

Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust

Rheumatology Service at The Minerva Health Centre

Patient Engagement Day

Contact details:

Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust
The Minerva Health Centre
Lowthorpe Road
Preston
PR1 6SB

Date and times of visits:

Thursday 10th November 2016 - 10am to 3pm

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives:

Aysha Desai (Lead Project Officer)
Linda Broomhead (Volunteer)

V3.1

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DISCLAIMER

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit, and is only representative of the views of the patients who met Healthwatch Lancashire representatives on that date.

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Introduction

Healthwatch Lancashire is committed to listening to patients and members of the public in Lancashire and making sure their views and experiences are heard by those who run, plan and regulate health and social care services. This is achieved through a core programme of work visiting health and social care services and speaking to service users.

In November 2015, the Care Quality Commission gave Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust an overall score of “requires improvement”, however in January 2017 this was upgraded to “Good” following improvements made over the last year. Following on from the changes made within the services, Healthwatch Lancashire felt a dedicated program of work was required to speak with people that have used its services. This part of the project has focused on speaking with patients and relatives using the rheumatology service at the Minerva Health Centre in Preston.

Methodology

The visit was arranged as part of Healthwatch Lancashire’s Patient Engagement Day schedule, with the aim of gathering patients’ views on accessibility and the quality of care provided. The team of project officers and volunteers speak with patients in the waiting room and record their feedback, which is later compiled into a report.

The report is sent to the Director of Nursing at the trust for validation of the facts and to provide a formal response. The response is included with the final version of the report which is published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at:

healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/reports

This report reflects the views of 20 patients that we spoke with at the Minerva Health Centre, however, not all surveys were completed in full. This is often due to the patient being called in to their appointment during the completion of the questionnaire. As such, the total number of people that answered each question will be detailed in brackets under the results of each question.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank the staff at the Minerva Health Centre for welcoming us during our visit.

The Patient Engagement Day at the Rheumatology department at the Minerva Health Centre took place on Thursday 10th November 2016. 20 patients shared their views.

Results - Access and Booking Appointments

1. We asked: 'How long have you been coming for appointments here?'

37% said less than one year **16%** said one and two years **47%** said more than two years

(19 patients answered)

2. We asked: 'How did you first get your appointment to come here?'

Referred by GP	Referred by hospital	Self-referred	Other
63%	37%	0%	0%

(19 patients answered)

3. We asked: 'How did you find the process of being referred?'

79% said they were happy with the process **21%** said there could be improvements

(19 patients answered)

Fifteen patients said that they had no problems during the process of being referred. Some of the comments made are listed below:

"Simple."

"Quick and good."

"No issues."

"Surprisingly quick."

"Straightforward."

"Very good, straightforward. I waited three months."

"Straightforward, the consultant moved here."

"Fine, it wasn't a long wait."

"The hospital and GP were all helpful. I had no concerns."

"It was straightforward and more convenient for me."

Negative or neutral comments about the process of being referred:

"It's been quite a long wait. It took two to four months but my GP said it might take a while."

"It has been slow, I have waited months."

"I have waited about four months or longer from referral."

"It was a bit slow. The referral took about five months before I got an appointment."

4. We asked: 'Do you like the facility?'

94% said Yes

0% said No

6% said Mostly

(18 patients answered)

Positive comments about the facility:

"Better than the hospital, it's easier to get to."

"It's better than the hospital."

"The facility closed in Chorley where I was using the service."

"Easy parking. I prefer this to the hospital."

"It's better than the hospital. Easy to get to and there is free parking with easy access."

"It is handy."

"Great."

"I live close by."

"I feel safer coming here than the hospital."

"It's much easier to come here than Royal Preston Hospital."

"It is easier to park here and it's free."

Negative comments about the facility:

"I have problems getting here on public transport. I live in Walton-le-Dale."

"My only issue is getting here and back home. It was easier to access Chorley Hospital from home."

"This service is further away from home than Royal Preston Hospital. I use public transport. It was easier to get to Preston. I have to catch two buses to get here."

5. We asked: 'Have you had any difficulties getting appointments for this service?'

27% said Yes

68% said No

5% said Sometimes

(19 patients answered)

Positive experiences of making appointments:

"I attend every eight weeks for tests and am recalled if there are any problems and sometimes informed on the same day. I see the consultant yearly."

"I get follow-on appointments."

"I have never had any difficulties getting appointments here."

"None what so ever."

"No I was referred, and now get follow-on appointments."

"I get follow-on appointments I attend every four weeks."

"They're great."

"I am happy with the service. It's better to have this special clinic for bloods rather than on general dates for tests. The appointment system avoids lengthy waits."

Negative or neutral experiences of making appointments:

"There were delays in getting appointments. My first appointment was in May and second one in November."

"There was some difficulty in getting first appointment."

"Only when I need to see the consultant but it's understandable."

"I am very disappointed that the occupational therapist went off sick at the time of the appointment so it has been put to the back of the queue. My appointment is now in January 2017."

Results - Quality of Care

6. We asked: 'How have you found the staff?'

100% said Happy with Staff **0%** said Happy with Most Staff **0%** said Unhappy with staff

(19 patients answered)

Positive comments that patients made about the staff:

"They are very friendly, I've never had a problem."

"I always see the same consultant."

"All the staff are excellent."

"The staff are really nice."

"You get to know them, and they're friendly."

"Very, very nice, they are helpful and happy."

"They've all been very friendly."

"The staff are excellent."

"Better than the hospital. It's more personal than the hospital as the staff have time to care."

"They look after patients."

"Fantastic and lovely staff."

7. We asked: 'Have you noticed a difference in your health since coming here?'

38% said Yes **31%** said No **31%** said they have noticed some difference

(13 patients answered)

Positive experiences of health improvement:

"Better."

"It's been fine. I have no problems. Bloods taken weekly and the results are sent to me. Any problems are pointed out and appropriate appointments are made."

"The medication and monitoring helped. I see the consultant at the Minerva Health Centre also on a regular basis."

"My hands have improved."

"I have had Improvement in pain management due to changes in drugs."

Neutral experiences of health improvement:

"It's too early to say as I've only been coming a few weeks."

"About the same."

"It has been 15 years and I have pretty much stayed the same."

"This is my first time visiting here, so far everything has been good."

"Not yet but I'm hoping to. I have ulcers between my toes so I'm having treatment and seeing the specialist today."

"My health has stayed the same."

"I have had difficulties as I can't take anything due to underlying heart condition."

8. We asked: 'Overall, how satisfied are you with the care provided?'

78% said Very Satisfied **22%** said Satisfied **0%** said Unsatisfied

(18 patients answered)

Positive experiences of care provided:

"More regular appointments have been great. If I have a problem, they explain things to me."

"Everyone has been great."

Negative experience of care provided:

"I used to be admitted to hospital a lot due to delays in getting blood test results."

9. We asked: 'Is there anything you think would improve this service?'

Some comments were made by patients which they felt would improve the service:

"I am confused with the parking spaces labelled R1, R2, R3, R4."

"Reinstate the cafe which is now not operating."

"There should be a clearer notice for people attending the blood clinic when it is not a drop-in service. There are leaflets here but people don't look and GPs are probably not informing patients."

Nine patients said they did not think the service could be improved. The following remaining comments were made:

"No. Even if I come early in the morning I don't have to wait long. The most I've waited is about ten minutes."

"No. The service is quick and efficient."

"No problems with anything."

"No. They are very professional and helpful."

"I am generally happy with the service."

(20 patients answered)

Healthwatch Lancashire Summary of Findings

Here is a summary of findings from the visit to the Rheumatology service at the Minerva Health Centre:

- The majority of patients had been attending rheumatology appointments for either less than one year or more than two years.
- The majority of patients were referred to the service by their GP and 37% were referred by a hospital.
- The majority of patients were happy with the process of being referred, although 21% felt improvements could be made with the waiting time.
- The majority liked the facility, with positive comments made about improved access and convenience as opposed to the previous location of hospital outpatient departments. A small percentage had some difficulties and raised issues about public transport and having to travel further than before.
- The majority of patients had no difficulties getting appointments for the service, although 27% did have difficulties and 5% had occasionally. All those with difficulties raised issues in waiting times and delays in appointments.
- All patients were happy with the staff, with positive comments made including staff being excellent and friendly.
- The majority of patients said they had noticed a positive difference in their health since attending appointments, although 31% had not.
- The majority of patients said they were very satisfied with the care provided and 22% said they were satisfied. None of the patients surveyed said they were unsatisfied.
- A small majority of patients felt improvements could be made with the service, including labelling within the car park, reinstating the café, and clearer notice for people attending the blood clinic when it is not a drop-in service.

Response from provider

Lancashire Care **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Action Statement

Rheumatology Service at the Minerva Health Centre

10th November 2016

No.	Issues Raised by Patients	Response or Action From Provider	To be Addressed by	Name of Manager Responsible
3.	Process of Referral	Lengths of waits have been longer than we would have liked. At the time of the visit typical waits were 10 weeks for urgent appointments and 16 weeks or more for routine appointments. We have worked to reduce waits recently by using additional doctor capacity. We have also identified slots to support people to access urgent advice when clinically necessitated. Currently waits for urgent appointments are between 2-3 weeks, while routine waits are approximately 3-4 weeks. In addition we have no waits for access to emergency appointments for suspected Giant Cell Arteritis and access to our extended scope physiotherapy led service.	March 2017	Carmel Jones
4.	The Facility	Our service operates across two sites and we provide clinics in our main site in Preston at the Minerva Health Centre and at the Euxton Centre in South Ribble. We offer a smaller service from our Euxton clinic but do offer two urgent appointments there a week, and we do offer follow up clinics for the doctors, nurses and occupational therapists. In addition, we also run our blood monitoring service at the site which patients can choose to access. We are currently reviewing our capacity to offer physiotherapy support at the site.	Ongoing	Carmel Jones
5.	Making Appointments	Lengths of waits have been longer than we would have liked. We have worked to reduce waits recently by using additional doctor capacity and as a result we have much improved access times. We have also identified slots to support people to access urgent advice when clinically necessitated.	March 2017	Carmel Jones
7.	Health	Our service is committed to supporting people living		

No.	Issues Raised by Patients	Response or Action From Provider	To be Addressed by	Name of Manager Responsible
	Improvement	with Rheumatological conditions to lead as active a life as possible. We support people to make informed choices regarding their care plans and where possible work with people to improve self-management of their condition.	-	-
8.	Experience of Care Provided	We are pleased that people felt they had maintained their health or had improved it. We continue to seek feedback from people who use our services to develop new ways of working. We have started to increase our use of patient reported experience measures with people accessing our therapists alongside the friends and family test.	Ongoing	Carmel Jones
9.	Improvements to Service	We are also disappointed that the café is no longer open. It was run by a charity who felt it was no longer viable to operate. We have made available some vending machines and a water cooler so drinks and snacks are available. We will review the signage for blood clinics to make it clearer where to go. We are sorry the numbering of the car park has caused some confusion. The numbering system is operated by Preston North End Football Club only for match days where parking can be reserved. On clinic days there are a number of disabled car parking spaces available. All our car park spaces are free of charge.	March 2017	Jo Blofield

Additional questions:

1. Is the report factually accurate? If not, please state what needs to be changed and why

There are no factual inaccuracies noted.

2. Have you learnt anything new about the experiences of your patients as a result of this exercise?

Reaffirmed how valuable our service is to the community we serve

3. What was your impression of Healthwatch Lancashire during this exercise? Do you think they could have done anything better?

Overall positive experience, we welcome feedback

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank all members of the public who shared their valuable feedback with us during our engagement activities at the Minerva Health Centre.

All of our intelligence is shared with the Care Quality Commission and commissioners and is used to inform our projects and programmes of work.

All reports can be found online at www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk/reports