Recruited a Psychologist who is supporting staff with wellbeing sessions and training



- ◆ New catering supplier and a new menu



- ◆ Hearing loops for both Luton and Bedford sites, and the Patient Safety Matron has been training staff to use the equipment



- ◆ The building work is almost complete with more chairs and a brighter waiting room



In addition, fundraising is ongoing within the Trust charity for a sky panel in the ceiling and more technology items to redesign and improve the clinical Emergency Department space for Paediatric patients.



Thank You

Overall, it was a positive and refreshing experience for the team. Volunteers felt the staff were happy; very welcoming and friendly. All volunteers enjoyed visiting the hospital and being able to observe what goes on 'behind the scenes' and how services are managed and delivered.

The young volunteers would like to thank staff at Bedford Hospital for giving up their time and showing the volunteers around the hospital. Comments from volunteers included the following:

"I wanted to take part in the visit to Bedford Hospital as I had been a patient there myself as a child over many years. I do still feel significant improvement is needed; however a lot has been improved since the last visit."

Molly, YHW volunteer

"The Bedford Hospital visit gave me the opportunity to see how healthcare professionals work collaboratively in a busy environment to ensure the delivery of efficient care to the patients, alongside the importance of developing a rapport with the patient and respecting their wishes and needs."

Olivia, YHW volunteer

"My visit to Bedford Hospital had several distinct purposes. Firstly, I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of how hospitals operate, particularly when it comes to paediatric care. During my visit, I had the opportunity to observe doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals in action. This allowed me to learn about their roles, see how they interacted, and understand the protocols they followed. The experience provided invaluable insights into the healthcare system, emphasising the importance of teamwork, communication, and empathy in delivering quality paediatric care.

Additionally, my visit aimed to explore the hospital's child-friendly environment and amenities. I wanted to see how the hospital made efforts to create a welcoming atmosphere for young patients. This involved play areas, colourful decorations, and child-oriented services designed to reduce anxiety and make hospital visits less intimidating. As I explored these aspects, I gained a clear understanding of how these features positively impact children's experiences during medical visits, which is crucial for designing and improving paediatric healthcare facilities."

Batool, YHW volunteer

Paediatric Matron from Bedford Hospital also gave their feedback on the visit by YHW volunteers:

"We were so pleased to welcome Young Healthwatch back to our Riverbank Children's Ward, Meadowbank Special Care Baby Unit and Children's Outpatients – it was a great opportunity to show them that we have acted on their recommendations and more since their visit back in 2019. A great deal of work has been done to improve facilities and experience for the children and young people we care for and their families, with a fully refurbished playroom and a dedicated 'chill' zone with gaming and entertainment for our older patients. The input from Young Healthwatch is invaluable in informing our vision for the future and continuous improvement to ensure we meet all our patients' needs."







Appendix A

General Observations

YHW volunteers marked these as present (yes) or not present (no) with any supporting comments by observing the external and internal general areas of the wards and hospital:

External Building Condition

1. Internal Decoration?
2. Parking Arrangements, including provision for Disabled Visitors?
3. Clear signage?

Observation Criteria

4. Wheelchair / pushchair accessible?
5. Condition and location of toilets?
6. Fire Exits – locations and signs?
7. Hearing Loop system in place?
8. Drinking water available?
9. Vending machines available?
10. Clear signs within the department e.g., toilets, exits etc.?
11. Complaints information displayed?
12. Confidentiality / privacy declaration displayed in public areas?
13. Range of literature / leaflets available?
14. Information available in other languages?
15. Hand sanitiser/single use masks available?
16. Clear guidance on how to inform the staff of your arrival?
17. Are the staff friendly and approachable?
18. Interpretation services information displayed?
19. Payphone available?
20. Is the department child friendly?
21. Is the department / ward well lit?
22. Is it a comfortable temperature?
23. Breastfeeding friendly?
24. Healthwatch poster displayed?



Appendix B

Questions

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 in this ward today?
2. Are you satisfied that you have fully explored other options before arriving at the hospital today, such as speaking to a GP, Pharmacist or Mental Health Professional, or calling NHS 111?
3. Are you satisfied that staff have involved you in discussions around your care and treatment today?
4. 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)?
5. Are you satisfied that staff have explained what your care and treatment plan is and that you understand it?
6. Are you satisfied that staff ask your consent and explain when they carry out care and treatment?
7. Are you satisfied that you have been shown how to contact /call staff for assistance whilst waiting for treatment?
8. Are you satisfied that you have been treated with dignity and respect during your visit today?
9. Were you spoken to by a hospital play consultant today? E.g., what activities, toys, games were available to you? Was it suitable for your age group?
10. How would you rate your overall experience of this service?
11. Have you eaten food in the ward? How would you rate this? Where you offered food outside of mealtimes? If possible, what improvements would you like to see?
12. Any other comments you would like to share today?
13. Gender: Male, Female, Transgender, other, prefer not to say.
14. Age: under 12, 12-13, 14-15, 16-17, 18-30.
15. Ethnicity: please state or 'prefer not to say'.

Parents/Carers Questions

YHW volunteers asked these questions to parents/Carers of young patients.

1. What is your relationship to the person you have accompanied to the department/ ward today?
2. What has brought you to the hospital today / What is the reason for your visit?
3. How long is it since you arrived in the department / ward today?
4. Do you know what the person you are accompanying is waiting for? (e.g., triage, blood test, X-ray, admittance to a ward). What is next in their treatment plan? Has their treatment plan been communicated to you? Do you feel informed?
5. Why did you / the person you are accompanying come to this hospital as opposed to another in the area?
6. Have you/the person you are accompanying consulted NHS 111 prior to attending? By phone or by email.
7. Have you been offered activities for the person you are supporting to do? If so, what? What has worked well? What could be improved?
8. Have you eaten any food supplied by the hospital? If so, did you enjoy it? Could anything be improved?
9. Was the person you are accompanying asked if they had any additional communication needs? (e.g., hearing or visual impairment or require additional language support). If YES, please state the nature of the impairment and whether any special provision was made for you.
10. Was the person you are accompanying asked if they require an interpreter? E.g., BSL. If so, has this been acknowledged/provided?
11. How was your experience with reception / front desk?
12. Due to Covid -19 restrictions, are you experiencing any difficulty supporting the patient?
13. What would you improve if you were given the option to do so?
14. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your visit to this department/ ward?
15. Gender: Male, Female, Transgender, other, prefer not to say.
16. Age: 18-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 71 +.
17. Ethnicity: please state or 'prefer not to say'.



Staff Questions

YHW volunteers asked these questions to staff on the Paediatric wards:

1. How long have you worked in this department / ward?
Up to 1 year / 2 – 3 years / 3 – 4 years / 4 – 5 years / Other (specify)
2. Have you worked elsewhere within the Trust?
3. Do you have regular team meetings? If so, how often?
4. Do you feel the current staffing level is adequate?
5. If a person came to the department / ward with additional needs, how would they be supported? (e.g., dementia, learning difficulty, hearing impairment, etc)
6. How do you support patients who have difficulty communicating?
7. Do you know how feedback is collected and then used within your department / ward?
8. Do you feel you have been offered sufficient training for this role? If not, why not?
9. What other training do you feel you or other members of your team would benefit from?
10. Do you feel able to request further training appropriate to your role?
11. Is today's staffing level usual for this department / ward?
12. Are you able to take your breaks as scheduled?
13. Do you feel part of a team within the department / ward?
14. Do you feel valued in your role?
15. Do you feel part of a wider team within the Trust?
16. How would you describe current staff morale within the department / ward?
17. Are you aware of the department / wards Safeguarding procedure?
18. Do you know who the 'Trust's Freedom to Speak Up' (FTSU) Guardian is and how to contact them?
19. What changes do you feel could be made to improve the patient experience?
20. Is there any other feedback you would like to give?



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 your 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.

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 or call **0300 303 8554**.





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Registered Company No: 08399922
Registered Charity No: 1154627

