



Enter & View Report

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| Name of service: | Fairfield Independent Hospital Crank Road Crank St Helens WA11 7RS |
| Date & time: | Monday 1 st July 2024 |
| Authorised Representatives: | Ann Bridge, Kath Inkpen |
| Support team members: | Gail Aspinall |
| Contact details: | Healthwatch St Helens 0300 111 0007 |

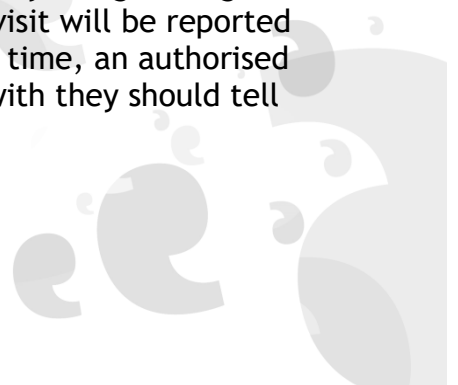
Acknowledgements

Healthwatch St Helens would like to thank the staff and patients at Fairfield Independent Hospital for their valuable time and hospitality during this visit.

What is Enter & View?

Part of the local Healthwatch duty is to carry out Enter & View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health & 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 and dental surgeries. Enter & View can happen if people tell us there is a problem with services or, equally, if services have a good reputation so we can learn about them and share good practice from the perspective of the people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter & Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues; however any safeguarding concerns which arise during a visit will be reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If, at any time, an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable with they should tell their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.



In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

Purpose of the visit.

To engage with residents and staff

- To observe care at the point of delivery
- To identify good working practice
- To identify areas for improvement

This visit was requested by the CEO, Cheryl Nolan, and was arranged with Jenny Gallagher, Director of Clinical Services and Quality.

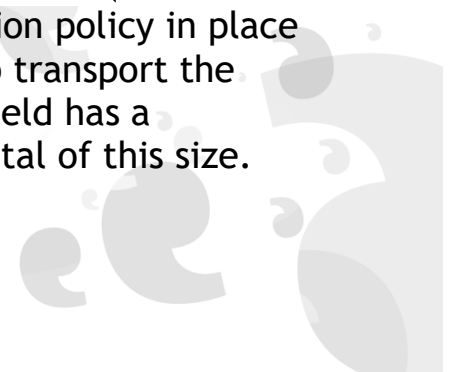
Methods used

Observations made by the visiting team might be based on instinct and not on something that is visible or measurable.

Summary of findings

Fairfield is an Independent Charitable Hospital set in seven and a half acres of idyllic surroundings in Crank, St Helens and within the grounds sits Fairfield Gardens. Rainford Hall is located next to the Hospital. The entrance is well sign posted and from there, a winding road leads to the main entrance. The Hospital has a main car park and two overflow car parks, which did seem quite small when considering the number of patients that attend the Hospital, however dependent on the clinics on a given day, these car parks can be utilised. Fairfield is an established charity with a Board of Trustees who are volunteers with backgrounds in the private business sector and public services, such as the NHS.

Originally owned by the Pilkington family, the Hospital was built in the late 1800's but is not a listed building. Extensions were added in 1973 and 1983/84. These extensions became operating theatres, conference and treatment rooms and patients' bedrooms. There is no ICU (intensive care unit) at the Hospital. However, there is an escalation policy in place if a patient needs ICU facilities, an ambulance is used to transport the patient to Mersey and West Lancashire NHS Trust. Fairfield has a decontamination unit, which is quite unusual for a Hospital of this size.



Referrals to the Hospital come from many sources and the current ratio of patients is 80% NHS, 20% private. All speciality surgeries are different, so waiting lists for operations vary. Outside reception there is a large mobile MRI scanning unit. The visiting team were unsure if this was a permanent site, or if the unit is transported to other sites.

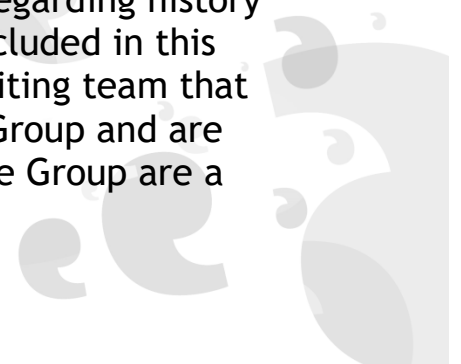
First impressions

When the visiting team arrived we were asked to sign the visitor's book and offered a seat in the bright, spacious waiting area. There were two receptionists and it was noted that they were very polite. The seating consisted of one long, low level comfortable seat. There was one armchair of higher height, and there may have been more around the building. Adjacent to the seating were large noticeboards detailing the nursing staff and health care assistants on duty that day, along with other notices and literature, including safeguarding information. There is CCTV in the reception area for both patient and staff safety. The television was on, but the volume was not loud. There is a large clock close to the reception desk. A water cooler machine stood in reception and is available for anyone to use. Décor was plain but clean with various framed pictures on the walls.

There are corridors leading from reception to various rooms including X-ray, clinic and consulting rooms. The rooms are clearly identified and signage is clear throughout the building. There are ten out-patient consultation rooms including ENT, Audiology, Ophthalmology and Physiotherapy.

There seemed to be some confusion as to who would be escorting us for our visit and we were eventually greeted by Ian Campbell, Director of Finance. From there, the visiting team were taken to meet Julie Ollerton (Integrated Governance Department) who had worked at Fairfield for forty years. Julie began to talk about her experiences when Jenny Gallagher (Director of Clinical Services and Quality) came to meet the visiting team and escort us to meet Cheryl Nolan, the CEO of Fairfield.

Cheryl gave some interesting background information regarding history and day to day life at the Hospital, some of which is included in this report. Cheryl was very excited to announce to the visiting team that Fairfield have exchanged contracts with Circle Health Group and are working towards completion in the coming months. The Group are a



nationwide company but currently have no presence in the Merseyside area. All staff were very positive and enthusiastic regarding the acquisition. The visiting team were then introduced to Lyndsey Fairclough (Outpatient Manager) and Joanne Clandon (Ward Manager), both were extremely knowledgeable and it was obvious how proud and conscientious they are about working at Fairfield.

Staff

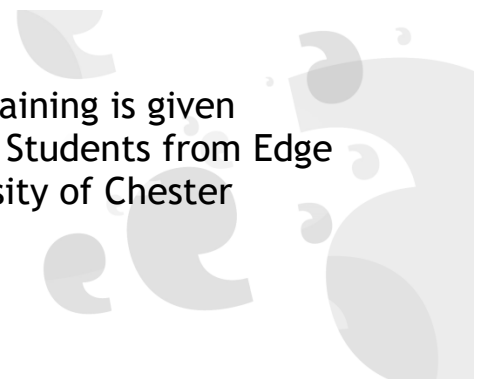
Fairfield is a Consultant led Hospital, with over eighty visiting Consultants who work at the Hospital under practising privileges and are required to work to the policies and procedures of the Hospital. There are one hundred and ninety six staff employed at the Hospital, consisting of full and part time workers. Currently, there are no male nurses employed at Fairfield. There are two porters who ‘go out of their way to help patients.’

The Hospital adopts a ‘family friendly’ attitude with many staff members working shift patterns that enable them to balance work and family life perfectly. The majority of staff employed have been there for many years. There is a 5% turnover in staff and the Hospital boasts a 3.5% staff sickness record. Lunch time is thirty minutes, with free drinks available throughout the day. There is an outside area where staff can eat their meals. Staff incentives include free car parking and subsidised meals and drinks at the canteen. A summer BBQ is arranged for staff every year.

The Hospital has a lone worker policy and there are emergency buzzers in the treatment rooms. The visiting team were told that staff morale is very good, and this has partly been due to the imminent acquisition by Circle Health Group, which will provide investment, opportunities and improvements for both staff and patients and everyone the visiting team spoke to, are very excited. The visiting team spoke to several members of staff, each one enthusiastic about their work and surroundings. The staff are passionate about the care they provide focussing on ‘the patient comes first’.

Staff training

New staff are required to attend induction days and training is given onsite. There are lots of mandatory training courses. Students from Edge Hill University, John Moores University and the University of Chester



complete placements here and there are two student nurses at present. Their placements last four to six weeks. The students have their own information board.

If a staff member wishes to undertake other training, education or development, a form is completed and given their Line Manager for consideration and where appropriate, this is then escalated to a member of the executive team for full consideration and approval, if appropriate. All appropriate staff are trained as scrub nurses for minor surgeries. Clinical staff are given direct supervision whereas other staff members are not given supervision in the true sense, but work under the hierarchy of control, eg a member of staff would speak to their Line Manager or Supervisor if there were any issues or questions and that would be cascaded, to staff, if necessary. This seems to work very well and everyone seemed happy in their job.

Smoking Policy

The Hospital employs a strict no smoking policy anywhere inside the building or the grounds. If staff/patients wish to smoke, they are required to leave the site completely.

Food & refreshments

The canteen boasts a five star food hygiene rating. Staff lunches are served from 11.30am to 1.30pm. A microwave and fridge are also in the canteen for staff use. The menu is currently the 'summer menu' this is on a two week change around and is rotated seasonally. Lunch is served to patients at 12.30pm which usually consists of sandwiches/soup etc and dinner at 5pm, which is a hot meal. Drinks are available upon request. There is a vending machine in the hallway.

Privacy & dignity

There are twenty eight individual bedrooms at Fairfield, each en-suite. Some of the rooms were sponsored in the past, with some still having the sponsors name on a plaque next to the door, along with the Consultant's name. The rooms are spacious and spotlessly clean, with many having a beautiful view of the gardens. Some of the rooms have doors that open out onto a roof top garden. This garden has window boxes full of flowers and garden furniture for patients and their families to use. Each bedroom has the usual hospital furniture, and all have a wall mounted

television. On the table at the end of the bed is a blank patient book ready to be completed when a new in-patient arrives. Each room has a call bell system, this is light controlled and alerts the attention of the Nurse. There are two patient bathrooms, one equipped with disabled facilities. The post-operative recovery room has four bays and patients here receive 1:1 care. Their stay in this area is approximately an hour, but of course, this varies with each patient. Visiting times are fairly flexible and this helps anxious patients, but mealtimes are protected to prevent disruption to patients and staff. The Hospital use two companies for interpreter services and hearing loops are used. Staff are mindful of any patients with learning disabilities/mental health issues and will provide the support necessary to try to reduce any unnecessary anxiety. Where patients have additional support needs (which may also include co-morbidities) this may require adjustments to the timing of their procedure.

Hygiene & cleanliness

Housekeeping staff are based throughout the Hospital. All clinical and ward areas were visibly clean and well equipped. Deep cleaning takes place in theatres and treatment rooms every day with consulting rooms deep cleaned weekly. The current infection rate is 0.6%. There were lots of hand sanitisers around the building and the laundry is cleaned off-site with twice weekly deliveries. Maintenance work is completed by an in-house team of staff who check the work list to ensure issues are addressed in a timely manner.

Safety & security

Fire doors are alarmed and the wards are all key-coded to gain entrance. There are CCTV cameras throughout the Hospital except in spaces where privacy is required. There is a regular fire alarm test, Monday at 11am and when asked, the visiting team were told the whole Hospital can be evacuated within five minutes. There is a zoned fire procedure in place.

Access to care and medical care

At the time of the visit there were two Orthopaedic, two Neuro and three general Consultants on site at Fairfield. The Hospital has a small pharmacy, which is open between the hours of 9am to 1pm. The Ward Manager explained that the pharmacy provision may be extended in the future when the acquisition is complete. If a patient requires medication outside opening hours, the Resident Medical Officer will dispense this in

collaboration with the Registered Nursing Staff. The Hospital has its own OPD clerks, who manage all appointments and test results.

The Physiotherapy department works to capacity through the provision of inpatient and outpatient management including the provision of the 'Joint School'. This has up to six pre-op patients attending per session and runs weekly for approximately 1 hour 30 minutes. At the time of our visit, this session was being delivered by Sally, one of the Occupational Therapists. She gave practical information and advice on what to expect both during the operation and post-operatively. The visiting team spoke to a couple of people in the group and they said "it's been very informative" and "it's comforting knowing what is going to happen." The discharge process is wholly individual but the majority of inpatients are usually discharged home within 2-3 days.

**Are there any providers who are particularly helpful? If so, who?
What is it that you find particularly helpful?**

GPs are very helpful and staff wanted to mention the excellent support that NWS (North West Ambulance Support) give.

Are there any providers you would like to receive support from? How is it they could improve their service offer?

The visiting team were told that sometimes communication can be difficult between Fairfield Independent Hospital and other hospitals.

Recommendations:

- The visiting team did not see any evidence to assist patients with dementia. If such individuals did attend the Hospital, it would be a recommendation to identify key areas with pictures/photographs as well as words.
- To keep up the good work, staff morale and excellent patient care. Well done!
- To continue to seek new opportunities to develop the Hospital further under Circle Health Group.



Response from Provider

The team at Fairfield Independent Hospital are really pleased that the visiting team recognised the good work of our staff in the provision of first class patient care.

All patients who attend Fairfield Independent Hospital are provided with personalised and holistic care. Staff actively support patients to ensure that everyone can be open about their individual needs and personal characteristics, and where everyone has equal access, experience and outcomes in their treatment and care.

For patients with Dementia we actively encourage and support family and carer involvement including at outpatient appointments and during admission to the hospital, where visiting is flexible to support the patient as required.

Our service user cohort includes patients and those important to them and either the patient or an individual important to them, may have additional support and care needs due to a learning disability, autism or dementia. Therefore, it is imperative that our staff are aware of and understand how to care for someone with these conditions and to facilitate this staff undertake additional training regarding these conditions.

All our staff continue to work hard to provide the levels of care and service that are expected of our organisation, which is a credit to them all.

HwSH will share Enter and View reports, as appropriate, with:

- The provider
- Healthwatch England
- The Care Quality Commission
- Commissioners
- The public
- St Helens Council Safeguarding team

Disclaimer

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

It is important to note that Healthwatch St Helens approaches Enter & View from the community perspective and its remit is very different from organisations such as the Care Quality Commission and local authority Quality Monitoring Team.

