

Enter & View Report

Churchill Ward The Harbour

**12th November 2025
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 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

Olivia Kay- Ward Manager

Healthwatch Blackpool Authorised Representatives

Charlotte Knight

Mike Verity

Vanessa Lett

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank patients and staff for making us feel welcome during our visit to the Churchill ward.

Announced Visit

General Information

- The Harbour is run by Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust.
- Acute adult male ward.
- 18 bedrooms with en-suites 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 **3** patients during the visit. It is important to note that patients within the ward 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 ward and patient feedback.

Daily Life

Daily life on the ward varies according to individual routines. Breakfast is served from the hatch between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m., with nurses administering medications. Morning and afternoon activities are structured to support patient engagement and wellbeing, while lunch is served at 12:30 p.m. and tea at 5:30 p.m., followed by supper when night staff begin their shift.

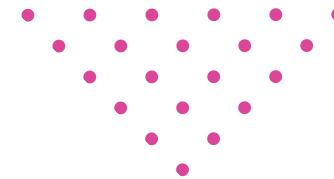
One individual shared that they had a good daily routine with regular staff support, while some highlighted that there were limited activities, noting that their main engagement was seeing the Occupational Therapist on Thursdays.

“I have a good daily routine. If I don’t get up for breakfast Helen will often wake me and make me get out of bed in a fun, teasing way.”

“If there are things I fancy doing e.g. baking then Helen will make provision for it.”

“Nothing apart from OT on a Thursday.”





Quality of Care and Staff Manner

Olivia explained to Healthwatch Blackpool staff that patients have access to health and wellbeing sessions with a variety of health professionals including, Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists. Olivia also noted that staff receive extensive ongoing training, including safeguarding, enhanced life support, infection control and trauma-informed care, to ensure continued professional development.

Patients reported a high quality of care on Churchill Ward. Patients praised staff for being kind, compassionate, and caring. Patients complimented staff and doctors for their excellent care and felt heard and understood. Some patients, however, felt that the limited daytime presence of regular staff and reliance on agency staff made it harder to build relationships. One patient expressed frustration about an ongoing skin condition; Healthwatch representatives raised this with the ward manager and were assured that follow-up care was underway. Although one individual reported feeling distressed and wanting to go home, others emphasised that, despite staffing challenges, the positive aspects of their care experience far outweighed the negatives.

"It's horrible- I want to go home; I'm waiting for a dermatologist currently."

"In the daytime there is very rarely regular staff lot of regular staff are kind compassionate and caring. You know they are there because they care."

"There are staffing problems, but the positives far outweighs the negatives."

"The care I have received since coming to Churchill Ward has been excellent. Dr Nanda has been fantastic, he treats me like a person and makes me feel understood. All the regular staff on the ward are great and Helen is great with the activities."

"The regular ward staff are great but the agency staff much less so."

"In the daytime there is very rarely regular staff lot of regular staff are kind compassionate and caring. You know they are there because they care."



Activities

Healthwatch Blackpool were informed that a wide range of activities is available to patients, led by Health and Wellbeing Workers Helen and Noel. They provide structured daily routines, gym and exercise sessions, and varied activities such as animal safaris and monthly visits from the Blackpool Football Club Community Trust. Additional opportunities include charity events and community outings, including trips to the Blackpool Illuminations and a local fish and chip shop.

Patients complete an individual activity planner on arrival to record personal hobbies and interests, and an activity timetable is clearly displayed on the ward. Communal areas include a large pool table, a TV in the living room, and a separate games room with board games, darts and a PlayStation, though the TV in the games room was noted to be broken at the time.

One patient said there is plenty of choice and that staff can arrange alternatives if needed. Another patient said they were aware of the activities available but chose not to participate.

"There is a big choice of organised activities and Helen and Noel will also try to accommodate other ideas if requested."

"There are activities but I don't take part in them."





Food

Churchill Ward uses the Maple system on an iPad, allowing patients to choose their meals in advance. Patients select their options each morning for the day ahead. Breakfast, served through the hatch between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m., typically includes toast and cereal, with access still available for those who miss the set time. Lunch is served at 12:30 p.m., and the evening meal at 5:30 p.m. Patients can choose from two hot meal options, along with alternatives such as sandwiches, salads, soups and sides, including chips and vegetables. The ward operates a four-week menu that changes every quarter to reflect seasonal ingredients.

One patient shared that they did not like the food on offer, though they acknowledged that there is a daily choice available. Another patient commented that the Maple system is efficient and easy to use, adding that there is plenty of choice and the meals are generally good.

"Not very good –dinner times always rubbish."

"You do get to choose – get what you need."

"The foods not too bad, the Maple system on the I-pad is the most efficient way of ordering. There's always options and you're never missed. They'll make it happen."

“Meals are generally good with a decent choice.”

Safety, Privacy and Wellbeing

Patients told Healthwatch that night times can sometimes feel noisy and chaotic due to other patients' mental health challenges. One patient also reported that new clothing had gone missing in the laundry and believed it may have been sent to the wrong ward. Another patient noted that they had been able to access advocacy support on a regular basis.

"Nights are horrendous as some people are really ill, there's a lot of noise next to me. I'm not getting enough sleep."

"My new tracksuits went missing, i think they went next door."

"A man smashed up the door over a cigarette."

"I saw an advocate last week."



Patient Involvement

Staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that patients are encouraged to suggest new activities, helping to promote choice and involvement on the ward. Feedback can be given through Friends and Family forms, which are displayed on the notice board, or shared informally with staff at any time. Weekly patient meetings are provided, offering individuals the chance to raise any positives, concerns or suggestions.

Families can contribute their views by completing feedback forms and are invited to attend MDT meetings, either in person or via phone or video call, to support their relatives.

One patient said they were aware of the weekly feedback meetings but chose not to attend.

"There is a patient feedback meeting, but I don't go."



Visits, leave, and contact with loved ones

Visiting is flexible and generally available from mid-morning until 8 p.m., with protected mealtimes in place. Visitors can use designated visiting and family rooms.

Decisions about patients leaving the ward are made on an individual basis and are risk-assessed through MDT meetings. Detained patients require Section 17 leave, which can be escorted or unescorted depending on assessed need.

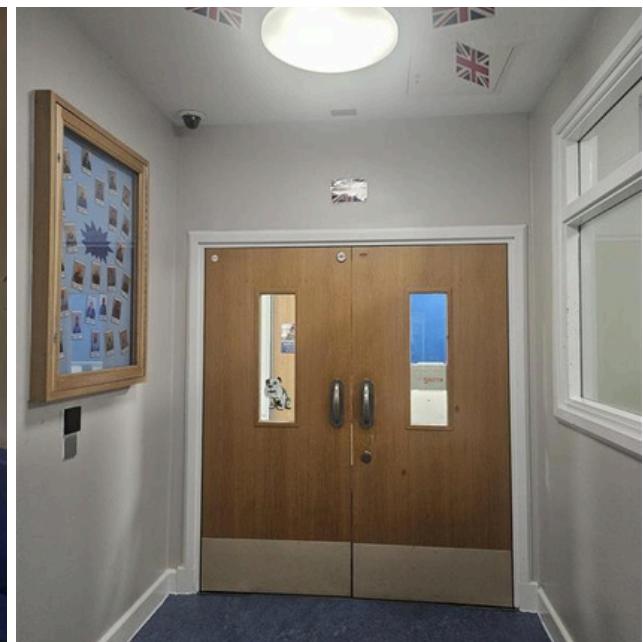
Staff reported that patients now receive unescorted leave more quickly than before. Leave may include access to hospital grounds or nearby shops. The ward introduced a no-smoking policy in April and patients were described as accepting of the change, with clear explanations and support provided. Nicotine-replacement therapy, hospital vapes (including pods and chargers), and input from the Tobacco Dependency Team are available to help patients reduce or quit smoking.

One patient shared that they receive regular visits from loved ones and can leave the hospital unescorted, while another expressed that they have few visitors.

"My family and friends are local and visit me regularly. Sometimes it gets a bit much."

"I get next to no visitors anyway."

"I can go out unescorted."



Visit summary & observations

Pre visit

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

First impressions

Churchill ward is located 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. The hospital has a front car park with designated disabled bays and extra overflow parking available. There is a bus stop situated directly outside, linking in with public transport. The ward itself is situated at the end of the main corridor. 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 we visited the ward, we were welcomed by Olivia.

Environment and communal spaces

Churchill Ward has 18 ensuite bedrooms, all redecorated within the last 18 months in neutral colours. Patients are encouraged to personalise their rooms with their own belongings and artwork. At the time of the visit, all rooms were occupied.

On entering the ward, a wide hallway leads to several rooms for family visits and a patient kitchen. This opens into a large communal area with comfortable seating, a TV, tables and chairs, and a pool table. Adjacent to this is a games room equipped with a rowing machine, table football and other activities. Large glass doors in the communal area open onto a spacious garden with a lawn and raised beds used for growing flowers, fruit and vegetables. Staff told Healthwatch that patients enjoy spending time here, particularly in summer, and some help maintain the space.

Beyond the communal area is the main bedroom corridor, which leads to an additional seating area at the far end of the ward, offering views over the surrounding fields.

Observations of patient and staff interaction

On the day Healthwatch visited the ward, it was observed that a member of staff was preparing some breakfast items with one of the patients. Both of the health and wellbeing staff were present on the day of the visit, organising activities for the patients. The staff were interacting well with the patients in the communal areas.

Patient Support

All staff complete mandatory training, including annual enhanced life support, positive and safe restraint, trauma-informed care, fire safety, and infection control, alongside other relevant courses. Patients can be assessed for mobility aids, wheelchairs, and physiotherapy, supported by the occupational therapist.

The ward has two dedicated health and well-being staff who coordinate activities and support patient engagement. Staffing levels are continuously reviewed and adjusted, particularly during night and morning observations, to ensure safety and support. Patients seeking help to stop smoking can access the Tobacco Dependency Team, with information also available on the ward noticeboard.

Independent advocates regularly visit the ward to ensure patients' views, wishes, and rights are understood and supported, with information about mental health law clearly displayed.

Challenges

The ward manager told Healthwatch that the ward often faces challenges due to the varying acuity of patients. Different stages of illness can create difficulties for both staff and patients. It was noted that some patients might be better placed on a PICU ward if they are not responding well on the acute ward. Ongoing risk assessments are conducted throughout each day to ensure the safety of both patients and staff, highlighting the complexities of risk management on the ward.

Oral Health

Oral health is included in the ward's holistic assessment and care planning, with toothbrushes and toothpaste provided. However, staff do not routinely check patients' teeth, and many patients are admitted without a regular dentist. When patients report issues such as toothache or abscesses, staff support them with emergency dental care and medication, following up on treatment as needed, but there are no regular oral health checks.



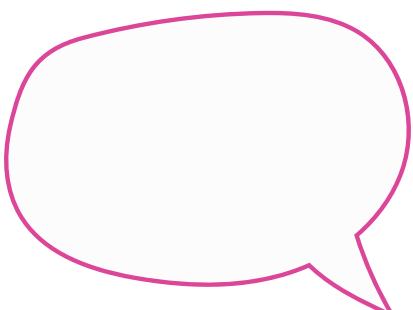
Overall visit summary

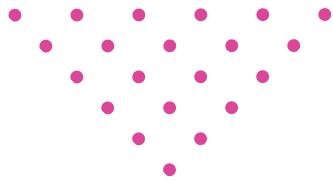
Healthwatch Blackpool had a positive experience visiting Churchill Ward at the Harbour. The ward manager provided a full tour, explaining a typical day, and patients in communal areas were observed engaging in activities with good support. Most patients reported that care was good overall, praising staff as caring, kind, and compassionate. The ward doctor was noted for a patient-centered approach, ensuring patients felt heard.

Some concerns were raised about nighttime noise, the need for more consistent staffing, and greater engagement between staff in the office and patients in communal areas. Patients generally felt there was good meal choice and quality, as well as a variety of activities.

Key areas for improvement included consistency of staff, particularly bank staff, increased proactive engagement from staff in communal areas, and managing evening noise to support patients' rest and wellbeing.

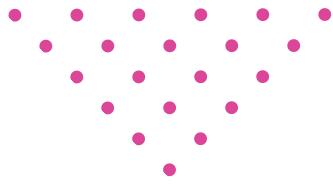
The ward environment was clean, and noticeboards were informative. Overall, the visit highlighted many positive aspects of care while identifying areas for development. Healthwatch Blackpool thanks staff and patients for welcoming the team and sharing their experiences.





Recommendations

Observation/Feedback	Management/Provide Response	Action to be undertaken by/when?
Improve staffing levels on the ward where possible, as discussed with the ward manager during the visit.	<p>The harbour has daily staffing meetings so staffing levels can be balanced across the Harbour. the ward itself is rarely, if ever understaffed on a night shift, but due to increased clinical pressures during day this can be affected.</p> <p>2 deputy ward managers have successfully been recruited and 3 new staff nurses (RMN) to support the staffing levels.</p>	Ongoing
Repair or replace the broken TV in the games room to improve access to entertainment in communal areas.	This has been reported and will be repaired as soon as possible.	Actioned
Reduce nighttime noise and disturbances, particularly from patients singing or shouting, to support rest and wellbeing.	This has been feedback to teams to ensure all patients are supported.	Actioned
Reduce staff presence in the office and increase engagement with patients in communal areas.	There is ongoing discussions with the team to raise awareness and ensure staff are located on the ward when not needing to be accessing the office	Ongoing



Recommendations

Observation/Feedback	Management/Provide Response	Action to be undertaken by/when?
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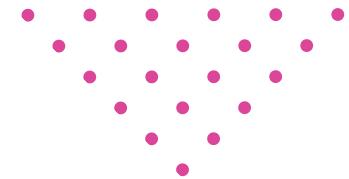
Further individualisation of the activities offered to patients.

Management/Provide Response

There is a 7 day health and wellbeing cover with the recovery support workers who support the patients with activities. Interest checklists are completed on admission and on and off ward activities are offered. Community meetings happen weekly for patients to feedback and look at structured activities.

Ongoing

Action to be undertaken by/when?



Managers Overall Feedback

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

“Yes, we received plenty of notice beforehand with the date and time of the visit. Unfortunately the original date was postponed last minute due to an incident on the ward however a new date was arranged promptly.”

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

“We was given enough notice prior to the visit and provided with a poster to display for patients, visitors and staff. The staff that completed the visit were polite and pleasant throughout the visit and took the time to speak to a few patients during the morning. We received verbal feedback following the visit which was extremely helpful.”

Do you have any comments on staff conduct?

“No issues.”

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

“No negative aspects to the visit.”

Is there any way in which Healthwatch Blackpool can improve?

“No improvements to feedback. It was a positive experience giving us the opportunity to showcase our ward and the care we provide for our patients on Churchill ward. We appreciate the feedback we have received which will support the team in making changes to further benefit our patients.”