

Enter and View

Accident and Emergency Department Queen's Hospital Burton

16th April 2026



Healthwatch Staffordshire

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Report on Enter and View Visit Undertaken by Healthwatch Staffordshire on 16 April 2026

Service Visited:

Accident and Emergency Department
Queen's Hospital Burton
Belvedere Road Burton on Trent DE13 0RB
01283 566333

Authorised Representatives undertaking the visit:

David Bassett and Aresha Quazi

Purpose of the Visit:

As part of the Healthwatch Staffordshire's responsibilities, authorised representatives will carry out Enter and View visits to health and social care premises to assess how they are managed and to make recommendations for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 empowers authorised representatives to observe service delivery and speak with service users, their families, and carers at locations such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies. Enter and View visits may be conducted based on reports of issues with a service or to learn about and share examples of services that are performing well.

The Accident and Emergency Department has recently been visited by the Care Quality Commission and the Derbyshire Integrated Care Board Quality Team. To avoid duplication, the focus for this visit was therefore to:

- Look at the new layout to the department and the implications for patients.
- Raise questions we have received from members of the public.
- Listen to current patient experiences in the department, depending on circumstances on the day.
- Enquire about ambulance turn around delays.

- Enquire about the next phase of departmental structural alterations and how patient feedback can be considered in the design process.

Methodology

Prior to the visit we had received feedback from the East Staffordshire District Patient Participation Group and individual members of the public. We invited feedback from Derbyshire Healthwatch and West Midlands Ambulance Service.

On the day we met with the two Emergency Medicine Matrons who showed us around the Department and were able to answer our questions.

At the time of visiting, the department was very busy, the waiting area was full, and they had just received six ambulance patients in rapid succession. There was an atmosphere of calm efficiency in the department, but it was not appropriate to talk with individual patients at that time.

The Service:

Queen's Hospital Burton (QHB) is the main provider of acute hospital services for people in Burton upon Trent and nearby areas, including Southeast Staffordshire, South Derbyshire and Northwest Leicestershire. It serves a population of around 360,000 and is run by the University Hospitals of Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust (UHDB).

The Accident and Emergency Department provides a 24-hour emergency service to adults and children, treating on average 200 patients each day.

It provides onsite out-of-hours clinicians and state-of-the-art facilities, including:

- A recent £ 1.1 million Minor Injuries Department refurbishment including a new entrance and waiting area.
- Resuscitation room with 3 bays plus a children's resuscitation room.
- 22 Majors cubicles (where further investigations take place).
- Pit stop (a fast-tracking area for urgent cases where initial tests can be ordered)
- Plaster room.
- 3 Triage rooms where patients are streamed into the right care pathway.
- Paediatric minor injury / illness bay.
- A dedicated mental health consulting room.

Physical Environment:



As of December 2025, the patient entrance to the Emergency Department (A&E) at Queen's Hospital Burton moved to a new grey building. This new waiting room is located near the previous A&E site, with the entrance clearly marked after the rainbow canopy. The new area replaces the previous temporary arrangements, which were in place during building works.

The department is situated at the front of the hospital up a ramp and is well signposted. There is one dropping off point for patients arriving by car outside the department with other drop off points at the bottom of the ramp. The nearest car park is car park 3. We had been told by some patients before our visit that they had experienced some difficulties unloading relatives with mobility issues close to the entrance. There are other car parks on site and feedback from patients is that parking can be challenging at peak times.

The new entrance and waiting area are more spacious and lighter than the previous areas and have the benefit of air conditioning. Toilet facilities were well signposted and there was information of waiting times displayed on a TV screen on the wall. The rest of the department looked clean and well maintained.

There is a dedicated entrance for ambulance patients with the resuscitation bays immediately accessible.

Assessment on Arrival:

The department is working hard to minimise the time patients are waiting by starting initial assessments as soon as possible after arrival which then makes it possible to stream patients to the most appropriate treatment pathway based on individual need rather than them being placed in a linear queue. This was appreciated by people who had told us that they had recently used the service.

Waiting Room Triage – After reporting into the reception, walk in patients will initially be seen by a nurse in one of the triage rooms. Tests and treatment can be initiated so results will be available by the time the person is seen by a doctor or an emergency nurse practitioner. Patients who present as urgent will be fast tracked through to Pit Stop or Resuscitation depending on the severity of their symptoms.

Pit Stop – This is a dedicated, fast-assessment treatment area. It provides rapid evaluation, initial tests, and treatment for ambulance arrivals who do not need resuscitation and for urgent walk-in patients. This also helps to reduce ambulance turnaround times.

Resuscitation – This is the highest-intensity zone reserved for patients with life-threatening illnesses or severe injuries. It features specialized life-saving equipment, specialized medical teams, and constant monitoring.

Options for Onward Journey through the department:

On walking through the department, we could see how different areas were set aside for majors, minor injuries and illnesses. It was encouraging to see dedicated treatment facilities for children and an area dedicated to mental health. Prior to visiting we had heard from patients that the mental health support available from the Psychiatric Liaison Team at the hospital had been high quality.

We had a specific enquiry from patients about the availability of ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) and Ophthalmology cover out of hours. We learnt that there was no on-site cover although there was a link to the on-call doctors at Royal Derby Hospital, if required.

We had a further question from a carer seeking clarification about the department's policy on allowing relatives to sit with patients within the unit particularly during the night. We were told that carers are welcome and can provide invaluable support to the patient

We were also made aware of referral routes from Primary Care into the Surgical Assessment, Same Day Emergency Medical Assessment and the Paediatric Assessment Units on site that are all contributing to relieving the pressure on the Emergency Department.

Staffing:

The two matrons are responsible for managing the nursing component of emergency medicine on the Queen's Hospital site and the minor injuries units in Tamworth and Lichfield. (See Appendix for details).

A vacancy freeze in the Trust in the latter half of the 2025/26 financial year, to meet financial pressures, meant 25 vacancies out of 103 permanent nursing posts were frozen. They have since been released in the new financial year and are gradually being filled with steady interest reported. Although this had been an additional pressure the service had been maintained successfully through the winter period.

Future developments:

It is anticipated that there will be further building upgrades to the Emergency Department in due course and when these reach the planning stage there is a commitment to secure patient feedback into the design process.

Conclusion:

Bearing in mind that the department had recently had two external inspections and on the day was very busy, we limited our focus.

The visit was informative in highlighting the recent layout changes to the Emergency Department and successful in answering the questions patients had raised with us which we will feedback through the East Staffordshire District Patient Group. We will also publish this report on our website.

We would like to thank the matrons for making us welcome and express our appreciation of the calm, professional teamwork we saw during our visit.

Feedback from the Matron, Acute Medicine Business Unit

"Thank you to D and the Healthwatch team for pulling this together and for sharing it with us ahead of publication."

Appendix – Minor Injuries Units in Lichfield and Tamworth

The units offer a nurse-led service for those who have minor injuries or minor illnesses. They will usually be seen quicker than in a busy Emergency Department.

"I hurt my shoulder due to a fall. I went to Lichfield Minor Injuries Unit rather than Queen's Hospital A&E. I was seen, X-rayed and discharged in just under an hour."

Patients may be redirected to their GP or to an emergency department, if this would be the best and most appropriate healthcare for their condition.

Minor Injuries Unit in Lichfield

Samuel Johnson Community Hospital
Trent Valley Road
Lichfield
WS13 6EF

Telephone: [01283 566 333](tel:01283 566 333)

Opening hours: 8am – 9pm
(X-ray Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm only)

Minor Injuries Unit in Tamworth

Sir Robert Peel Community Hospital
Plantation Lane
Mile Oak
Tamworth
B78 3NG

Telephone: [01283 566 333](tel:01283 566 333)

Opening hours: 8am – 9pm
(X-Ray Monday to Sunday: 9am – 5pm)