

# Urgent Treatment Centre Morecambe

Thursday December 11, 2025

10:00am-12:30pm



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

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## Registered Manager:

Michelle Sproston - Lancashire Place Lead, FCMS (NW) Ltd.

## Date and Time of our visit:

11 December 2025

10am-12:30pm

## Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representative:

Sue Edwards (Senior Engagement Officer)



# 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 practice 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](http://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.

## General Information

The Urgent Treatment Centre, Morecambe, is managed by FCMS who provide community healthcare across Lancashire, South Cumbria, South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and the Midlands.

The service provides urgent treatment for injuries and ailments which require same-day medical intervention but which don't require a visit to an Emergency Department (ED) or Accident and Emergency (A&E).

Patients can self-refer or be referred from their GP, NHS 111 and the ambulance service.

## 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 Morecambe Urgent Treatment Centre and received feedback from:



## Pre-visit questionnaire

Prior to the enter and view visit, the manager at Morecambe 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

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

## Observations

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

# Summary

## Local Demographic



Morecambe Urgent Treatment Centre is primarily used by residents of the Morecambe, Heysham and Lancaster area, as well as out-laying towns and villages such as Bolton-Le-Sands, Carnforth, Slyne and Middleton. Some patients opt to travel to the Urgent Treatment Centre rather than the Emergency Department (ED) at Royal Lancaster Infirmary for shorter waiting times and ease of access.

The Urgent Treatment Centre is located within a shared building alongside Bay Medical Group (GP practice) and other NHS services, and there is a Cohens Chemist located adjacent to the carpark.

## Attending the centre

The Urgent Treatment Centre offers same-day treatment for minor injuries and ailments which may need urgent medical intervention but does not warrant a visit to Accident and Emergency (A&E) or an Emergency Department (ED), and the Urgent Treatment Centre has access to on-site X-Ray services located at the health centre.

Patients can walk-in or be referred via several pathways including GPs, NHS 111 and Northwest Ambulance Service (NWAS). Both patients and professionals, including NHS 111 and NWAS, can pre-book appointments in order to reduce waiting room times for patients; and this is encouraged where possible by the centre as it reduces pressures in the waiting area.

Urgent treatment services at the centre are provided by FCMS, who also provide the out-of-hours GP services at the centre.

## Visit Summary

An announced Enter and View visit was carried out on December 11, 2025, 10am-12:30pm. Healthwatch Lancashire spoke with management to discuss the service and view the facilities, following which conversations were held with six patients in the waiting area.

Patients were seen to be treated quickly and efficiently, and overall the patients spoken with were satisfied with the level of care that they received. Low waiting times, locality/convenience and helpful staff were seen as a positive when using the Urgent Treatment Centre.

At the time of the visit the waiting space/reception area was seen to be in need of some improvement by varied seating types and better layout, and two patients commented around this aspect. This is currently under review by FCMS who have

already identified this need and have plans in place for improvement in the near future.

Throughout the visit patients were seen quickly with minimal time spent in the waiting area, and staff were observed being friendly, professional and helpful.

Discussion with management determined that FCMS actively seek and listen to patient feedback, and act on it wherever possible.

During the visit staff were busy carrying out their roles and it was deemed by Healthwatch Lancashire as inappropriate to distract them from their duties. Healthwatch Lancashire offered staff the opportunity to provide feedback at a later date/time, however, no staff feedback was received for the purposes of this report.

Observations highlighted the need for some improvements to the external appearance of the building, with peeling paint and cracked windows. However it is important to note that the building is not owned by FCMS and is shared with other NHS services so they have limited influence on building improvements.

Internally the building is light, spacious and well maintained overall.



# Services

Care at the Urgent Treatment Centre is Provided by FCMS, who also provide same-day urgent care in Fleetwood, Blackpool, and Doncaster.

The Urgent Treatment Centre provides same-day medical intervention for minor injuries and ailments which don't warrant hospital Emergency Department treatment, and the Urgent Treatment Centre has access to on-site X-Ray services, which are located at the health centre.

Discussion with management identified that patients are referred from various sources including GPs and NHS 111, and are sometimes brought in by ambulance crew who have identified that there is no need for hospital treatment.

Patients are able to walk-in or can book an appointment. The management team explained to the Healthwatch Lancashire representative that the majority of patients now have a pre-booked appointment via the 111 service, and that this has improved patient experience by reducing the need for long waiting times in the waiting area.

FCMS also provide the out-of-hours GP service at Morecambe Health Centre.

## Enter and View observations

### Location and External Environment

Morecambe Urgent Treatment Centre is located within Morecambe Health Centre, on Hanover Street, in the centre of Morecambe. Bay Medical Group (GP practice) is also situated in the health centre, and there is a Cohens Chemist located adjacent to the car park.

The health centre was easy to find with good roadside signage, and there is a large carpark which includes blue badge bays and an ambulance bay. There is good public transport access, with a bus stop directly outside the health centre. Morecambe train station is an approximate fifteen minute walk away.

On arrival the carpark area was seen to be busy with people accessing the Urgent Treatment Centre, Bay Medical and Cohens Chemists.

Externally the building is in need of some improvement, with peeling paint and cracked windows giving a neglected feel to the site. However, it must be noted that the building is not owned by FCMS so they have limited ability to improve the overall condition of the building and carpark.



Access into the building is via automatic double doors, leading from the carpark. The entrance was seen to be accessible.

Seating is available in the space between internal and external entrance doors, allowing for those waiting to be picked up to be seated.

It was noted that the main entrance has prominent Bay Medical Group signage which could be confusing for those attending the Urgent Treatment Centre, and it would therefore be good to have clearer Urgent Treatment Centre signage (Recommendation 1).





## Internal Environment and Waiting Area

On entering the building the Bay Medical Group reception desk is immediate to the left, and the Urgent Treatment Centre is located past this further along the left side.

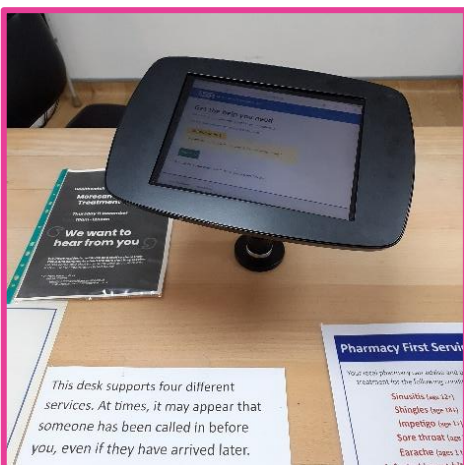
Consultation rooms are located throughout the building.

There are various waiting areas located centrally, with chairs arranged to face different directions in order to distinguish individual service waiting areas.

Overall the general waiting area is well lit, free of clutter and appears well maintained.

The Urgent Treatment Centre reception desk is clearly identifiable. It was noted that the reception desk is high and could pose a barrier for some patients, although there is a lower section for easier access when required/necessary.

On discussion with management it was identified that reception staff have raised concerns around safety with a lower desk. It is therefore recommended that this is investigated further in order to create a more accessible but safe reception desk (Recommendation 2).



On arrival patients are asked to use an electronic NHS Streaming and Re-direction Tool '*patients answer questions about the symptoms they have arrived with. They can then be prioritised within the department based on their need or can be redirected elsewhere, if it is safe and appropriate. This may involve being sent to an alternative department within the hospital or to an external service such as a dentist or a pharmacy*' (NHS England, 2026).

Once the patient has used this device the reception staff will then have a follow-on conversation in order to ensure that the patient receives the most appropriate care.

This device is easily accessible on the lower section of the reception desk and patients were observed using this throughout the visit.

Signs on display close to the reception desk request that patients use the electronic device on arrival, although some patients appeared unsure and were observed asking reception staff as to whether they should be using it (Recommendation 3).

Seating in the waiting area for the Urgent Treatment Centre is in rows facing the reception desk and is all of the same type and height. Patients were observed moving chairs in order to engage more with those they had accompanied to the centre which demonstrates that the seating layout is not ideal for all people using the service. The seating area was adequately spacious for wheelchair users, and there was sufficient seating at the time of the visit, although this could be different during busier periods.

Discussion with management identified that FCMS are aware of the need to improve the waiting area by way of differing types and heights of seating for individual needs and requirements, and that they are currently reviewing the seating layout to improve overall patient experience (recommendation 4). Healthwatch Lancashire asked patients about their views around the seating and waiting area in order to be able to feed into this review.

Conversations with the management team also identified that the childrens play area had been removed for better infection control during the Covid pandemic. FCMS are currently in the process of a creating a new interactive feature for children which is due to be unveiled in the near future.

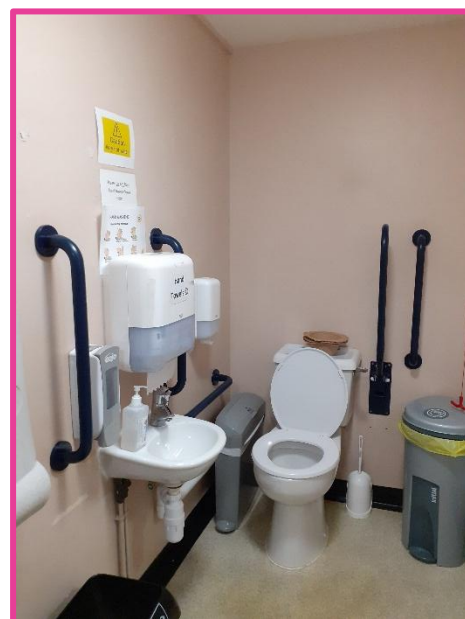


At the time of the visit there were posters with relevant information on display around the waiting area and reception desk, and this included the Healthwatch poster announcing the visit.

In order to make the waiting space more contemporary FCMS are currently reviewing the posters and displays in the waiting area and are investigating the use of an electronic monitor as an alternative for information sharing.

There is an accessible toilet available for patients and this was seen to be clean and with good mobility support equipment.

It was noted that there is a need for more dementia friendly signage, especially for the accessible toilet, and that contrasting toilet seat colours would be good for those with dementia/Alzheimer's (Recommendation 5).



## Patient Interactions



On arrival Healthwatch Lancashire was greeted warmly, and all staff observed were seen to be professional, friendly and approachable.

The Healthwatch Lancashire representative was asked to sign-in as a visitor and also sign a non-disclosure agreement, both of which evidence good safeguarding practice. There was also a health and safety induction which included highlighting the location of fire exits, which demonstrated good health and safety practice.

Patients were called into their appointment by a member of staff who accompanied the patient to the relevant consultation room. Staff were heard reassuring patients to take their time and not rush.

Staff were seen attending quickly to a patient who was bleeding quite heavily, and they are to be commended on how they responded promptly and compassionately to the patients' needs.

The overall atmosphere in the waiting area was calm and welcoming. Discussion with management identified that the system of predominantly pre-booked appointments has reduced patient numbers in the waiting areas and has therefore reduced patient frustration with waiting times.

In the staff room there is a notice board with patient feedback and with a 'They Said We Did' poster, along with thank-you cards and patient quotes. Discussion with management showed that the Urgent Treatment Centre actively seek and listen to patient feedback, and have implemented changes based on what they hear, such as including a water cooler in the waiting area.

It is recommended by Healthwatch Lancashire that this should be displayed in the waiting area for patients to see. This will ensure that patients are aware that their feedback is valued, listened to and where possible acted on (Recommendation 6).

Should a patient need an environment less stimulating due to a neurological condition, such as autism or dementia/Alzheimer's, a consultation room will be utilised. As they won't be visible to the Urgent Treatment Centre team a member of the clinical/non-clinical team will accompany the patient to ensure that they are kept safe. FCMS also offer the option for patients to stay in their cars or local vicinity and will phone them to let them know when staff are ready to see them.

FCMS use The Big Word for British Sign Language (BSL) and for those for whom English is a second language and are currently investigating a hearing loop system.

**They said, we did**

**Patient:** Maybe a water dispenser, had to wait quite a while

**Action:** Moved our water dispenser to the reception area accessible to patients.

**Patient:** (Cosmetic) just a bit of decoration

**Action:** Keep an eye out in the near future, there will be an

# Patient feedback

Healthwatch representatives spoke with six patients during the visit.

## Attending the service

During the visit patient footfall was low, with most patients being seen quickly.

Several patients declined to speak with Healthwatch Lancashire as they did not feel well which was respected by the Healthwatch Lancashire representative. Conversations were brief as patients were called in to their appointment quickly and opted not to return to the conversation following their treatment.

Patients were visiting the urgent treatment centre for a variety of health concerns, and several had been referred by GP or NHS 111.

One patient spoken with had initially called NHS 111 who advised that an ambulance would be sent out. However, they had opted to travel independently to the Urgent Treatment Centre as they thought it would be quicker and less fuss ***“I don't want to be a burden”***.

Another patient commented that they had chosen to attend the Urgent Treatment Centre rather than attend an Accident and Emergency Department ***“It was my first thought rather than go to A&E”***.

One patient stated that they had been unable to get a GP appointment and so had called NHS 111 who had advised them to go the Urgent Treatment Centre.

## Tell us about your experience so far

Due to the low footfall and quick treatment times most patients spoken with had newly arrived and checked in when approached for their feedback. However, all patients spoken with have attended the centre in the past so were able to speak with both present and past experience. All stated that they knew where to go and what to expect.

***“They're really good”***

## What works well at this centre?

All patients spoken with stated that they were happy with the service. Low waiting times, locality and convenience were discussed as positives when using the centre.

***“It's local, easy to get to and a quick service”***

***“It's local and friendly”***

***“You don't have to wait for the GP to get back to you”***



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

All patients spoken with were asked their views on the waiting area in order to feedback to FCMS who are currently reviewing this space. Four patients stated that they are satisfied with the waiting area, and two felt that it could be more comfortable, with more spacing between chairs needed and comfier seating being discussed.

***“The waiting room could be more comfortable with more comfortable chairs and better spacing...”***

One patient felt that the waiting area isn't conducive to patient dignity as patients are visible to all using the health centre ***“I preferred the urgent treatment centre waiting room separated [from the health centre] for more patient dignity...”***

One patient suggested that a coffee machine would be a good addition to the waiting area.

One patient stated that the reception area could be improved but was called into their appointment before they could expand on this.

## Do you receive information from the centre that is easy to understand?

All patients stated that they were happy with the communication from the centre ***“Yes, it's very clear”***.

# Staff feedback

At the time of the visit all staff were seen to be busy treating patients and it was deemed inappropriate to interrupt them whilst carrying out their duties. All staff spoken with briefly expressed pride in the services they provide and how they listen to patient feedback in order to continually improve services.



# Recommendations

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

1. Consider clearer signage for the Urgent Treatment Centre to reduce patient confusion on arrival
2. Investigate whether it would be feasible to reduce the reception desk height in order to allow for easier patient access whilst maintaining staff safety
3. Look at how to further communicate/promote the electronic NHS Streaming and Re-direction Tool process in order to minimise patients queuing to ask reception staff beforehand. This could be when pre-booking appointments and/or by clearer signage
4. Carry out the review of the waiting area as planned, and incorporate seating of varied types and heights in order to meet individual needs and requirements
5. Add more dementia friendly signage, especially for the accessible toilet, and look at contrasting toilet seat colours which would aid those with dementia/Alzheimer's
6. Continue to listen to, and share patient feedback by a 'You Said We Did' in the waiting area which will demonstrate services are actively listening to patient feedback and acting on it where possible

# Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe	Comments
Consider clearer signage for the Urgent Treatment Centre to reduce patient confusion on arrival	New signage to be ordered to read 'Morecambe Urgent Care Centre'	3 months as need to order and raise job with estates	CQC reg location to be updated to reflect this naming also so to cover UTC and OOH
Investigate whether it would be feasible to reduce the reception desk height in order to allow for easier patient access whilst maintaining staff safety	Job has been raised with estates with planned works w/c 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb.	1 week	Once the desk counter height has been reduced then will look into Perspex screens to allow some protection
Look at how to further communicate/promote the self-check-in process in order to minimise patients queuing to ask reception staff beforehand	The iPads are for all walk in pts to use (unless outside of criteria) – improved signage to state if got a pre booked appt to present to the desk directly and not use the iPad. Separation of pre booked / walk in's,	3 weeks	There is a sign directly above the iPad to state to only use if no pre booked appt however we could make it clearer and the recep should be encouraging pts waiting that have an appt to queue separately.
Carry out the review of the waiting area as planned, and incorporate seating of varied types and heights in order to meet individual needs and requirements	Review has been carried out and adequate / improved seating has been ordered.	3 weeks delivery	
Add more dementia friendly signage, especially for the accessible toilet, and look at contrasting toilet seat colours which would aid those with dementia/Alzheimer's	Explored this with Quality and Risk as feel a suggestion for the org. Nothing currently locally agreed / used however clinical manager exploring some resources.	1 – 2 months	
Continue to listen to, and share patient feedback by a 'You Said We Did' in the waiting area which will demonstrate services are actively listening to patient feedback and acting on it where possible	Planned to have this on the waiting room monitor along with QR codes, vacancies, entry points to the service, pharmacy 1 <sup>st</sup> promotion and x-ray opening times.	TBC	Advised to hold on monitors until all HW reviews are carried out to explore idea for other services also.



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