

Fleetwood Urgent Treatment Centre Enter and View Report

21st February 2024
10am-12pm



Disclaimer: This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

Contact Details

Contact details:

Fleetwood Urgent Treatment Centre
Fleetwood Health & Wellbeing Centre,
Dock Street,
Fleetwood
FY7 6HP

Registered Manager:

Michelle Sproston

Date and Time of our Visit:

Wednesday 21st February 2024

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Steve Walmsley (Engagement Team Leader)

Austin Staunton (Volunteer)

Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather people's views and experiences, especially those that are seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service. The aim of an Enter and View visit is to gather views and experiences of patients and staff of a service and observe the environment to assess the quality of the service.

This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced.

The team collate feedback gathered and observations made to compile a report. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement. Healthwatch Lancashire is an independent organisation, therefore we do not make judgements or express personal opinions, but rely on feedback received and objective observations of the environment. The report is sent to the manager for their opportunity to respond before being published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk.

Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is available to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations.

General Information

The Fleetwood Urgent Treatment Centre is located in the Fleetwood Health and Wellbeing Centre. The centre provides urgent treatment and assessment for patients from the Fylde coast footprint.

Patients can attend the centre for minor injuries and ailments without needing to book an appointment. Patients can self-refer to this service or be referred in through the 111 number or a local call service.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank management, staff and patients for making us feel welcome and for taking the time to speak to us during the visit.

Glossary of terms

UTC

Urgent Treatment Centre

FCMS

Social enterprise Health and social care provider operating in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre

What did we do?

Healthwatch Lancashire Enter and View Representatives made an announced visit to Fleetwood Urgent Treatment Centre and received feedback from:



Pre-visit questionnaire

Prior to the enter and view visit, the manager at Fleetwood Urgent Treatment Centre was provided a pre-visit questionnaire to complete. The aim of this questionnaire is to gather information about the patient population, services offered and how the practice manage appointments for patients. Information from this questionnaire is included in the summary below.

One to one discussions with patients and their relatives

Healthwatch spoke with patients about their experiences including accessing the service, how they felt about the care and treatment delivered by the staff at the centre.

Due to the high number of attendance at the centre the opportunity for one to one conversations was limited.

Discussions with members of staff

Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives spoke with members of staff about their experiences of delivering services to patients. Questions centred around support for patients and any improvements staff felt could be made at the medical centre.

Observations

Observations were made throughout the visit. This included patient and staff interactions, accessibility measures in place throughout the medical centre and the condition and cleanliness of the facilities.

Summary

Local Demographic



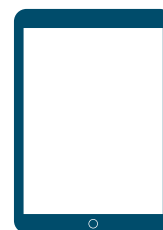
The centre is mainly used by residents of the Fleetwood area, however it was explained that residents of the Fylde Coast also make use of this service. A discussion with the Centre Manager highlighted that patients would sometimes attend the centre before making the journey to the local accident and

emergency at Blackpool Victoria Hospital as it is more convenient for them to travel to.

Attending the centre

As well as making the decision to attend the walk-in centre, patients may have been advised to attend after contacting 111 or the local 0300 phone line.

Upon arrival, patients are directed to tablets at the rear of the centre to answer a series of Self-assessment questions to speed up the triage process. Patients can then book in with Reception and wait for their appointment in an appropriate waiting area in the centre.



Visit Summary

Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives viewed available facilities, including the waiting areas, reception office and clinical rooms.

At the time of the visit, the following surgery staff were present; one Advanced Care Practitioner (ACP), one Urgent Care Practitioner, one Agency ACP, two Healthcare Assistants, one GP and two Receptionists.

During the visit, the centre was experiencing a high number of attendances which meant that there was an average two hour wait to be seen by a clinician. Patients were seen by a Nurse for an initial triage within around half an hour of arrival.

Staff were observed to be compassionate and ensured that patients were given up to date information about expected wait times.

The self-assessment tablets and waiting area were overseen by a member of staff who would offer and provide assistance to patients using this system.. This appeared to alleviate some of the queues.

Patients spoken with, praised the convenience of the centre and the attitude of the staff. Some concerns were noted about the waiting time and the self-assessment system with some patients appearing unsure about the process when they entered the centre.

Enter and View observations

Location and External Environment

Fleetwood Urgent Treatment Centre is located at the Fleetwood Health and Wellbeing Centre on Dock Street. There is access to public transport with a bus stop located approximately a two-minute walk from the centre. Patients can also travel to the centre on the local tram network which is also within close proximity of the centre.



The centre can be accessed via two entrances at the front and rear, both with dropped kerbs for improved access. A large car park was available for patients to use at the rear of the centre which included eight disabled spaces. At the time of the visit the car park was full and patients could be seen parking along the road in front of the centre. One patient had also parked their car across one of the drop kerb at the rear of

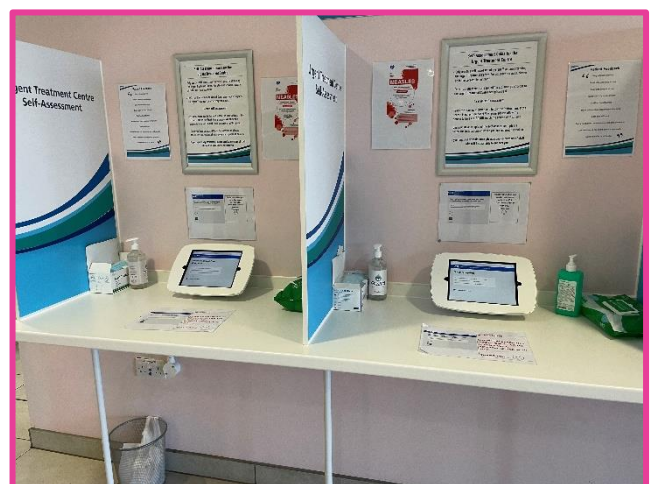
the centre which negated access to patients using wheelchairs, other mobility aids and prams.

Internal Environment and Waiting Area

The waiting area is shared with the local X-ray clinic and Mountview Practice. Each service has a designated section within the waiting area that patients are directed to use by staff members. There were signs above the Reception desk in high-contrast text to indicate which section of the desk patients needed to report to, this comprised white writing on a blue background.

The waiting area for Mountview Practice and the X-ray department had signs to highlight their location but there were no signs indicating where patients needed to wait for the UTC (Recommendation 1). At the time of the visit there was provision in place for patients who presented with symptoms of Measles to wait in a designated private room away from the main waiting area.

Upon arrival at the centre, patients are directed to use a Self-assessment system on a tablet at the rear of the centre, which was signposted by large freestanding banners. This system helps to triage and assign a priority level to each patient for staff to book the patient an appointment with an appropriate clinician. A member of staff was available to assist patients using this facility. It was observed that some people, who entered from the main road, passed





the signs and approached the Reception desk before they were directed by members of staff to use the tablets.

Once patients completed the pre-assessment on the tablets, they then booked in at the Reception desk to confirm their details and were then directed to the appropriate waiting area for their appointment. At the time of the visit Healthwatch Lancashire observed that this waiting area, which comprised around twenty chairs, was full and standing, with patients using chairs in other waiting areas.

The waiting area was clean and free from clutter with all chairs appearing in a good state or repair. The chairs in the Urgent Treatment Centre were all a consistent size and shape, which may not suit all patients' needs. There was a range of chairs available for patients to use in different areas, however they were different due to them being put in place by a different service provider. Two patients were observed discussing which chairs to use as one was using a mobility aid to walk (recommendation 2)

Noticeboards contained information about local services, ways to provide feedback about the service and information about the clinical team. These boards were up to date and were clear to read.

Patient Interactions

Patients were observed making enquiries at the front reception desk and with the member of staff in the waiting area. Three patients were observed reporting to the desk before using the self-assessment facility. Staff directed them to the self assessment tablets and explained how this would help patients with the checking in process and patients were provided additional assistance as needed by the member of staff in the waiting area. Staff were polite and courteous with patients and ensured that patients were directed to the correct area of the centre.



One patient was observed asking about wait times, as they had been in the waiting area for two hours. The staff member explained the status of appointments and provided reassurance to the patient about the support available.

Another patient was observed attending the centre with a relative. Both the patient and relative appeared visibly anxious about checking in and were seen becoming frustrated with the tablet system. A member of staff responded quickly to this in a calm manner as the patient was experiencing discomfort and assisted them through the process before directing them to the Reception desk. The relative of the patient was noticeably calmer after they had been provided reassurance from the member of staff and left the centre to move their car. (Recommendation 3)

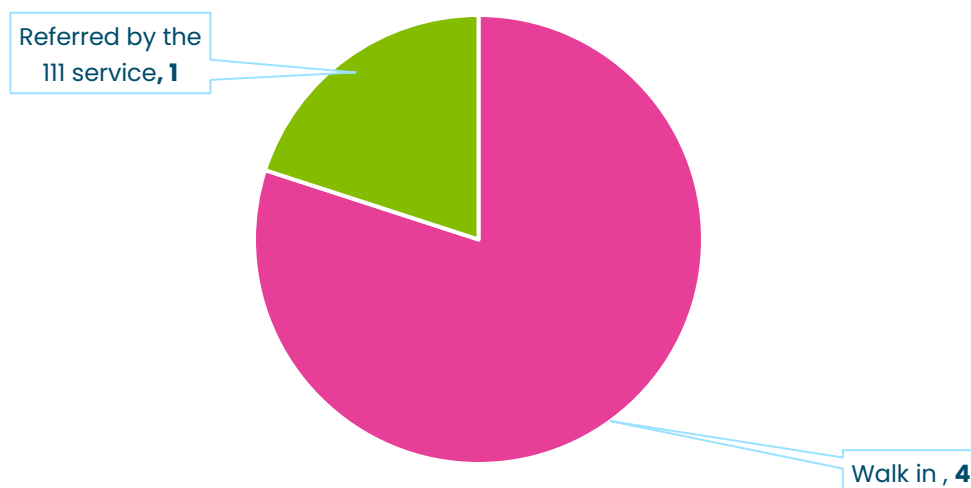
Patients were called to their appointments by the clinician, who would walk directly from the corridor into the sight of the patients in the waiting area and call the patient's name. However, at times during the visit, some of the clinicians did

not come out into the waiting area and called for patients behind the cover of a door. This created some confusion amongst patients in the waiting area as they were unsure who was being called for especially if they were hard of hearing, Deaf or relied on lip-reading. A visual display which identifies a patient and gives directions may be one way to avoid patients missing their appointment being called (recommendation 4 &5).

Patient feedback

Healthwatch representatives spoke with five patients during the visit. Due to the high number of patients attending the centre, the opportunity for private discussion with patients about their experiences was limited.

Attending the service



One patient commented that they felt the 111 call had allowed them to be triaged before they went to the centre. Patients were asked about how they felt the process of attending the service worked for them and all patients were satisfied to either walk in or use the 111 process.

“I knew that I would be seen by the right person.”

Two patients commented that they were unsure about what to do when they first arrived at the centre. They had been observed enquiring at the Reception desk and then making their way to the tablets to self-assess their symptoms.

Three patients mentioned that the self-assessment system was something that they were familiar with and that they felt it made the process of attending the centre much simpler due to the ability to answer triage questions quickly and in private.

“The tablets make things easier, then I am not queuing”

They explained that being able to send information about their condition to the Reception desk meant that they wouldn't need to spend too long explaining their condition to a member of staff. One patient commented that it was “tricky” at first but once they were used to it they were more comfortable with the process.

What works well at this centre?

Five patients explained that they felt the care they received was always outstanding.

“All the staff are lovely!”



One patient had attended the centre for the first time and stated that the staff were still courteous and helpful even though the centre was busy.

Another patient commented that it was their preferred choice of service to attend, instead of travelling to Blackpool Infirmary, as it was always a calmer experience, even though it was busy at time of their visit.

Two patients commented that the centre was easy for them to get to. It was a much better alternative than travelling to the Emergency department at Blackpool as it was closer to their home and the queues weren't normally too bad.

Is there anything that could be changed to meet your needs?

Despite praise for the tablet system in place, four patients did express a concern that other patients might struggle to book in at the centre as the tablets were so new, although it was recognised that a member of staff was present to help which patients preferred. (recommendation 6)

“I wouldn't want to come if there was nobody there to help me with the tablets.”

One patient explained how they struggled to use technology and found support with the process made it simpler for them.

One patient commented that they felt the centre would benefit from having more clinical staff but they felt that the service provided was still excellent.

Do you think the premises are well maintained, accessible and clean?

All patients spoken with felt that the centre was well maintained and clean. One patient commented on the lack of space in the waiting area,

“I needed to sit in the x-ray seats”

They mentioned that the centre was not always as busy as it was at the time of the visit but they would like more choice of seating in the waiting area due to their mobility needs as they used a mobility aid. (recommendation 2)

Do you know who to speak to if you are not happy with the service or wish to make a complaint?

All patients spoken with were unsure about how to directly raise a complaint about the service. One patient commented that,

“I would probably just ask at Reception”

Patients were satisfied with the care and how the centre was run and mentioned that they did not feel there was a need to raise complaints.

Staff feedback

Healthwatch spoke with three members of the staff team during the visit and four submitted responses to the staff survey online after the visit was completed.

Do you have enough staff when on duty?

Four members of staff felt that there were enough staff on duty to provide care for patients. One member of staff explained that there had been a change in staffing levels due to the need to assign a member of staff to man the tablets in the waiting room.

“We use a staff member for triage, but we are unable to replace this staff member on shift.”

It was explained by one member of staff that they felt that sickness was sometimes a restricting factor when dealing with high capacity.

Do you feel supported to carry out a person-centred experience?



Three members of staff felt that they were able to provide a patient centred experience. One member of staff explained that when they were fully staffed the service was much more effective.

“When three receptionists are on, we all have chance to spend enough time with patients.”

One member of staff commented that they had experienced time restraints in appointments which meant that they felt it was not always possible to deliver a fully patient centred experience. (recommendation 7)

What measures are there in place for people with disabilities such as people with physical impairments or who are Deaf?

One member of staff explained that the centre used language line for interpreters and that they made sure the centre was free from clutter to allow patients to access the centre. Staff mentioned the level access available in the building and how staff provide support for people who needed it.

Do you feel you have enough training to carry out your duties well?

One member of staff praised the training that was on offer at the centre. They explained how the mandatory training was helpful and that they were able to access courses that they needed.

“Yes and extra training is always offered to us.”

Are there any changes that can be made to improve the patient experience?

One member of staff mentioned that they felt the centre was well equipped to meet the patient demand but they felt that there was a need to educate patients about other options that they could take.

“We signpost if appropriate, especially if it can be dealt with by the pharmacy.”

They explained how patients would sometimes attend the centre when they didn't strictly need to see a clinician and that there was work to be done to educate patients about choosing the most appropriate pathway. (recommendation 8) They suggested that there could be more information available online to help patients make informed choices.



Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated based on observations of the environment and feedback gathered from patients and staff.

1. Improve signage in the waiting area to help patients identify where to sit
2. Consult patients to hear their views about the suitability of chairs in the waiting area
3. Celebrate and share good practice highlighted within this report, particularly where excellent patient care has been highlighted
4. Ensure that patients are alerted about their appointment in a consistent manner by members of staff, making sure they face patients sat in the waiting area or investigate the implementation of an electronic patient alert system
5. Continue working with patients so that they are familiar with the use of the self assessment system particularly if a patient has phoned up in advance of attending the centre
6. Consult with the staff team about ways to alleviate time pressures when working with patients
7. Promote information relating to self-care and pharmacy first pathways using the FCMS Facebook page and information at the centre

Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe	Comments
1. Improve signage in the waiting area to help patients identify where to sit	I will have a look into some signage for the waiting area.	End of April	The receptionist do tell all patients where to sit and we bought blue chairs for the UTC waiting area and red chairs for x-ray to enable a clearer direction.
2. Consult patients to hear their views about the suitability of chairs in the waiting area	Although we can investigate this, our waiting area is very small with limited space for seating. Due to this it is unlikely to change.		We have a bariatric wheelchair that some patient use should they require a larger supported chair.
3. Celebrate and share good practice highlighted within this report, particularly where excellent patient care has been highlighted	Once the final draft has been finalised, we will share this with our teams. We will also look at changing one of our waiting room boards to promote this to patients.	End of April, if the final report has been done	
4. Ensure that patients are alerted about their appointment in a consistent manner by members of staff, making sure they face patients sat in	This will be discussed with all the clinical team to ensure all patients can see the person calling them.	Week commencing 1 st April (team meeting)	

the waiting area or investigate the implementation of an electronic patient alert system			
5. Continue working with patients so that they are familiar with the use of the self assessment system particularly if a patient has phoned up in advance of attending the centre	The floor walking role is a permanent position for our reception team. It is part of the SOP for ED streamer. The HCA team have also been trained on this, should experience staffing issues due to sickness.	Already in place	
6. Consult with the staff team about ways to alleviate time pressures when working with patients	We always stress to the team to work at their own pace, however, when the centre is busy, they do feel pressure. We will reiterate this to all our team at our next team meeting.	Week commencing 1 st April (team meeting)	
7. Promote information relating to self-care and pharmacy first pathways using the FCMS Facebook page and information at the centre	We can look into promoting via our facebook page, however, we also do comms via the trust and ICB as it gets shared wider due to the number of their followers.. We can do an information board in our waiting area too.	End of April	

Any other comments

It was really interesting to know that the floor walking role is useful to our patients. We enjoyed having the Healthwatch team at Fleetwood. It is always nice to hear positive feedback, but also how we can improve our service for our patients.



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