

Enter & View Report

Stevenson Ward The Harbour

6th March 2025
10am – 12:00pm



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 service users who met members of the Enter & View team on that date.

Contact Details

Harbour Hospital, Windmill Rise, Blackpool, FY4 4FE

Person In Charge on day of visit

Matt

Rebekah

Healthwatch Blackpool Authorised Representatives

Alex Lever

Charlotte Knight

Mike Verity

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank patients and staff for making us feel welcome during our visit to the Stevenson Ward

Announced Visit

General Information

- The Harbour is run by Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust.
- 1 of 2 female acute mental health wards at the Harbour Hospital.
- 18 single en-suite rooms on the ward.
- 18 patients were occupying the ward at the time of our visit.
- The latest CQC inspection and review confirmed that the Harbour Hospital is overall: Good

What is Enter and View

We have the statutory right to carry out 'Enter and View' visits which allows trained authorised representatives of Healthwatch Blackpool to enter those premises where health and care is provided, to observe the nature and quality of the services. These visits are an opportunity to collect views directly from patients and to observe the environment and the quality of the service provided.

The visit was part of our programme of Enter and View visits to healthcare facilities in Blackpool. The aim of the visit was:

1. To find out about patients' experience of the hospital in relation to:
 - Daily Life
 - Quality of Care
 - Activities
 - Involvement of Patients
2. To identify examples of good practice
3. To highlight any issues or concerns from patients and any ideas for improvements



Service User Feedback

Healthwatch Blackpool engaged with **8** residents during the visit. It is important to note that residents within the home had varying levels of capacity. Healthwatch representatives had numerous conversations on the day of the visit and below is some feedback directly relating to the home and patient feedback.

Daily Life

During the visit, Healthwatch Blackpool representatives observed patients engaging in various activities, such as listening to music in the communal area, participating in activities in the activity room, socialising, or resting. Staff shared that daily routines vary, with a structured activity planner managed by activity workers. Patients have access to facilities including the communal gym, outdoor spaces, activity room, and sensory room. Community engagement is encouraged, with free swimming sessions available at a local leisure Centre.

Patients reported feeling welcomed and supported on the ward. However, some noted that staffing shortages occasionally impact access to activities like the gym. Others mentioned spending time visiting local shops, watching TV, socialising, or staying in their rooms.

"When I arrived on the ward I was welcomed and supported."

"I have found the experience on the ward OK."

"Everything has been OK but I feel that it is constantly short-staffed so patients often have to wait to get the attention of staff, particularly at mealtimes."

"Watch a lot of TV but also like going to the pet therapy sessions."

"Spend a lot of time in my room but I like to go into the communal area for a chat with other patients."

"I like doing my washing but would like to be able to do my ironing."

"it's understaffed- not enough staff to go out to the gym – if no staff available for activities cant do it."

"Can't have my reading glasses."

"Blue light glasses should be offered. I can't read much due to eye strain."

"It's patient led."

"I've been here for 3 months."

"I go to tesco."

"I'd asked to be woken up by staff – no staff woke me up. Staff didn't give a reason. This request should be honoured."

Quality of Care

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that The Harbour offers weekly workshops and self-harm support sessions run by Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners, as well as regular check-ins with nurses.

Some patients reported that they feel listened to and supported, others report difficulties in gaining staff attention, particularly due to staff shortages. Patients raised communication challenges with staff, with some reporting that they were unsure why they were in the facility or struggling to gain explanations for medication changes. It was highlighted that patients had difficulties accessing pain relief and medication with some feeling they are not being listened to or that their needs are not prioritised. While some were happy with their treatment and supported by staff, others felt ignored or unsupported. Additional concerns include difficulties accessing care plans, challenges for patients with dyslexia, staff shortages, and a reluctance to seek help due to fear of being a burden.

*"I feels that staff do listen to me but getting their attention takes too long."
"dependant on staff."*

*"I dont feel that it has been clearly explained to me why I am The Harbour."
"having to ask for meds."*

"They are not giving me the medications that I need."

"Staff generally listen to me and respond well."

"I have found the experience good and finds the staff supportive."

"I am happy that my drug treatment seems to be helping and I am confident that I am getting better."

"Weekly basis with nurses."

"Have to request to be assessed- some aren't available."

"Not listening for pain relief – difficult."

**Not Listening for
pain relief –
difficult** ”

"I don't feel like im listened to. I said I had a sore throat – pain relief is hard to get, doctors don't explain a change in meds. Hard to get oral medication and it took a while for staff to print out my meds."

"Wouldn't print care plan out for me- I have a right to see care plan. I don't want to feel a burden for consistent care."

"No support, they tell me to go away and come back."

"I don't feel listened to."

"I'm dyslexic, cant spell and I cant read."

"I've had staff treat me like shit at night time."

"No support. Staff ignore me when I'm knocking on the door."

"Sometimes made to feel a burden."

"I have been on the ward for 4 months. Everything has been OK but I feel that they are constantly short-staffed so patients often have to wait to get the attention of staff. This is a particular issue at mealtimes."



Activities

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that patients have access to a variety of activities within the ward and the main hospital. Staff mentioned that the hospital currently has a contract with the local swimming baths, providing free entry and encouragement to more community based activities. The main hospital has a sports hall and a gym, offering low-impact activities and women only sessions. Other available activities include pet therapy, bingo, and coffee gatherings. The ward has two activity coordinators and a main hospital activity planner, with daily schedules posted on the board, and staff inform patients on the activities for the day. Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that the main hospital activities have been improved with activities planned for each day. Other activities include badminton, boxing, table tennis, and basketball, as well as arts and crafts such as drawing, painting, and bracelet making. It was recognised that patients have crafted cat toys for a local sanctuary. Within the ward, a sensory room is available for everyone to use and a dressing table with beauty products is set up in the activity room. Staff also highlighted a newly introduced self-harm course, providing 1-1 psychology sessions for patients.

Some patients suggested other activities to be implemented such as photography and embroidery, while others prefer not to engage in activities. Patients mentioned that the availability of activities are very dependent on staffing numbers.

"There's badminton, boxing, table tennis, basketball."

"I made' this bracelet last year."

"I'd like to do photography and embroidery."

"I don't want to do any activities."

"Activity coordinator – daily schedule but depends on staff numbers."

**“ We have a
sensory room ”**



Food

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool representatives that there is a food ordering system, requiring patients to place orders a day in advance via a communal tablet. Staff informed us that there are various options such as halal, vegetarian, and vegan. Discussions with patients highlighted that they weren't aware of this system. Staff highlighted that patients have access to storage for their own food and drinks, and an OT kitchen is available for those who prefer to prepare meals themselves.

Some patients stated that they find the menu repetitive and limited options, lacking variety and issues with texture for those with sensory needs. It was highlighted that requests include decaffeinated beverages, more protein-rich meals, and better accessibility to personal food storage. Some patients feel they are not informed about meal choices, and there are mixed reviews on overall food quality, with comments ranging from "reasonable" to "horrible."

"Food is generally OK but has gone downhill somewhat since December. There is a reasonable choice for dinner but only a choice between standard or vegetarian at lunch."

"I find the food mediocre but tolerable. It was better in November."

"not enough variation – curry too spicy"

"The food is reasonable."

"Texture needs to be improved for those with ADHD and autism."

"We don't get the option to choose and we don't have a food ordering system, I know there was an order once but what was selected were the wrong items."

"not easy to get my own food and drinks – if its in the main fridge , food could get pinched."

"We need decaf tea and coffee – there is none! Those that don't want increased anxiety due to caffeine."

"The food needs to be a bit better than it is."

"More wholesome food – more protein."

"The food is horrible."

"They don't ask me what food I want."



Safety, Privacy and Wellbeing

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that the ward has 18 ensuite rooms. Patients reported that while they feel safe, others have expressed concerns about privacy and security. One individual highlighted that on one occasion a male staff member entered their room without knocking, and felt this to be triggering. Additionally, patients reported incidents of personal belongings going missing, including documents, handbags, and purses, and led them to feel that their personal belongings were not safe. While some patients found their rooms ok, others stated that they do not feel safe in the environment.

"Currently feel safe."

"Kind of private- male staff just walk into rooms – having a shower and getting clothes. Triggering and should knock."

"Been here since Saturday."

"Another patient was in my room and all my documents have gone, my handbag and my purse. It makes me not feel safe. Ive been robbed."

"I don't feel safe."

"My room is OK."



Patient Involvement

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that patient involvement is encouraged through regular staff feedback requests, the Family and Friends Test, and the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for complaints.

Some patients felt that they lack adequate information from staff, particularly upon admission, and felt that they would be more willing to give feedback if they were better informed. One individual suggested that there should be a complaints or suggestion box to provide feedback. A further individual stated that there needs to be a translator for non-verbal patients.

"More patient information."

"Nothing been explained – I don know about info- I would give feedback."

"Information when admitted."

"Needs a complaints/suggestion box."

"Translator-non verbal."



Visits

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool staff that family visits are encouraged, offering flexible visiting hours and quiet rooms are available for a private space. Staff highlighted that patients are also supported in going out with their families, and relatives are involved in risk assessments where appropriate. For those who do not consent to visits, family members can still call and speak with staff.

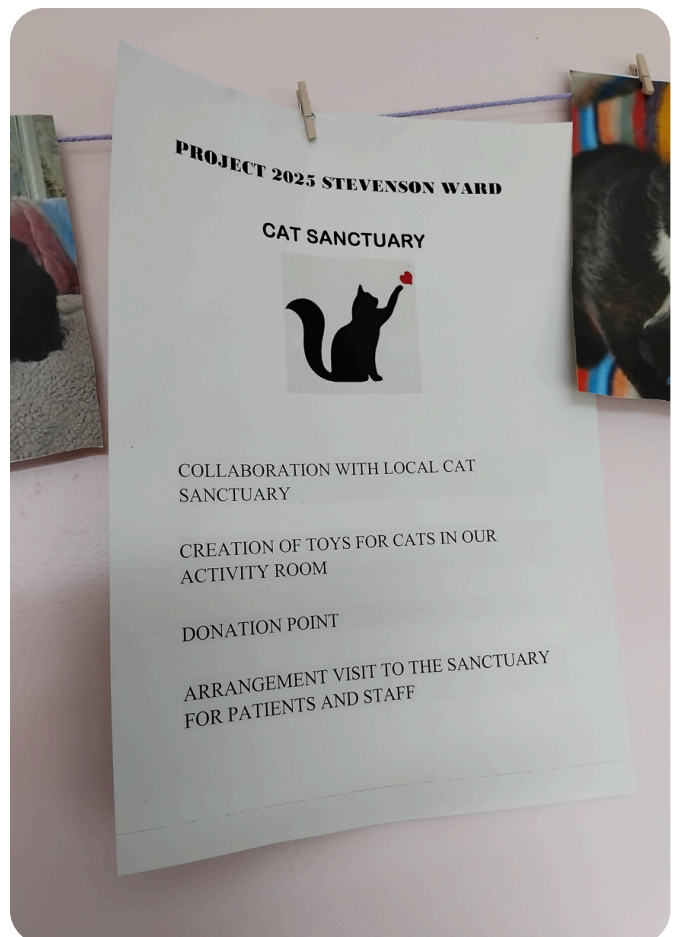
Some patients reported that they appreciate the flexibility and accessibility of visits. One individuals felt that they weren't informed about their rights and the visiting process, as there were no welcome pack or clear guidance provided. Others reported that there is poor mobile phone signal, causing difficulties when phoning family and friends, particularly those that live further away.

"No welcome pack or been given any information on visits."

"They don't explain your rights and having to ask staff to know your rights."

"Visitors can come and see me but my friends and family live in Manchester and it is a long way to come. I do try to contact them by phone but the mobile phone signal is very poor."

"I can have visitors whenever I wants and my family and friends do come."



Leave

On the day of the visit, staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that leave is encouraged, but recent changes under a new locum psychiatrist introduced a new approach. Healthwatch Blackpool were informed by staff that had been stopped for certain individuals, and eight patients currently do not have escorted leave in public areas. Staff highlighted that while informal patients can come and go freely, detained patients are facing stricter limitations, with some losing previously granted leave. Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that complaints surrounding leave had been escalated to the medical director and there were ongoing discussions regarding leave for smoking.

Patients raised that this has had a significant impact and some felt this was unfair, particularly those wanting to visit unwell family members. While some individuals reported to receiving unescorted or escorted leave up to four times a day, others report having their leave reduced or revoked completely. One individual stated that their leave is dependent on staff availability.

"I can have leave, unescorted when I want it."

"I can go out escorted up to 4 times a day."

"I can go out with somebody , I go out twice a week."

"My mums not well at the moment. They wont let me go and see her."

"Because im from another town they don't think I have family."

"Hasn't given me any leave."

"4 times a day that new doctor has stopped my leave. I've been on it for 2 months. I did have Tesco leave before. I want to become informed."

"Depends on staff availability. Haven't been granted leave."

"No grounds leave."

"New consultant few complaints on leave."



Visit summary & observations

Pre visit

The visit to was prearranged as per the Healthwatch Blackpool work plan. The home was notified via letter ten working days before the visit. The home was asked to display posters and make residents and families aware of the planned visit. The visit was conducted in line with current infection prevention control measures.

First impressions

Stevenson Ward is situated within The Harbour Hospital, accessible via a main road and close to the motorway. The external signage is clear to see when approaching the ward via the main corridor of the hospital. There is a car park to the front of the hospital, with disabled bays, and overflow parking available. As well as this, there are public transport links, with a bus stop directly outside the hospital. There is a locked-door policy on the ward and a reception area at the entrance, with a bell to alert the ward of your arrival. Visitors are greeted by ward staff and taken onto the ward. When entering the ward, we were welcomed by Rebekah and Matt.

Environment and communal spaces

Stevenson ward consists of 18 ensuite rooms, two of which are equipped with profiling beds designed for patients with advanced care needs. Shower chairs are also available, and an assisted bathroom is in place to support patients with mobility challenges.

At the time of the visit, 18 patients were on the ward. Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that discharges typically occur around midday, with new admissions arriving by 5pm. Staff highlighted that the admission process varies dependent on priority and those placed higher on the triage list. Staff mentioned that The Bed Hub notifies The Harbour of incoming patients, and staff are able to review notes and prepare a plan before arrival. Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that upon admission, patients are taken to a side room, introduced to the ward, shown their bedroom, and provided with a fob for room access. A consultant sees them within 24 hours on weekdays or up to 72 hours on weekends. Junior doctors also assess patients and there are emergency on-call services available if needed. Staff mentioned that the typical length of stay for patients on the ward is under 90 days, and some remain for shorter periods of 40-50 days. Staff reported that there can be long-term patients with some staying for three to four years.

During the visit, many patients were in their bedrooms, spending some time within their own private space. However, there were some patients in the communal area, which consisted of a comfortable seated area with tables. Patients had access to the main communal TV which was on at the time, playing music. A few patients were conversing amongst each other in the seated area. Other patients were in the activity room carrying out bracelet making.

Stevenson ward has a relatively large garden and this is available anytime for the patients to use. Within the garden, there is a small grassed area with seating available. Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that there are plans to start planting flowers and vegetables for the spring and summer months. Staff highlighted that they have a smoke-free policy, with vapes being provided upon request.

Observations of patient and staff interaction

On the day of the visit, it was observed that staff were engaging well with patients within the main communal area. Staff were involved in the activities in the activity room, assisting patients with bracelet making.

Patient Support

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that Stevenson ward provides specialised support for patients with learning disabilities and autism. It was highlighted that staff receive training from The LD Collaborative and autism champions to support individuals with behavioural and sensory needs. Staff mentioned that upon admission, patients undergo health assessments, including blood tests, ECGs, height and weight measurements, and emergency medication are available where necessary. Staff highlighted that care plans are provided promptly, and a malnutrition screening system is currently being trialed to support patients with under or over-nourishment.

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that all patients receive welcome packs upon admission, providing information about the ward and introductions to staff. Staff highlighted that the most recent CQC inspection was conducted in January, and overall positive. The inspection found good engagement between staff and patients and a well-maintained environment. Staff highlighted that from the inspection, concerns were raised about disjointed systems and medication information were recorded in multiple systems rather than a single platform. Staff noted that these issues were addressed immediately.

On the day of the visit, Healthwatch Blackpool spoke with a staff member specifically for speech and language support. They stated that support is available for patients with learning disabilities and neurodiverse needs and utilise a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system to assess communication needs and support levels. It was reported that one patient, who is selectively mute, had been provided with non-verbal communication tools, including flashcards. Communication support plans were in place to support individual understanding, expression, emotional support, and reasonable adjustments are made for meetings.



Overall visit summary

Healthwatch Blackpool had a positive experience overall on Stevenson ward, and feedback was largely encouraging. While some of the patients we engaged with were happy with their care, the majority felt they weren't listened to or didn't receive enough support from staff. Most patients spoke about low staffing levels, which had an effect on patient activities or leave access. The majority of patients also highlighted the lack of leave they receive due to a new consultant and felt this to be unfair, as most smoked/vaped and weren't allowed to do this offsite or visit unwell family members. Most patients felt safe within the ward, however a few highlighted concerns to personal belongings going missing along with a lack of privacy in their bedrooms.

The main areas for improvement related to better leave accessibility, more options for decaffeinated hot drinks, improved patient feedback opportunities, more choice for meals and informed of the Maple system for food ordering, improved privacy for patients, reading glasses provided to those that need them, and improved communication between staff and patients, particularly regarding their rights and ward information.

Overall, the environment was clean and noticeboards were varied and contained lots of information. Stevenson ward can celebrate the many positives detailed throughout this report, and there are a few areas for improvement, detailed as recommendations. Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank staff and patients for accommodating our visit and for taking the time to talk with the team.

Observation/Feedback

Management/Provide Response

Action to be undertaken by/when?

More choice surrounding meals and decaffeinated drinks and patients to be informed of the Maple system for food ordering.

Ensure patients are informed and reminded of their rights and provided with ward information.

Communication and support to be improved between staff and patients.

Access to patient leave to be improved as this seemed to be a highlighted issue amongst the majority of patients on the day of the visit.

Staff informed Healthwatch on the day that this was an ongoing issue and that it would be fed back.

Reading glasses to be provided to patients that need them.

Staff informed Healthwatch on the day that this would be addressed immediatley.

Actioned

Improved privacy for patients.

Managers Overall Feedback

Were you happy with the Enter and View arrangements prior to the visit?

Yes we were happy with the support prior to the visit, Healthwatch explained the visit and sent out information to support with the day. They liaised with the ward to ensure that it was safe to attend prior to coming and this was scheduled with staff who are able to support the team.

Please use this space to outline any positives aspects of the visit?

Introductions were made and purpose of the visit was outlined. The team gave myself and Stevenson ward time to speak and share regarding the ward, the quality improvements, the challenges and what they are doing well. There was positive engagement with patients, the Healthwatch team interacted well with patients and staff throughout. The team listened to the patients and supported them in being open and transparent about their stay on the ward. Healthwatch team viewed the ward environment and took pictures but were mindful of patients and dignity and privacy. The visit was informative, with feedback being useful to help make improvements to the ward and the environment.

Do you have any comments on staff conduct?

The staff were amazing throughout, helpful, compassionate and understanding.

Please use this space to outline any negative aspects of the visit?

On this occasion there was nothing negative about the visit. We had some actions to take away but these were given in a kind and compassionate fashion.

Is there any way in which Healthwatch Blackpool can improve? Any feedback is greatly appreciated

No further feedback.