

Chorley Hospital Blood Clinic

Date Monday 9th December 2024

Time 8:45am-10:45am



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

Address

Chorley Hospital Blood Clinic

Preston Rd,

Chorley

PR7 1PP

Blood Clinic Contact:

Sarah Whalley (Phlebotomy Manager)

Date and Time of our Visit:

Monday 9th December 2024

8:45am-10:45am

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Emmy Walmsley (Senior Engagement Officer)

Austin Staunton (Healthwatch Lancashire Volunteer)

Introduction

Healthwatch Lancashire is the independent public voice for health and social care in Lancashire and exists to make services work for the people who use them. We believe that the best way to do this is by providing the people of Lancashire with opportunities to share their views and experiences.

Healthwatch Lancashire has statutory powers to listen, act, challenge and gather feedback to improve local services and promote excellence throughout the NHS and social care services.

To help achieve this Healthwatch have a statutory power to 'Enter and View' health and social care services that are publicly funded. The purpose of an Enter and View is to listen to people who access those services and observe service delivery.

Following the Enter and View visit a report is compiled identifying aspects of good surgery within the service visited along with any recommendations for any possible areas of improvement.

As we are an independent organisation, 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 service provider providing an opportunity to respond to any recommendations and comments before being published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at:

www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk

The report is available to members of the public along with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations. Where appropriate Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to monitor the progress of improvements and celebrate any further successes.

Why blood clinics?

Healthwatch Lancashire are carrying out visits to blood clinics in order to find out how the services are delivered across the county. Each visit will be held in the winter period to learn how services are coping with winter pressures by speaking to patients and staff.

Acknowledgements

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

What did we do?

Healthwatch Lancashire Enter and View Representatives made an announced visit to Chorley Hospital on Monday 9th December 2024 and received feedback from:



Introductory meeting with manager

At the beginning of the enter and view visit, Healthwatch Lancashire met with the Department Management team to discuss the background of the blood clinic and to view the facilities.

One to one discussions with patients

Healthwatch Lancashire spoke with patients using the blood clinic about their experiences, their reasons for visiting the clinic and how they felt about the service.

Discussions with members of staff

Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives spoke with members of staff about their experiences of delivering services. Questions centred around support for people using the service and any improvements staff felt could be made.

Observations

Observations were made throughout the visit. This included interactions between staff and people using the service, accessibility measures in and around the building and the condition and cleanliness of the facilities.

Summary



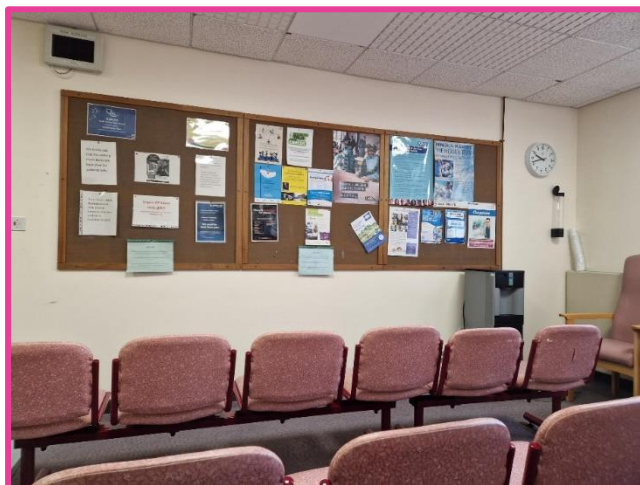
Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives attended Chorley hospital Blood Clinic on Monday 9th December 2024 and spoke with 18 patients and 2 members of staff.

During the visit, the blood clinic became very busy at times, but patients were being seen very quickly and efficiently with limited wait times. Patients were observed to be waiting no more than ten minutes, with most patients being seen as soon as they walked into the clinic.

Staff were observed coming out to patients and asking them to come through for their blood test. They made themselves visible and ensured patients knew where to get the tickets from. Patients were observed to be coming into the blood clinic taking a written ticket from a box near the machine and sitting down with ease. Only a few patients were unsure where to go and what to do when entering the clinic.

Overall patients were very happy with the new clinic and preferred the new location over the old one. They commented on the clear signage and how they are seen very quickly. Patients spoke about how easy it was to find and how they are seen so quickly that they don't need to worry about paying for parking. A few patients mentioned issues with the audio alert display, as the usual one was broken at the time of our visit. However, this has been addressed by staff at the clinic.

Overall staff were complimentary of the blood clinic and explained that they always feel staffed appropriately. They explained that at busy times they were able to bring staff from the ward to assist in the clinic. Staff mentioned how they work well together and get patients seen as quickly and efficiently as possible. Some queries raised by staff were around the ticket machine and also communication with gp practices as they find that gp's are still sending patients to Chorley even though they only accept urgent walk ins and not general blood tests.



Blood Clinic Overview

Location



Chorley Hospital Blood clinic is situated on floor three of the hospital in the pathology unit and can be accessed via the stairs or a lift. There is clear signage in the main building and throughout to show patients where to go to access the blood clinic. The hospital has a bus stop within the grounds that patients can access and will take them near the main entrance. There is parking available for patients at all entrances to the hospital. There is also ramp access or lowered curbs for patients who need ease of access.

Services available

This Blood clinic is open to the public for walk in appointments between 8:30am-5:00pm Monday to Friday for urgent blood tests from the gp or from hospital referral blood tests. The blood clinic moved to the pathology department in October and will now be situated here on a permanent basis.

Enter and View observations

Internal Environment

On entry into the hospital there are clear signs directing patients to the blood clinic's new location. There are also paper slips with directions for patients to take with them as they enter the main entrances, as well as signs in the lifts.

The blood clinic within pathology was clear to see from the corridor and had seating outside to allow patients to sit and wait during busier periods. Upon entry to the clinic a sign directs patients to collect a number and sit down in the waiting area. At the time of the visit the automatic number machine was not working, although we were informed that a replacement would arrive soon. In the meantime, patients are required to collect a slip of paper with a number of it from a box.

The waiting room has eighteen standard seats and ten with high backs and arm rests. There was also room to accommodate wheelchairs and prams. There are two phlebotomy rooms where patients are taken to have their bloods done. These rooms allow for privacy, and there is ample space to support patients who need additional support, including wheelchair users.

There is a wall clock in the waiting area, but it is off to one side and would benefit from being moved to a more central location.



Further, to aid inclusivity the clock should be replaced by a dementia friendly version. (Recommendation 1) There is a water machine available for patients, but at the time of our visit cups were still in plastic wrapping rather than being placed in the dispenser.

Notice boards in the waiting area shared information regarding mental health helpline, smokefree, inspire, diabetes, cancer and chaperone information. There is a 'how are we doing' board in the waiting area but it was behind the seating and could be easily missed by patients. (recommendation 2). Similarly, a leaflet stand in the waiting area, which offered advice and support, was impeded by chairs which made it difficult to reach. (Recommendation 3) There is one accessible toilet within the pathology unit but this did not meet the required accessible toilet standards with one hand rail to the right of the toilet and hand washing facilities being too far away for patients using wheelchairs. (recommendation 4)



There was no signage present that indicated the use of a hearing loop, translation service or access to British sign language. (Recommendation 5)

On the other side of the room was a trolley with friends and family test sheets available for patients to leave feedback on their care. This felt very separate from the clinic and was not in eye sight or in the vicinity of patients. It would be beneficial if the trolley was placed in a more prominent position for patients to see and give feedback. (recommendation 6)

The clinic was clean and tidy, and patients were being seen quickly and effectively throughout the visit.

Observations



Staff on reception of the hospital were observed to be signposting patients to the blood clinic and showing them the best way to get to the clinic.

Patients were observed to be entering the blood clinic and collecting a number and sitting in the waiting room. Patients were called in quickly and staff were observed to be coming out to the waiting room and saying the next number so the patient could see the phlebotomist.

Some patients were observed to be coming into the blood clinic and were confused as to where to get a ticket, this tended to happen when the blood clinic was busier, and patients were helping other patients understand where to go.

During quieter times patients came into the clinic and went straight to the numbers to collect one. Patients were waiting no longer than ten minutes to be seen with most patients only waiting up to five minutes for their blood test.

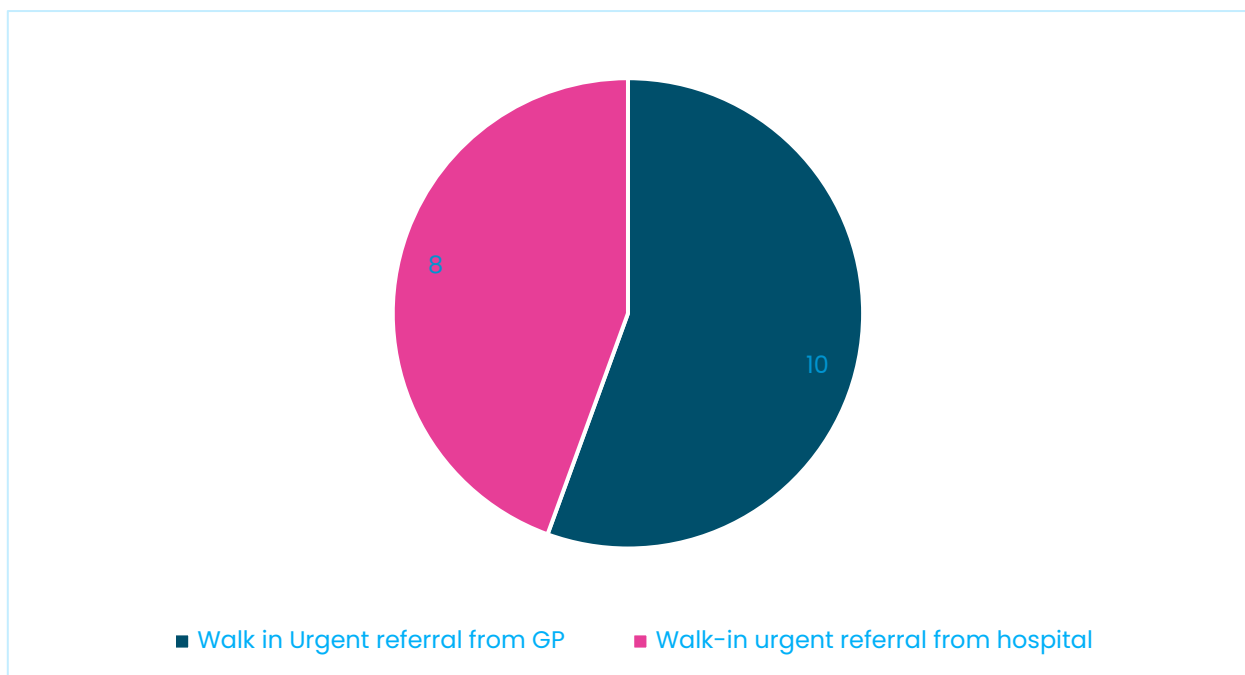
Staff were observed to be kind and courteous throughout the visit and were engaging in conversation with the patients as they were coming into the clinic and leaving. Staff were seen to be coming into the waiting area and acknowledging how many patients were waiting at certain times. Some members of staff at the clinic were observed to be showing patients where they needed to go and what to do next.



Patient Feedback

Healthwatch Representatives spoke with eighteen people using the service.

What is the purpose of your visit?



Chorley Hospital blood clinic is open for patients who have been asked to have an urgent blood test so this would only be referrals from the GP or the hospital

How far have you had to travel today?

Patients spoken with on the day of the visit had travelled different distances to come to this blood clinic. Three patients mentioned that they had attended this blood clinic as they prefer this clinic.

“I have come from Leyland; this is my preferred as I am in and out where others are long wait times.”

Two patients mentioned that this was their nearest blood clinic so convenient for them.

“I’ve come from Adlington; this is the nearest one to me.”

One patient spoke about how they had travelled from Preston as the blood clinics near to them had long wait times and they would prefer to travel and come to this one.

“I live in Preston, but I come here as it’s a better blood clinic and faster to get in and out.”



What is your experience using this service?

The overwhelming majority of patients told us that they found the blood clinic easy to find. Some mentioned that it was easier to locate now that it has moved. Only one patient stated that they had experienced difficulties finding the clinic.

“Yes, it was a lot easier to find than where it was previously.”

One patient spoke about how they were visiting someone that day and were directed by a porter to help find the blood clinic.

“I came from the dialysis unit and by chance I bumped into a porter who directed me here.”

One patient mentioned that they had found it hard to find the blood clinic, stating that they found the signage unclear. Whereas seventeen patients mentioned that the blood clinic was better to find and the signage was clearer.

“I found it very difficult to find, I had to ask staff to point me in the right direction.”

“Signage is great, they have definitely updated this.”

One patient spoke about how they had come into the main entrance and were greeted by a volunteer who directed them to the blood clinic.

“I came in at the front and the volunteer there showed me where to go.”

Have you received information about this visit in a way that was accessible?

Most patients we spoke to mentioned that they were familiar with the blood clinic, and so did not need support or information prior to their arrival. One patient commented that they had been told to go for a blood test and they had been told where it was situated.

“I was told by the hospital at my appointment where I needed to go.”

One patient said that they had been to the clinic before, so they didn't require any extra support.

"I knew where it was as I've been before."

One patient spoke about how they had received a letter from the hospital with a phone call to let them know where to go ahead of the blood test.

"I received a letter from the hospital to say I needed a blood test and they also rung me with directions of where to go."

What changes could improve your experience?

When speaking with patients it was apparent that they were happy that the blood clinic had moved to where it now is. One recommendation was around the visual number call out system and how it would be nice for it to be up and running again.

"The ticket machine up and running again would be good."

One patient mentioned that they feel the blood clinic would be better situated outside of the hospital, so patients don't have to walk through the hospital.

"I feel blood clinics should be outside of the hospital not inside but this one works well."

One patient spoke with representatives about how they had noticed the feedback forms, but they were quite out of the way and not visual to patients. (recommendation 6)

"I noticed by chance as I was unsure where to go when I got here but the feedback forms, they are a bit out of the way."

Any other comments and feedback

"I've been to the new one in pathology a few times now and I definitely prefer it."

"I think they are very good here, very quick and I'm always in and out."

"I've been to the new one in pathology a few times now and I definitely prefer it."

Staff feedback

Healthwatch received feedback from two staff members during the visit.



How do you manage your workload?

When speaking with members of staff it was apparent that they feel supported with their workload and feel they have enough staff to manage. Workload demands can naturally fluctuate depending on how busy the clinic is, but at no point do staff feel unable to perform their duties efficiently.

“This is dependent on how busy it is in the clinic, but we are good at managing patients.”

“There are usually 6 members of staff working, 3 on the ward and 3 in here so we manage well.”

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

Staff were asked what they felt works well within the blood clinic but also if they feel they have time to provide person centred care. One member of staff mentioned how they feel it is better now they have moved to pathology.

“I feel its brilliant here, now we are in pathology it is much easier to manage the blood tests, and the area is better.”

Another member of staff mentioned how with the staffing levels they are able to give person centred care within the blood clinic.

“I feel it works well having 3 staff it makes a huge difference. We also have time to spend with the patients which is nice for them and us.”

What measures are in place for people with disabilities?



The two members of staff spoken with explained how they have rooms large enough to facilitate wheelchairs and also how they have a room dedicated to take one patient if it is needed.

“Rooms are big enough for wheelchair users. We also have one room that takes one patient if they have any additional need or feel anxious about having their blood taken.”

During conversations it was discussed that they have had patients using BSL before, but they have always come with a carer, so they have never needed to access this support. (Recommendation 7)

“BSL users tend to come in with their loved ones so I’m not sure what’s in place.”

Would you recommend this service to a relative?

Both members of staff said they would happily recommend this blood clinic to other especially now it has moved to a more permanent place.

“Yes, I would recommend this blood clinic, it is much more accessible now has moved and means more of us can work here.”

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

One member of staff mentioned that it would be better once the number system is back up and running.

“The number call out system once it comes would be a lot better.”

When having conversations with staff members it was apparent that some GP's still are not aware of which local blood clinics do walks ins and which do urgent referrals, so some education around this would be good.



“I feel understanding from GP's could be better as we have a lot of patients sent here for routine blood tests.”

Any other comments?

“The feedback we've already had from patients is positive since we've moved locations.”

Recommendations

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

1. Ensure there is a dementia clock in the waiting area of the blood clinic
2. Move the 'How are we doing board' to a more prominent place in the waiting area.
3. Move the leaflet stand from behind the seating to a place where patients can access it easily.
4. Ensure the accessible toilet is meeting regulation standards. (see appendix 1 and 2)
5. Ensure there is a hearing loop in the reception area and information for patients around BSL and translation services if they are needed.
6. Move the friends and family table closer to the wait area so patients have access to this.
7. Develop a policy that staff have access to around British Sign Language and translation services for patients.

Appendix

1. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60b0ea89d3bf7f43560e324a/>
2. <https://accessible-toilets.co.uk/2019/02/07/all-about-emergency-cords/>

Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe
Ensure there is a dementia clock in the waiting area of the blood clinic	Agreed that would be good, but cannot be purchased owing to financial constraints	
Move the 'How are we doing board' to a more prominent place in the waiting area.	Completed. Chairs turned around so patients facing board	Completed
Move the leaflet stand from behind the seating to a place where patients can access it easily.	Completed. Chairs turned around so patients facing leaflet stand	Completed
Ensure the accessible toilet is meeting regulation standards. (see appendix 1 and 2)	Agreed that would be good, but cannot be purchased owing to financial constraints	
Ensure there is a hearing loop in the reception area and information for patients around BSL and translation services if they are needed.	Agreed that would be good, but cannot be purchased owing to financial constraints. Referrers should pre-notify service of communication requirement	
Move the friends and family table closer to the wait area so patients have access to this.	Completed within seating area now	completed
Develop a policy that staff have access to around British Sign Language and translation services for patients.	Referrers should pre-notify service of communication requirement, but would link in with other outpatient colleagues to resolve. Use pen and paper if required. Makaton book to be sourced for all BTC.	ongoing

Questions

Did you learn anything new about residents' views and experiences, or anything else, as a result of the Enter and View undertaken by Healthwatch Lancashire?

Yes, it was interesting to learn that Preston patients were attending the Chorley BTC because they thought it was easier to get their bloods taken there. We have now instigated comms to let urgent GP and OPs know that they can have their bloods taken at the Preston Healthport CDC

Any other comments?

We were happy with the report and agree that it was factually accurate. It will be escalated to division within the trust along with our actions.



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