



Enter and View Report – August 2023 Royal Sussex County Hospital

Service name:
Service Provider:
Date and Time:
**Authorised
Representatives:**
Contact details:

The Atrium at the Louisa Martindale Building
University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust
Thursday 17th August 2023
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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove would like to thank our volunteers, service providers, service users and staff for contributing to the Enter and View programme.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and 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 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. 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 we can learn about and share examples of what they do well.



Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove have worked in partnership with our local hospital trust for several years to conduct regular Enter and View visits. These visits to wards and other units are carried out by trained volunteer lay assessors and are called Healthwatch Hospital Enter and View visits. The visits are an extension of a national programme of audits called PLACE - Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment.

These Healthwatch visits:

- Provide valuable insight into the work of our local trust and its hospitals.
- Allow us to see first-hand the many positive aspects of our hospitals.
- Provide an opportunity to raise any concerns directly with senior trust staff.

Healthwatch Hospital, Enter and View visits are intended:

- To provide a regular, independent supply of information about the environment of our hospitals to the trust, which empowers them to act on emerging issues.
- To ensure that patients and staff benefit from an ever-improving hospital environment which in turn supports the delivery of high standards of care, dignity, and safety.
- To provide Healthwatch with an audit trail of intelligence and evidence which it can use to assess how our recommendations are helping to improve hospital environments.
- To enable Healthwatch to share our findings with interested partners such as the Care Quality Commission and the public.

Methodology

One trained DBS checked Enter and View volunteer lay assessor and one member of Healthwatch Staff (as part of their induction) visited the Atrium at the Louisa Martindale Building. They talked with six outpatients and their relatives and asked for their views on

their experience of the new Atrium building, about their first impressions of the new building, how it compares to when they visited the old hospital, about the food and drink available and if there is anything that could have been done to improve it further. They were also free to discuss any aspects raised by the people they met.

The representatives were accompanied by Dr Nicole Chavaudra, Director of Patient Experience, Engagement and Involvement from the NHS. They observed the environment at the new Atrium Building, and their views of the physical environment were recorded. They also completed a checklist to capture positive findings, challenges and concerns, and anything staff told us and our recommendations.

The checklist Healthwatch uses is based on the NHS publication “[The Fifteen Steps Challenge: Quality from a patient’s perspective](#)”, which explores what good care looks like through a patient’s eyes. When completing the checklist, volunteers are asked to say whether specific criteria have been met in full, partially or not at all and to award a suitable score out of ten. Volunteers are provided with the opportunity to record any positive findings and make recommendations under four headings:

- (i) Is the environment welcoming?
- (ii) Is the environment safe?
- (iii) Is the environment caring and involving?
- (iv) Is the environment well-organised?

Lastly, the volunteers spoke to outpatients and their relatives, who were happy to have a short chat. Notes from these conversations were recorded anonymously to maintain patient confidentiality.





Results of visit

Healthwatch asks volunteers to give a score out of 10 for each area as a simple way to assess things. The scores represent the subjective views of our trained volunteers and are not part of a national scoring system. Healthwatch considers that:

- 9 or 10 indicates that the ward or unit is performing strongly with little or no room for improvement and areas of excellence have been observed.
- 7 or 8 suggests there are a number of areas which require attention in order to improve the environment, but overall, things are good.
- a score of 6 or less indicates that significant changes may be needed to improve the environment.

Is the environment welcoming?	Score awarded: 8 out of 10
Is the environment safe?	Score awarded: 8 out of 10
Is the environment caring?	Score awarded: 10 out of 10
Is the environment well-organised?	Score Awarded: 10 out of 10

(a) Welcoming environment Score awarded: 8 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
• Open, clean, bright, welcoming. • Lots of signage for Wi-Fi. • Phone charging stations. • Good variety of seatings.	• Signage not as clear as it could be – we suggest bigger signs above doorways for the lifts and toilets. • There is a map of the hospital layout on your left when you first enter the building. It points to the Louisa Martindale building. We felt it could highlight where you are i.e. “you are here” more clearly/in more of a bold font. We also felt that the visual of the lift levels next.

	to the map could be clearer. i.e. again having a “you are here” more boldly, maybe an arrow or some kind of link between the building location on the map and which floor you are on, on the lift diagram. • We didn’t see a welcoming sign in any other languages.
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(b) Safe environment Score awarded: 8 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
• Inside was a very clean and well-ordered, safe space.	• There could be more hand gels in the café (we only saw one). • It would be good to have hand gels where there are touch screens i.e. at the check-in screens and the heritage screen. • Just outside the main entrance (not on the street), there were a lot of cigarette butts and 3 staff members smoking. There was no ‘no smoking’ signage. We suggest there is more no smoking signage directly outside the hospital entrance. • Fire exit signage could be better – confusing signage regarding fire exits in the corridor leading to the Heritage Chapel. Green signs indicate escape route, but locked door has sign stating not a fire exit. There are locked doors on the left of the corridor which appear to lead to the fire exit on the street. There is an emergency panel



	which advises it needs to be smashed to unlock the doors. Did not seem to make sense and could be dangerous in a real emergency.
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(c) Caring environment Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
• Excellent seating that seems to accommodate most needs. • Booths with high sides to create a sense of privacy – good for when people have received upsetting news or for those who are neurodivergent. • Comfortable chairs. • Variety of seating arrangements. • Acoustics really good. Felt calm and not too loud even when very busy.	• None.

(d) Well organised & calm environment Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
• All calm organised and clutter-free.	• Attention needed to the outside entrance area, not very calming due to smoke and cigarette butts.

Conversations with patients

Can you tell us your first impression of the Atrium?

- 🟢 Initially walked past the building, as not aware it was open (here to collect a patient). Very impressed with building. Felt light and spacious and happy to have the café to wait in. 🟡
 - *Outpatient relative 1*
- 🟢 Had arrived from ward on upper floor so had not seen the main entrance or reception area. She was very impressed with the large open space. As someone who was visiting a patient, she remarked that she was grateful for the café and the sense of calm. 🟡
 - *Outpatient relative 2*
- 🟢 Very impressive design and so spacious and calm. 🟡
 - *Outpatient 3*
- 🟢 Looked at map board outside the building. Found this helpful. Entered building and was approached by staff member (did not approach desk herself) and asked her where she needed to go. Very easy and positive experience. 🟡
 - *Outpatient 4*
- 🟢 Fantastic, clean, perfect. It is fresh, and bright, with lovely big windows – it's cheerful. 🟡
 - *Outpatient relative 5*
- 🟢 Very impressive. 🟡
 - *Outpatient relative 6*

How does this compare to when you visited the old hospital?

- 🟢 No comparison! The whole space and atmosphere are different and so much better. I think the staff seem more relaxed as the building is calm. 🟡
 - *Outpatient 3*

- More spacious, much better than the Barry building. Not dark and dismal. Nice and bright. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient 4*
- Much better than the Barry building. Staff, including catering staff, seem much more relaxed. Working conditions must be better. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 5*
- No comparison to the Barry building. So much better. Good presentation. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 6*

Can you tell us what you think of the food and drinks?

- Very impressed with the café and seating. He commented that there was a wide choice of food, which surprised him. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 1*
- Again, very impressed with the range of choice and that there were also shops (M&S and Smiths) available. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 2*
- Good to have a large café available. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient 3*
- Good food & drink at a good price. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient 4*
- Drink good, liked that they have oat milk! 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 5*
- Disappointed that there was only black coffee available in WHSmith. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 6*

Is there anything that could have been done to improve it further?

- Not that she could think of. 🗨️

 - *Outpatient relative 2*



- Good to have the large reception area, as they were able to find out where to go as they had found the signage confusing. She had a particular problem finding the toilets – the signage could be clearer, maybe larger. ●
 - *Outpatient 3*

- Would like more disabled bays near the building. She uses a walking stick and the parking was too far away. ●
 - *Outpatient 4*

- They initially went to the old cancer centre and said they would have found it helpful to have more signage there on how to get to the Louisa Martindale Building. More signs and arrows at the ends of roads. ●
 - *Outpatient relative 5*

- Came in through car park so did not use Atrium signage. However, found the signage on Level 5 very confusing and a nurse had to help them. ●
 - *Outpatient relative 6*

Overall

This was Healthwatch's first visit to the new Louisa Martindale Building, and we decided to visit the Atrium so we could gauge what the new environment is like and what people's opinion of it is.

From an environmental perspective, the overall feeling our lay assessors reported is that the Atrium is calm, clean, bright and welcoming. The lay assessors scored an eight out of ten for the environment being welcoming and being safe, and this was due to the lack of signage not being clear, specifically around the fire exit signage, which they reported as confusing. They also recommended that there were more hand gels, especially around the touch screens – this would be a good



precaution with the current rising levels of COVID-19. The lay assessors scored a ten out of ten for the Atrium appearing as a caring and well-organised environment. However, they do recommend that 'no smoking' signs be put up outside the entrance to deter staff and the public from smoking around the entrance.

The lay assessors spoke to six people during their visit to the Atrium, two outpatients and four outpatient relatives, to find out their views on four questions. When asked about their first impression of the Atrium, the feedback from all of the six people interviewed was very good, describing it as calm and impressive. When asked how the Atrium compared to the old hospital building, the consensus was that there was no comparison, and it was so much better. Two people also commented that they thought the staff seemed so much more relaxed in the new building. The lay assessors also asked what they thought of the food and drinks, and people generally thought that there was a wide selection of food and drink at an affordable price. Finally, they asked if there was anything that could have been done to improve the Atrium further, and almost all of the people interviewed thought that the signage could be improved, by being less confusing. The signage needs to be more comprehensive, and there needs to be more of it.

Next steps

Healthwatch will discuss our visit findings with the trust at their Patient Experience and Engagement Group where we will ask for an action plan to be created to follow up on our findings.



Healthwatch Brighton and Hove

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