

Podiatry Service at Wallingford Community Hospital Enter and View Report



December 2023

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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to thank all the people we spoke to and heard from, including patients and staff of the Podiatry Service at Wallingford Community Hospital for their support and contribution to the Enter and View visit.

1. Visit details

1.1 Details of Visit

Service Address	Wallingford Community Hospital Reading Road, Wallingford, OX10 9DU
Service Provider	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Date and Time	October 10 th 2023, 10am to 2pm
Authorised Representatives	Amier Alagab, Philip Baker, Carolyn Newbert
Visit Status	Announced
Contact details	01865 520520 Healthwatch Oxfordshire

1.2 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.

2. What is Enter and View?

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 legislation allows Enter and View activity to be undertaken on premises where health and social care is publicly funded such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies. We visit:

- To gather the views of health and social care service users, families, and carers.
- To report what we see and hear to improve the quality of health and care services.

2.1 Purpose of the visit

- To observe how the facility operates and provides its services.
- To collect views from patients, volunteers, and staff on services.
- To identify 'Best Practice' and highlight any areas of concern.

2.2 Strategic drivers

- Healthwatch Oxfordshire Enter and View visit to the Podiatry Service at Wallingford Community Hospital is part of a number of visits to a range of services within Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.
- These visits were planned and implemented in 2023 – 2024 with full support from Oxford Health.
- In September 2023 we published a report on people's experiences of accessing treatment for their foot care needs www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/report/what-people-have-told-us-about-foot-care-in-oxfordshire-september-2023/ which highlighted some of the challenges people faced accessing podiatry services in the county.

3. Summary of findings

Please note these findings represent a portrayal of what we observed and heard about the experiences of the service users and staff on the day that we visited:

- It is easy to follow signage from the car park to find the way to the Podiatry Unit.
- The hospital was very welcoming; there is a welcome sign at the main entrance.
- The hospital is clean and has a very calm atmosphere.
- Face masks and hand gel are available at the main entrance before passing to the main reception area.
- The Podiatry Team has three clinic rooms, two were big and under refurbishment, while the third room is smaller in size and in use by admin staff on the day of the visit.
- There is no specific waiting room available for podiatry patients. Patients were arriving 10 – 15 minutes prior to their appointment and sat near the clinic rooms at the corridor.

- Comments from patients about the environment and efficiency of the services, and the attitudes of staff, were generally very positive.
- There is a water fountain available at the corridor near the seats where patients waiting.
- There are no translated information or leaflets on display in the hospital's reception or at the podiatry clinics area related to podiatry services.
- There was no information on display offering patients access to an interpreter.
- There was not clear information on how to give comments and feedback, with no feedback or suggestion box available specifically for podiatry patients.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) report is not displayed.
- Relocation of staff to work across service sites in the county may be challenging due to staff shortages. Difficulty recruiting has an impact on staff workload and retention.
- Patients generally feel able to raise concerns with the staff team about their treatment and care directly or by phone.

4. Recommendations

Following our visit, we would like to make these recommendations:

- Provide and display patient information leaflets and documents in relation to the Podiatry Service.
- Display a suggestion box at the waiting area with information on how patients can give feedback.
- Provide patient facing information highlighting access to interpreters.
- The Care Quality Commission report should be displayed as per the attachment:

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2015024%20Guidance%20for%20providers%20on%20meeting%20the%20regulations.pdf>

5. Service response to recommendations



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5th December 2023

Dear Amier,

Enter and View Visit – Wallingford Podiatry Service 10th October 2023

Thank you for your report detailing the findings from undertaking the Enter and View visit of the Podiatry Service based at Wallingford Community Hospital. These findings have been shared across the Podiatry Service and an action plan has been developed with the leads of the area. Please see the table below which identifies the Healthwatch recommendation, the action/update identified by the Podiatry Service and the timescale identified for this to be completed within.

Ref	Healthwatch Recommendation	Trust Action/Update	Timescale	Lead
1	Provide and display internal patient information leaflets and documents in relation to the Podiatry Service.	Patient information leaflets/documents have been ordered and sent out to all podiatry bases. Appropriate holders to display the information are being ordered and arrangements are being made to install these.	31/12/2023	Senior Operational Manager
2	Display a suggestion box at the waiting area with information on how patients can give feedback.	<p>There is limited room in the Podiatry area to be able to display a Podiatry specific feedback box. Due to this a review of the information provided alongside the site suggestion box is underway to ensure that this encourages and captures any feedback responses (suggestions, general comments, patient experience surveys) for services operating on the site. There is a process in place whereby information posted is sorted and shared with the relevant departments for review/action.</p> <p>Podiatry patients are provided with paper patient experience surveys to complete from clinic and are advised to put these in the survey box by the entrance/exit to the hospital. Wallingford Podiatry have their own QR code that can also be used to complete an electronic</p>	31/12/2023	Operational Support Manager

		version of the surveys. Patient experience survey responses are being received for Wallingford Podiatry.		
3	Provide patient facing information highlighting access to interpreters.	Leaflets highlighting access to interpreters have been ordered and sent out to all podiatry bases. Arrangements in progress (as per action for recommendation 1).	31/12/2023	Senior Operational Manager
4	The Care Quality Commission report should be displayed	This has been completed. The required CQC information is now displayed in a patient/public facing area.	Closed	
5	Please can you ensure that this report is sent to the relevant service providers.	Report has been shared with the Podiatry Service and more widely within the Directorate.	Closed	

Although not made into Healthwatch recommendations, there were other areas of feedback in the report that we would like to acknowledge.

To accommodate training needs all staff have 'float' sessions built into their timetables. We recognise that access to training is essential for our staff in being able to deliver a safe and effective service. All training requests are reviewed by the service leads and accommodated where appropriate.

Podiatry is a countywide service provided across Oxfordshire. The aim is for staff to be working in their 'home' area to reduce the pressures of travel time as much as possible, however where there is need staff are contracted to work outside of these areas as and when needed. Split site working is reduced to a minimum and is unlikely to happen unless a clinician is undertaking domiciliary visits and a clinic on the same day, in this case travel time is factored in for staff.

We continue to work closely with our partners in the patient transport service to improve the care and service that our patients receive.

We appreciate the findings identified through this Enter and View visit and welcome the opportunity to develop our partnership with Healthwatch through future visits.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Ben Riley FRCGP Executive Managing Director
Primary, Community and Dental Care

6. Report: Visit to the Podiatry Service at Wallingford Community Hospital on 10th October 2023

Methodology

We follow Healthwatch England guidelines for Enter and View visits. The steps below summarise the process:

- **Plan:**
 - Appoint an Enter and View lead for the visit.

- **Communicate:**
 - Inform the provider of the visit, and relevant details including the purpose, date, time, estimation of how long it will take, how many people will be carrying out the visit, and the name of the lead person.
 - Prepare visit posters including the purpose of the visit, time and date, and dispatch these to the provider for display, so that people using the service are clear why the visit is taking place.
 - Include information about how members of the public can contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire if they are not able to when the visit is taking place.

- **Prepare:**

- Prepare resources such as surveys and questionnaires.
- Identify any requirements for special support necessary to facilitate the visit such as access or security. This must be done before the visit, as you may be refused entry.
- Meet with the service provider before the visit.

- **Report:**

- On completion of the visit a draft report is shared with the service provider requesting comments on factual accuracy and responses to any recommendations within 20 working days.

- **Follow up:**

The final report is published on Healthwatch Oxfordshire website and shared with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and service provider.

The visit to the Podiatry Service at Wallingford Community Hospital took place from 10am to 1pm on October 10th 2023, with three trained Enter and View representatives, including the lead member.

During the visit, the team were able to spend time observing the daily work of the hospital, noting the general environment such as cleanliness, comfort, and information displays, and to speak to both patients and staff.

Additional question sheets, with FREEPOST envelopes for return, were left with staff and patients for comment and feedback.

Service background

The Podiatry Service is one of the services provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust at Wallingford Community Hospital. Originally known as Wallingford and District Cottage Hospital, it was established in 1880. It became part of the NHS in 1948 under the Reading and District Hospital Management Committee. The hospital was subsequently renamed Wallingford Community Hospital and transferred to Oxfordshire Area Health Authority in 1974. It is now run by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

More details can be found at the link below:

https://oxfordshirehealtharchives.nhs.uk/hospitals/wallingford_community/

NHS podiatry in Oxfordshire is staffed by registered practitioners working for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (<https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/podiatry/>). The

Trust offers free NHS treatment to people who are eligible, with reference to National Institute of Clinical Excellence guidelines (NICE19) to define level and risk. Eligibility is on the basis that they have one or more of the following conditions:

1. Diabetes and/or other circulatory or neurological conditions that can affect foot health.
2. Acute foot ulceration.
3. Ingrown toenails that will need medical treatment to resolve the problem.

(see <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/podiatry/treatment/eligibility/>) People who do not fall into these three eligibility categories (including people who had diabetes but no circulatory problems) are not eligible for NHS treatment at Oxford Health and are advised to consult their family doctor. Referral by a health or social care professional is the main route to NHS clinic care, although those with diabetes can self-refer.

Oxfordshire – like the national picture – faces a shortage of podiatrists, impacting on services.

Oxford Health has been working hard to address this through a range of initiatives including apprenticeships, graduate training and other recruitment schemes as well as developing roles for podiatry assistants to carry out more routine care, all of which hope to increase capacity, manage waiting lists and reduce delay (Reference: Healthwatch Oxfordshire report on podiatry and footcare in Oxfordshire – September 2023).

Access and signage to the podiatry service

External signage from the hospital car park guiding patients to the main entrance was very clear and it was easy to find.

There were some signs on the internal boards that were not clearly visible.

The Wallingford Hospital has wheelchair access and a disabled car park near the main entrance.

The hospital had a welcoming sign displayed at the main entrance.



The Main Entrance



Internal Signage Board

The environment

The Podiatry Unit operates smoothly, with clear activity as patients arrive with prior appointment.

Patients arrive by referral from GPs or appointment only. Once arrived, they report to the main reception and wait in the designated waiting area before being consulted. There is no dedicated waiting room for podiatry patients.

A water fountain is available for patients and visitors at the waiting area/corridor, where people sit.

The atmosphere of the hospital was calm and quiet. Staff were welcoming and staff - patient interactions were friendly.

The hospital was bright, clean, airy, having a range of facilities, despite the age of the building.



Patients' Waiting Area

Information on display

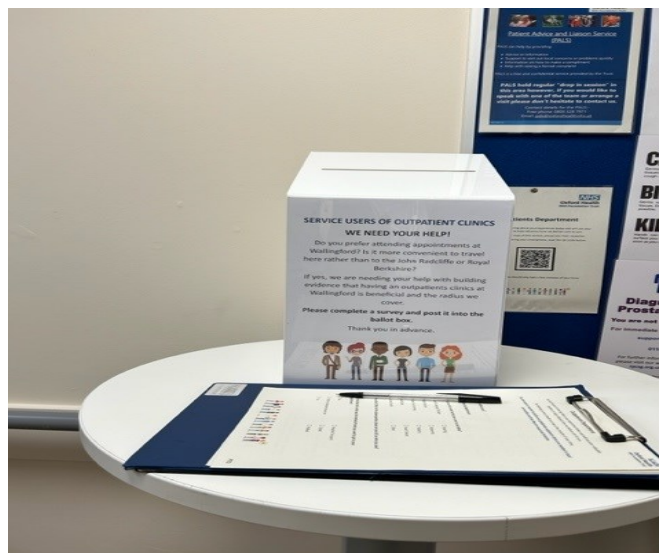
There is comprehensive information about health care services for patients displayed in the main reception area, but nothing related to the podiatry services.



Patient Information

We did not see information or reference to a Care Quality Commission (CQC) report displayed.

There is no suggestions box provided specifically for the podiatry patients to be able to leave comments and feedback - however this is available with a general survey box for all the outpatient clinics asking about a specific issue not general feedback comment.



Survey Box - Outpatient Clinics

Patient feedback

It was a very quiet session when we made our visit. As a result, in all we only heard from only one patient on the day of the visit.

Overall, the patient was hugely appreciative of the support and care they received at the podiatry unit. They praised and thanked the staff team.

The patient who spoke to us felt that the information and support they received about their treatment and care was good.

Patients are usually referred by GPs and can contact the podiatry unit to book follow up appointments according to their need.

The patient told us their experience at the unit was positive.

The patient was very happy about the care and services received and told us the staff are well qualified and offer a high quality of care, always supporting them and providing information related to their need.

Staff Feedback

We received feedback and comments from three members of staff on the day, representing a cross section of roles within the unit.

Staff we spoke to were positive about their work in the podiatry unit, and especially valued the patient, family and carer interactions and care.

Staff told us that the present management are open to suggestions and feedback. Staff commented that they felt listened to and able to make suggestions on the hospital. They felt that their concerns would be taken seriously.

Staff valued the sense of team atmosphere, and that meetings and daily team 'huddles' supported this.

We heard from all the staff that they had the required training and one of the team said due to the workload time is always a barrier for training.

A member of staff mentioned Oxford Health are working hard to find dynamic ways of operating the service to improve access and deliver better care.

What is the best thing staff said about the job?

Staff told us they are supporting the service in its ongoing development and growth, finding different approaches to work in a changing and challenging healthcare environment.

What are the challenges staff raised?

We asked staff to tell us about any frustrations or challenges with their work. Comments included the challenge of staff recruitment and staff shortage to the podiatry service.

Staff said that there is a growing population and demand for podiatry services. However, delivering an effective service that is accessible with limited resources are significant challenges faced by the service.

We heard from staff members that they do rotations between Wallingford, Didcot, and Henley-on-Thames community hospitals to offer the podiatry service. They said that the volume of work and travel between sites can be very stressful at times.

Currently the staff told us they are running a transformation project, and they would continue the process of standardisation and improvement of the service.

What suggestions did staff make?

Staff suggestions included:

- Need more staff to support podiatry services.
- Improve patient transport service as sometimes patients arrive late or missing their appointment due to delay in the service provided by South Central Ambulance Service.



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 9am-4pm Monday to Friday

To find out more about Healthwatch Oxfordshire please see **www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk**

If you would like a paper copy of this report or would like it in a different format or language, please get in touch with us:



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