



**Oxford Breast Imaging Centre
Churchill Hospital**

**Enter and View Report
December 2025**

healthwatch
Oxfordshire

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Visit details

Service	
Service Name	Oxford Breast Imaging Centre
Service Address	Churchill Hospital Old Road Headington Oxford OX3 7LE
Service Provider	Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH)
Date and Time of Visit	30th Sept 2025 10am-1pm
Authorised Representatives	Amier Alagab Katharine Howell
Visit Status	Announced visit
Contact details	Healthwatch Oxfordshire Office F20 Elmfield House New Yatt Road Witney Oxfordshire OX28 1GT T: 01865 520520

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff; it is merely an account of observations and contributions made at the time of the visit.

About Healthwatch Oxfordshire

Healthwatch Oxfordshire works to make sure NHS and social care leaders, and other decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve health and social care services. We can also provide you with reliable and trustworthy information and advice about local health and care services. We are an independent charity.

What is Enter and View?



Healthwatch Oxfordshire gathers information on people's experiences of using health and care services. One of the ways we do this is by visiting places where publicly funded health and care services are being delivered. This enables us to see and hear how those services are being provided.

These visits are called **Enter and View** visits and can be announced or unannounced. In an announced visit we will work with the service provider to agree the visit. As the local Healthwatch for Oxfordshire, we have statutory powers under the Health and Care Act 2012, and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, to carry out Enter and View visits to local health and care services.

Enter and View visits are carried out by a team of trained and DBS checked volunteers and staff. We call these our authorised representatives. We use what we hear and see on the day of our visit to report to providers and others with recommendations to inform change for the health and care services we visit. Enter and View visits are not an inspection and will always have a purpose.

Purpose of the visit

- To observe how the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre operates and provides its services.
- To collect views from patients and staff on the service.
- To identify 'Best Practice' and highlight any areas of concern.
- To report what we observe and hear about the quality of the services.

Strategic drivers

- These Healthwatch Oxfordshire Enter and View visits are part of a programme of visits to a range of services within Oxfordshire.
- These visits were planned and implemented in 2025 – 2026 with full support of OUH.

Summary of findings

During our visit to the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre at the Churchill Hospital we heard from five patients and eleven members of staff.

Signage and information



The Oxford Breast Imaging Centre is clearly signposted from the hospital's main entrance. It is indicated on the hospital map on the right-hand side as you enter the hospital, as well as by a sign navigating patients and visitors to the unit via the coffee shop. The centre opening times were on display at the main centre entrance.

As the centre is specialised in breast imaging all the information and leaflets on display are related to breast care.

The following information was on display on the day of our visit:

- Translated information and leaflets at the reception.
- How to book an interpreter poster.
- Information about mammography for carers and comforters.
- How to give OUH feedback or raise a concern.
- Infection prevention and control information.
- Information about general health and wellbeing.
- Radiation safety and clinical governance board.
- Health and safety information.
- Poster indicating the availability of hearing loop if needed.
- Board in the staff room displaying thanks from patients
- Sign in reception asking people to stand back to respect each other's confidentiality.
- Healthwatch Oxfordshire poster.

The general environment



The centre was clean and tidy; the waiting area was airy with different sizes of colourful chairs available. There was a water fountain in the patient waiting area. There was clear internal signage to help and support patients to find their way around. We observed two different coloured waiting areas, blue and yellow, which were allocated to help patients get to the designated appointment room.

On the day we visited the centre was quiet, with pleasant music playing in the reception area. A hearing loop device was available at the reception desk. There was a big waiting room adjacent to the reception in addition to the blue and yellow patient's waiting areas, in which information and leaflets were on display.

The décor was pleasant, with soft pink and purple hues, floral and textile artwork and plants, creating a gentle and welcoming ambiance throughout the space. While the furniture was in good condition, there are some noticeable scratches and marks on the floor and paintwork in certain areas, which slightly contrast with the otherwise well-maintained interior.







Patient and staff feedback



The patients we spoke to during our visit expressed high levels of satisfaction with the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre. They commended the professionalism, compassion and responsiveness of the staff. Overall, they told us that they felt well cared for and appreciated the quality of care provided throughout their entire visit to the centre.

The staff team is very dedicated, and the team members we spoke to said they felt supported in their career growth and training. This helps them to improve their skills and confidence and makes them happier in their jobs, and more likely to stay.

Recommendations

-  Display a welcome sign in the entrance to the centre to create a more inviting and friendly atmosphere for visitors.
-  Explore ways to build awareness of the breast imaging service within the community to promote earlier detection and treatment, including awareness that those over 71 can continue to book screening appointments.
-  Provide entertainment, such as magazines or a television, in the waiting areas to help patients relax while waiting.
-  Explore potential to develop a pilot to enable patients to call and book appointments to see if this method of booking appointments would reduce the number of 'no shows'.
-  Continue to address parking and transport issues to help alleviate patient and staff concerns and to ensure that there are sufficient, accessible spaces available for everyone who needs to visit the hospital.
-  The Care Quality Commission report should be displayed as per [the Health and Social Care Act 2028 regulations](#).

Service response to recommendations



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Tel: 01865 221383

Enter and View Draft Report – Oxford Breast Imaging Centre

Dear Healthwatch Team,

Thank you for visiting the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre at the Churchill Hospital and providing us with your report and recommendations. We are pleased to hear that you felt welcomed.

We are grateful for the recommendations you have made, and the department have reflected on your feedback to celebrate the excellent work already being done, and to identify areas for improvement. As a result, we are committed to developing a clear and concise action plan to ensure the required improvements are made, whilst continuing to deliver high standards of care for our patients.

Kindly find our response to your recommendations below:

Recommendation: Display a welcome sign in the entrance to the centre to create a more inviting and friendly atmosphere for visitors.

Response: This has been actioned, and a sign is now at the entrance to the department.

Recommendation: Explore ways to build awareness of the breast imaging service within the community to promote earlier detection and treatment, including awareness that those over 71 can continue to book screening appointments.

Response: We are working on this currently but will continue to do so. We are leafleting in the areas that we are screening, and liaising with GP practices. All those approaching 71 are sent a text and handed a leaflet to let them know screening is continued and they can self-refer for as long as they would like (every 3 years).

Recommendation: Explore potential to develop a pilot to enable patients to call and book appointments to see if this method of booking appointments would reduce the number of 'no shows.'

Response: We offer timed appointments as per national guidance. During covid recovery, many units in England adopted this method and uptake of screening was severely affected. The Thames Valley kept with timed appointments and uptake was not affected. Nationally the programme has gone back to all timed appointments. DNA's are reduced by sending text message reminders and second timed appointments. We use a smart booking system that predicts the likelihood of attendance and utilises capacity by overbooking slots on historical information about behaviour. Our uptake rate is currently one of the highest in England at 74.7%.

Recommendation: Continue to address parking and transport issues to help alleviate patient and staff concerns and to ensure that there are sufficient, accessible spaces available for everyone who needs to visit the hospital.

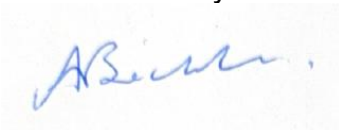
Response: Parking remains an ongoing Trust-wide challenge, and the Trust is actively working to manage this issue.

We continue to escalate all patient transport-related issues to our current service providers and concerns are logged via the Ulysses system and followed up by email correspondence with the relevant teams.

Recommendation: Ensure the Care Quality Commission report is displayed in line with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 regulations.

Response: At the time of your visit this was not in place. This will be rectified immediately.

Yours sincerely



Aletha Bicknell
Head of Patient Experience

Report

Methodology

When organising an announced Enter and View we follow the steps below:

- **Plan:**
 - Appoint an Enter and View lead for the visit.
- **Communicate:**
 - Inform the provider of the visit, and relevant details including the purpose, date, time, estimation of how long it will take, how many people will be carrying out the visit, and the name of the lead person.
 - Prepare visit posters including the purpose of the visit, time and date, and dispatch these to the provider for display, so that people using the service are clear why the visit is taking place.
 - Include information about how members of the public can contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire if they are not able to when the visit is taking place.
- **Prepare:**
 - Prepare resources such as surveys and questionnaires.
 - Identify any requirements for special support necessary to facilitate the visit such as access or security. This must be done before the visit, as you may be refused entry.
 - Meet with the service provider before the visit.
- **Report:**
 - On completion of the visit a draft report is shared with the service provider requesting comments on factual accuracy and responses to any recommendations within 7 – 20 working days.
- **Follow up:**
 - The final report is published on Healthwatch Oxfordshire's website and shared with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and service provider.

The visit took place from 10am to 1pm on 30th September 2025, with two trained Enter and View representatives.

During the visit, the team were able to spend time observing the daily work of the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre, noting the general environment, such as cleanliness, comfort, and information displays, and to speak to both patients and staff.

About Oxford Breast Imaging Centre



The Oxford Breast Imaging Centre is run by Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) and located in the Churchill Hospital main building, at the ground floor on the right side via the coffee shop.

In England, breast screening is currently offered to women every three years (and some trans and non-binary people as appropriate) from the age of 50 up to their 71st birthday. Those with a family history of certain cancers may

also be invited before the age of 50.

Women invited for a breast screening have an X-ray (mammogram) at a clinic or mobile breast screening unit. The Oxford Breast Imaging Centre is staffed by an all-female team who provide breast screening across Oxfordshire. Women may also be invited to the centre for follow-up screening following their routine screening or via a referral from a GP or the symptomatic breast clinic.

More details about Oxford Breast Imaging Centre and the services they offer can be found at the following link: <https://www.ouh.nhs.uk/services/departments/radiology/churchill-radiology/breast-screening/>

Our visit



During our visit, we were welcomed by administrative staff at the reception and then by the Mammography Modality Manager, who explained about the services offered. We had a tour around the building and then proceeded with the visit.

On the day of our visit, we engaged with five patients and eleven members of staff.

Access and signage

The signage guiding patients from the hospital's main entrance was very clear, with a hospital map on display on the right-hand side navigating people to all hospitals department. It is easy for patients to navigate directly to the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre via the coffee shop.

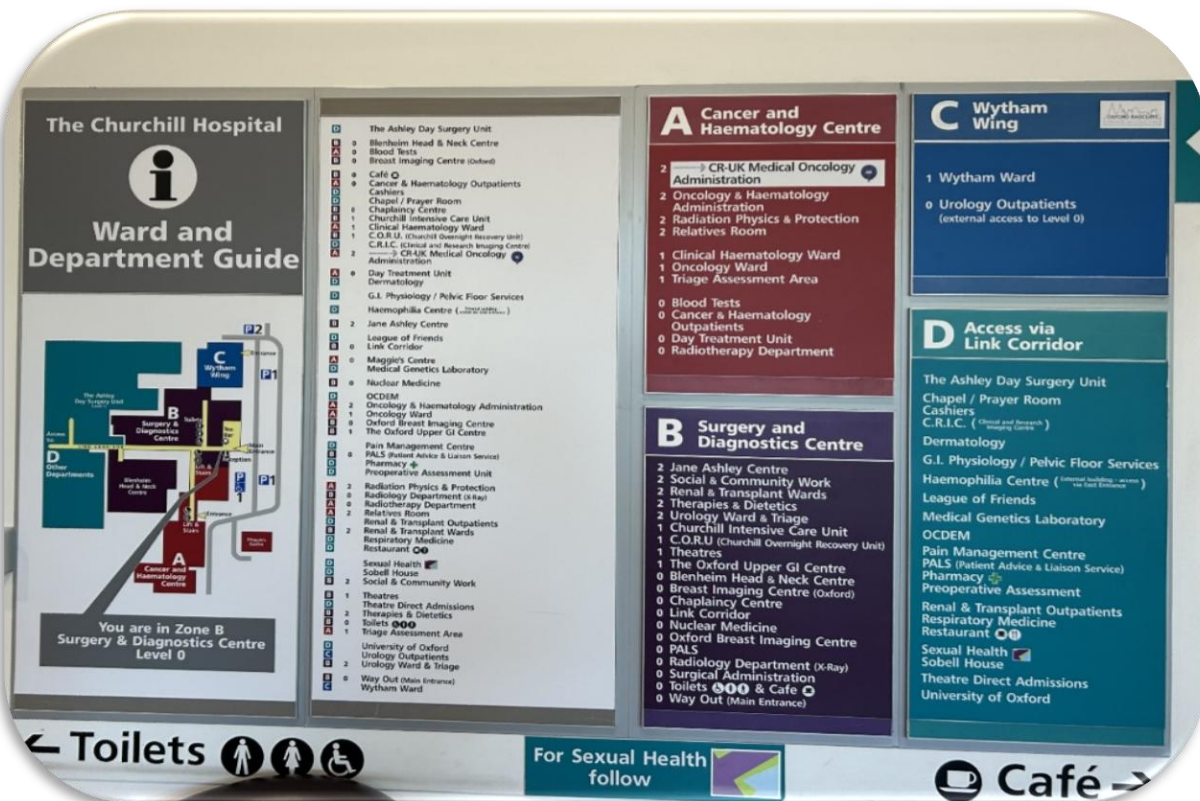
The centre opening hours were on display which is essential for patients and visitors.

The centre environment

The atmosphere in the Breast Imaging Centre was calm; the staff were welcoming and interactions between staff and patients seemed friendly. There was a water fountain in the patients main waiting area at the centre, and there were two other small waiting areas.

The hospital in general, including the entrance and the Breast Imaging Centre, was very clean and tidy. The toilets were clean, and the staff room was well established with good facilities.

The clinic or diagnosis rooms were equipped with all the facilities needed to provide the best service.



Hospital map



The opening hours on display at the main entrance. There was no welcome sign at the main entrance or at the reception or the main waiting area.



Main waiting area

The patients' main waiting area was very clean, with different sizes and colours of seats, a water fountain available and display boards with a variety of information. At the reception desk there was a sign telling patients about the hearing loop, and a notice informing people to respect patient confidentiality by standing back until called.



Reception

The reception was staffed, and we saw the staff warmly greeting patients upon their arrival, offering clear directions to the appropriate seating areas to ensure patients knew exactly where to wait. When it was time for their appointment, staff members personally accompanied each patient to the clinical rooms to provide additional support and guidance throughout the process.

The centre has three different waiting areas: the main room adjacent to the reception and two others coloured (blue and yellow) inside the centre to allow patients to wait near the clinic room where they will have their appointment.



The waiting rooms were tidy, with some information on display and different sizes of chairs. The main waiting room had a radio and magazines for patients. The other two waiting rooms had radios which were switched off during the morning clinics. Ahead of the afternoon clinic, one of the nurses switched on one of these radios to help distract and reassure anxious patients.

The centre has a quality management department to carry out quality improvement process and implement new Trust policies.

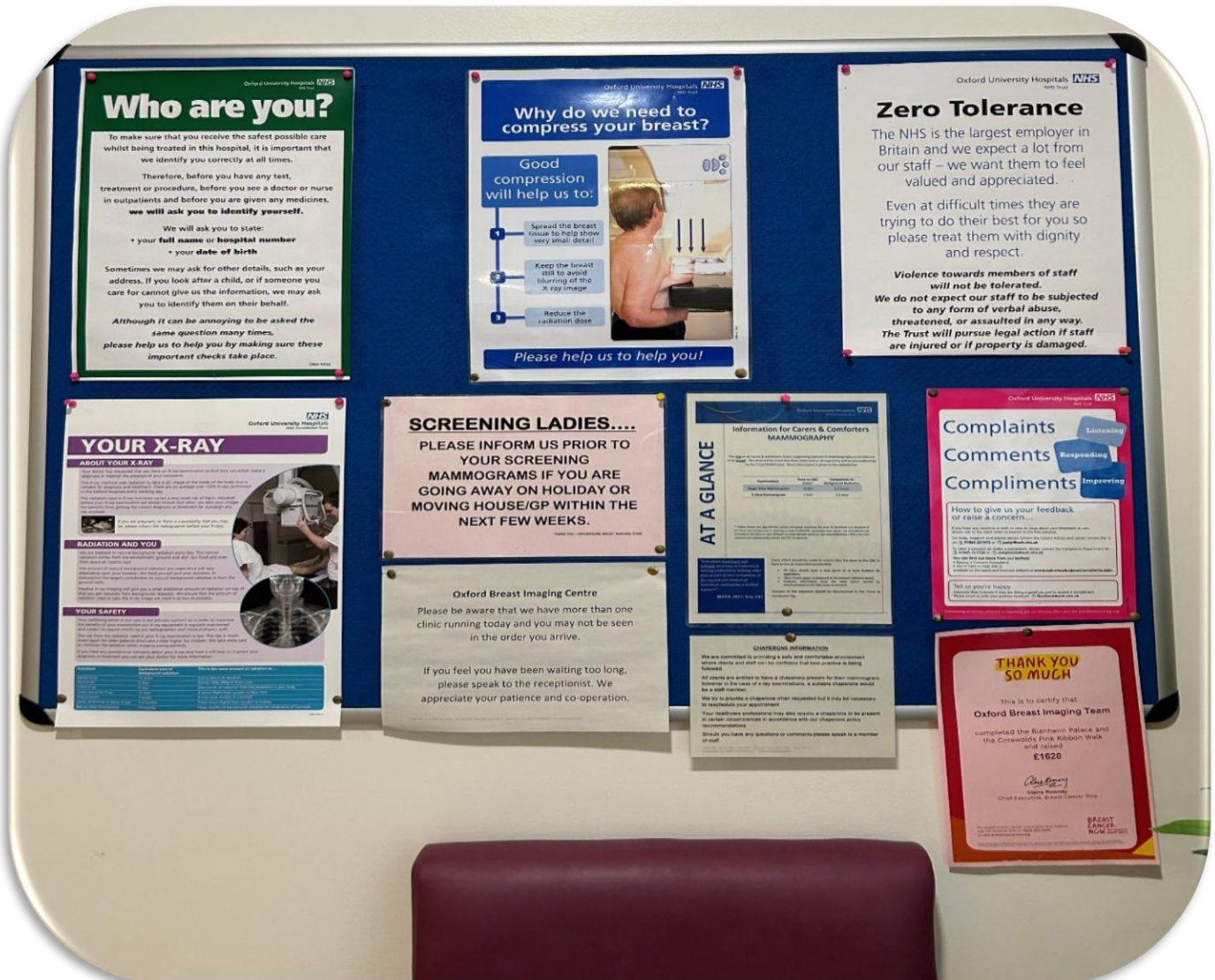


A quality poster displayed on internal door.

Information on display

The Oxford Breast Imaging Centre had on display a variety of information materials and leaflets about the imaging service, the technology used and what patients can expect during their visit.

These specialised materials are designed to ensure clarity and accessibility, supporting patients to be informed about what will happen during their visit.



Information on display

The centre provides information about breast care and self-checking in several different languages at the reception.



Translated materials

There was no suggestion box in the centre, but the complaints policy, and information on how to give feedback or raise a concern, was clearly on display.





Leaflets on display

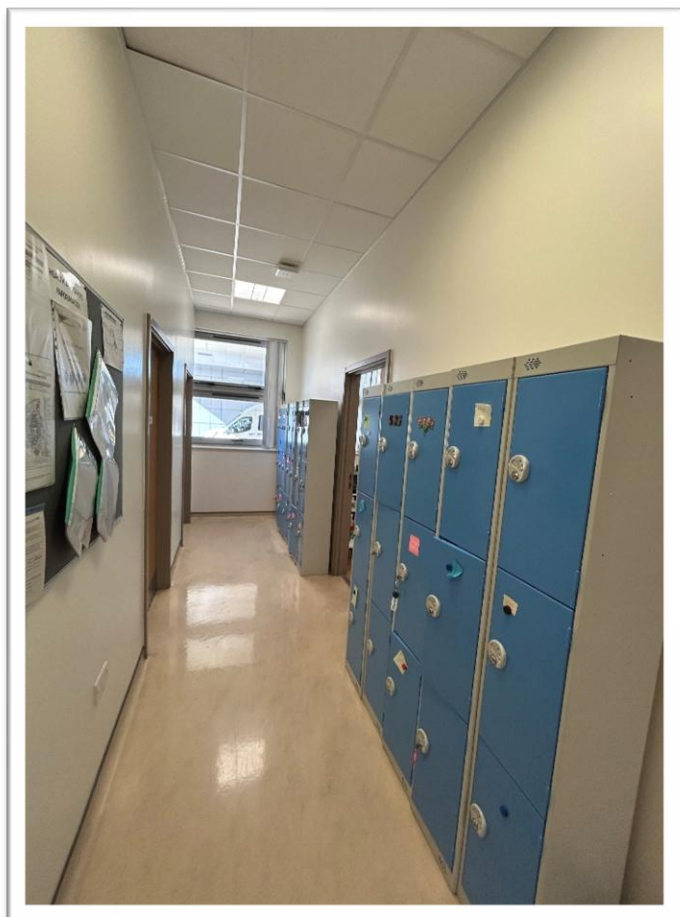
There was a range of leaflets on display to keep patients informed about the imaging process and different breast conditions. Posters were also prominently displayed in the centre providing information on coronavirus precautions and safety measures.

There was also guidance for carers and comforters who were supporting someone during their mammography, and clear details about the availability of face-to-face and online interpreter booking services to support effective communication.

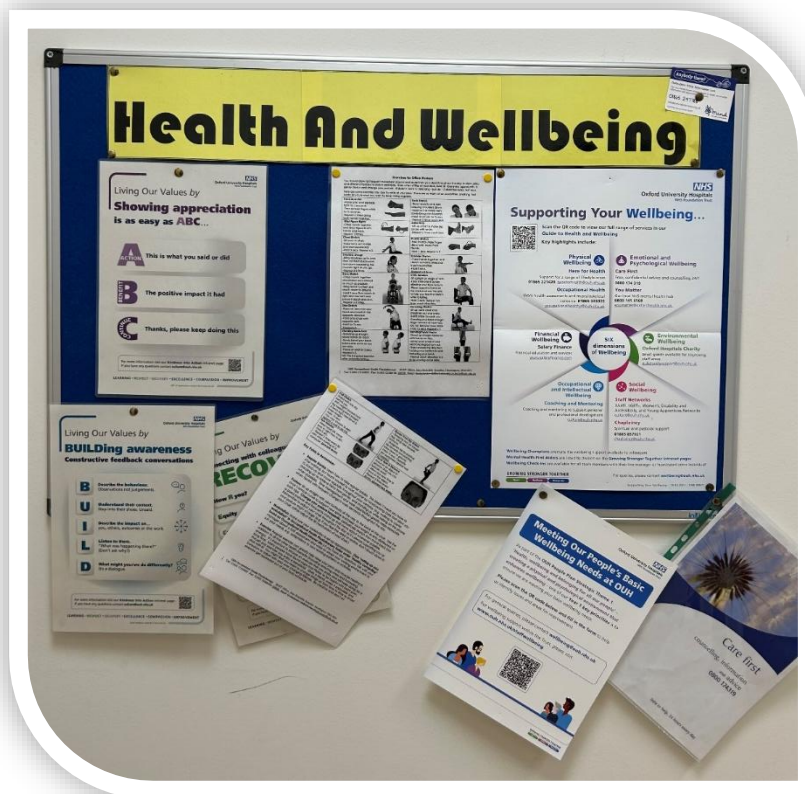


Leaflets and information

The staff room well maintained with good facilities, a health and wellbeing board and thank you cards from patients on display.



Staff room



Health and wellbeing board

Summary of patients and staff feedback

Patients feedback

During the visit to the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre , we spoke to five patients. The age range of the patients' we spoke to was between 25 and 79 years old. Two identified as White British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh, one Indian and one White, other.

We asked patients to tell us about accessing the department. The patients said they were aware of the services available and why they were here. We heard praise for the efficiency of the service provided and the staff. Some patients had experienced challenges and delays with parking.

What we heard from patients included:

'The lady in reception guided me well to the waiting area, I was told the wait would be roughly half an hour. I found this unit OK, but renal outpatients [for the breast clinic] was hard to find.'

'We got lost finding the renal transplant unit, hard to find from the car, we went upstairs, and then got sent to the wrong place, but then a nurse walked us to the right place. It was fine finding the breast screening unit from there.'

'I came here from the breast clinic, at the breast clinic I had to wait a bit which creates the anxiety. The staff all seemed fine.'

'Great that you can get an appointment here straight after the breast clinic. We were waiting about an hour in the unit.'

'I went to A&E a week ago and they referred me to renal who I saw this morning, and they referred me here. My appointment was half an hour late, but they apologised. The only thing I would say is that the reception table was kind of falling apart. I thought I would be here for five hours, but it will be more like two. We usually have private healthcare, but this experience has been really nice.'

'I was a bit surprised that I had to have this appointment, it's like a pre-pre-op, I have a phone pre-op and a face-to-face pre-op as well. It's for a minor lumpectomy but all these appointments make it feel bigger than it is.'

When we asked the patients about how the staff addressed and managed their individual needs, we heard responses such as:

'All the staff are really nice, it makes you feel more relaxed. They are probably really busy, but they make you feel like they have time for you.'

'The lady at the front desk here was really chirpy, she made us laugh with a little joke.'

(We also observed clinical staff greeting the person in a friendly way and making clear her companion could come too if she wanted.)

'Reception staff were friendly and efficient. Everyone has been really, really kind. The staff communicate with each other – you're expected when you arrive somewhere.'

We asked patients to tell us about their care and the information they received during their visit.

Patients said they appreciated the care and support provided by the team members. The patients we spoke to said:



'It's been all good. The receptionist, medical team, and everyone have been polite. They gave me good advice and information and explained things clearly.'

'All been efficient, the staff are pleasant.'

'Staff are always lovely and supportive and can't fault them.'

'The reception staff here are very pleasant and always have been great and supportive.'



We asked patients if they knew about how to give feedback and complaints

Most people we spoke to were happy about the service and said they wouldn't have any complaints.

'I wouldn't know how to complain.'

'Normally get sent a text.'

'We saw a compliments, comments and complaints poster in A&E.'

When we asked the patients about any improvement required in the centre we heard:

'It's good, not too packed at the moment – it might feel cramped if there were more people as there's many chairs.'

Staff feedback

We received feedback and comments from eleven members of staff on the day, representing a cross-section of roles. A positive attitude was consistently expressed by staff members about their work, their interactions with patients, and the high standard of care they provide. Their positivity collectively fostered a supportive and welcoming environment within the centre, and we were informed by all staff that they had received all the essential and required training necessary for them to effectively manage their roles.

What is the best thing staff said about the job?

Staff indicated that they are satisfied with their jobs. We heard:

'Job structure. I know what is expected from me every day.'

'Being autonomous.'

'Providing professional and efficient administration service, as part of breast screening using my experience, skills, and knowledge, being able to help patients ensuring that they receive the best care and service.'

'The patients that I meet. Though our interaction is brief in time, I try to make the lady feel relaxed and comfortable, it's great to see an anxious lady relax and say, 'that was not as bad as I thought it would be'.

'Mentoring, coaching, empowering the trainee staff. Feeling like I make a difference. Troubleshooting morale issue/conflict resolution, working as a close team to support breast health for Oxfordshire women.'

'Seeing people achieve success and reach their goals.'

What are the challenges staff raised?

We asked about any frustrations or challenges that staff might experience in their work and the service they provide. Comments we heard included:



'Mostly lack of communication, not always but unfortunately happens often, and sometime feeling unappreciated. (workload) and showing work equality in team advice.'

'Slow operating systems. Clients not understanding how the system works.'

'When people do not turn up to appointments but did not call to let us know they couldn't make it. We could have used that appointment for someone else.'

'Sometimes going to our breast screening mobile units, we go to different locations and sometimes it is very far from home.'

'When ladies do not realise that over the age of 71 yrs, they could have self-referred for a mammogram, but they did not know they could have, and then we see them at the symptomatic clinic with a symptom.'

'Conflicting schedules, managing clinics / service with peoples shift preferences trust setting unachievable targets.'



We asked staff if they would raise concerns? We heard:

'I think I can raise concerns or make suggestions, but know hands are tied by higher up decision makers/national guidance that governs our systems.'

'Yes, we have monthly departmental meetings, our manager updates us of any changes, and we are given chance to raise anything.'

'Yes, my manger is so supportive and always listens.'

'Yes, always, we have monthly meetings where each voice is heard, and suggestions/new ideas are explored. Our manager tries very hard to accommodate our requests.'

'Sometimes, but I don't see any changes so far.'

We asked how staff thought the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre and service they provide could be improved? We heard:

'Not specifically related to this department, but more parking i.e. another level (mezzanine) would help patients. They worry about being late and not be able to find a space.'

'To wear appropriate clothing for the role.'

'The screening service could be improved by inviting patients to their appointments by asking them to call in to book an appointment. Currently we automatically give an appointment that may not be convenient and then they do not turn up. If it was so that they book, I think they are more likely to attend.'

'Sometimes it feels like the of time allocated to a mammogram is short, can feel like a production line, patients can feel anxious, so it's not nice to rush them. Inevitable in the NHS to fill clinics and maximise capacity, but some patients require more time; 7 minutes are not always enough to build rapport, gain their trust and describe and carry out procedure.'

'Better access for transport patients, additional clinics in ultrasound to increase capacity, but staffing restricts this.'

'Increase staffing in line radiologist team, and additional new rooms but no space for it.'

'Online booking for breast screening and more flexible hours.'

* The picture on the report front cover was displayed at the Oxford Breast Imaging Centre.



If you would like a paper copy of this report or would like it in a different format or language, please get in touch with us:

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