

Patient feedback report

Urology department – New Cross Hospital

June 2023

About Healthwatch Wolverhampton

Healthwatch Wolverhampton gives citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social services are provided within Wolverhampton. It is set apart from the statutory structures, voluntary and community sector it works within, as it performs public functions, delivers statutory duties, and receives public funding. Its core purpose is to make sure that the views of the public shape the health and care services they need.

What we did:

Between the 24th-26th May 2023, Healthwatch Wolverhampton (HWW) attended the urology department (A31) at New Cross Hospital. We had been asked by the Health Scrutiny Panel to enquire about people's experiences of the urology services and whether they had been impacted by Walsall and Wolverhampton's merging of the service. The feedback would then be used to discern whether the merging of services has proved beneficial to patients or not and to identify if change is required to address any negative feedback received.

Attendees:

In attendance were:

- Engagement Officer: Hina Rauf
- Volunteer Officer: Andrea Cantrill

HWW volunteers:

- Claire Brewer
- Tracey Hubball
- Winifred Onwuka

Survey:

We created a short survey to provide structure to our conversations (see Appendix).

Our survey focused on three main areas: **demographics**, **patient experience** of the service itself (focusing on the merger), and **travel** to the department. An additional space was included for patients to share any other thoughts they had.

Findings:

A total of **38 surveys** were conducted via a conversational method of feedback collection. The process involved engaging with patients and their friends/family members before they were called in for their appointments. The number of patients present each day was determined by the nature of the appointments. Less time was

spent with fast-track patients, whereas on other occasions, in-depth conversations were had with other patients.

Demographics:

By age group:

- 21-25 years- 2 patients
 - 26-30 years- 1 patient
 - 31-35 years- 1 patient
 - 50-55 years- 2 patients
 - 56-60 years- 4 patients
 - 61-65 years- 2 patients
 - 66-70 years- 7 patients
 - 71-75 years- 4 patients
 - 76-80 years- 7 patients
 - 81-85 years- 5 patients
 - 86-90 years- 1 patient
 - 91-95 years- 1 patient
 - 1 person did not respond
- Males accounted for the majority of patients seeking treatment for urology related health concerns. We spoke with **24 male** patients and **12 female**. **2 people did not answer**
 - White British was the most prevalent ethnic background with **29** patients identifying as white British. **1** patient identified as black British and **1** as black Caribbean. **2** patients identified as Asian. **5** did not respond to this question
 - In terms of postcode, **24** patients were from the **WV** postcode, **9** from the **WS** area code, **1** patient from **Halesowen (B6)** and **2** patients from **Stourbridge (ST)**. **2** did not respond

Patient experience:

Patients were asked to rate their experience of the urology services at New Cross Hospital based on a scale which ranged from: very good, good, satisfactory, bad, or very bad.

- **Twenty two** patients stated their experience was **good**. For some individuals it was their first visit to the department. Many patients who rated the department as `good` also stated that they would prefer not to go to Walsall Manor.
 - 'Happy with care, wouldn't go to Walsall area.'
 - 'First appointment here.'
 - 'Good treatment.'
 - 'Knew where to come and journey was easy.'
 - 'Unclear signposting, couldn't find A31 and nurse shouted at us.'
- **Six people** said they had a **very good** experience. Parking was however picked up as an area for improvement.

'First time, pathway has been good, referral picked up quickly.'

'Parking time, you must allow extra because you don't know how much time you'll need.'

'Staff are always pleasant, helpful, and knowledgeable and the building is in good condition.'

- **Seven** people said their experience was **satisfactory**. Parking was mentioned here too.

'Easy enough to get to.'

'Parking was a nightmare, have been round and round, finally found a parking space.'

'We have a blue badge so could park on double yellow lines; this is easier than finding a parking space.'

- **One** person said their experience was **very bad**. They made the following comments.

'Hard to find, no wheelchair access in some areas.'

'Signposting should be better, better access, better parking.'

'Let patients know beforehand that they will need to provide a sample.'

Travel:

- When asking people how easy or difficult they found locating the urology department within the hospital, **the majority stated that it was not easy to find**. Parking was a recurring topic of conversation as many individuals could not find parking. This meant that patients were left alone in the waiting room while their family member(s)/partner were finding an appropriate parking space.
- Patients were asked if they had knowledge on a patient transport service that is provided by New Cross Hospital. The majority of individuals spoken to said that they **had not used the transport service themselves, so are unaware of its existence**. However, they do think that the hospital should provide transport for patients.
- One woman stated that she knows a transport service exists because her mother has used it before when she has been discharged from hospital. A patient who was not aware of the transport service stated that travel could be improved if the hospital provided a shuttle bus for patients.
- Most people travelled to the hospital by car rather than public transport.

Main themes:

- **Parking:** This was the main cause for concern and a major issue. This was due to people being unable to find a parking space. The cost of parking was also mentioned as it is very expensive.

'Parking is appalling'

'Parking, no space'!

'Had to park at Bentley Bridge.'

A small number of patients said they didn't have a problem finding the department or finding a space to park.

- **Location of appointments:** Some patients/family members stated that the consistency of appointments in terms of location had been problematic with appointments being across both locations, whereas a few people stated that it had not been a problem and they had been seen at one location rather than changing between.

'Happy that I don't have to travel to multiple hospitals.'

- **Lack of awareness that services had combined:** It seemed that most patients were unaware that Wolverhampton and Walsall urology services are combined. This had not been communicated to them. For some individuals, it was their first appointment.
- **Hospital preference:** Some individuals stated that they would prefer to be seen at New Cross Hospital rather than Walsall Manor Hospital.
- **Suggested improvements:** When asked about improvements patients felt could be made, the most common answer to this was **parking spaces**. However, one individual stated that they felt improvements had already been made:

'Service has been improved - I can call secretary for reassurance.'

- **Waiting times for appointment:** Wait times for appointments was also mentioned as people remain unaware of how long they will have to wait, this can impact people's personal lives. **Some people waited a very long time to be seen.** One woman mentioned that she had to get back to work afterwards.

Final comments and recommendations:

Overall, we found that patient experience was varied. Although, most people had a good experience of care, travel to the hospital, finding the ward and parking remains a concern. Most people were unaware of the merger occurring at the time we spoke to them.

We suggest the following actions to address people's concerns:

- Better signage after reaching the A29 and A30 zone, with clear directions to urology.

- More education and information that the service is combined.
 - More information on alternative parking.
 - More information about the shuttle service.
 - More information to patients pre-appointment, outlining what to expect at the appointment, for example to bring urine samples and information to manage expectations on waiting times.
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For more information:

Contact Healthwatch Wolverhampton:

Website: www.healthwatchwolverhampton.co.uk/

Call: **0800 246 5018** between the hours of 09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday.

Email: info@healthwatchwolverhampton.co.uk

Post: Healthwatch Wolverhampton, Regent House, Second Floor, Bath Avenue, Wolverhampton, WV1 4EG

Appendix – Survey questions

See below.

Urology department survey:

Brief introduction explaining that you are a volunteer with HWW and what HWW as a service do.

Demographics:

1. What is your age? (Please circle)

18-20 21-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45 50-55 56-60 61-65 66-70 71-75
76-80 81-85 86-90 91-95 96+

2. What is your gender? (Please circle)

Male Female Other Prefer not to say

3. What is your ethnic background?

4. What is your postcode?

Patient experience:

5. How would you describe your experience of the urology services at the hospital based on the following scale? (Please circle)

Good Very good Satisfactory Bad Very bad

6. Since the services have been combined, would you describe your experience of the service as better or worse?

7. What do you think is better or worse?

8. What is different now to before?

9. In what ways do you think the urology service could be improved?

Travel:

On a scale of 1 – 10 (1 being the easiest and 10 the most difficult) – please rate the following:

10. Locating the urology department within the hospital **(Please circle)**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. Travel to the department (by car) **(Please circle)**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. Travel to the department (via public transport) **(Please circle)**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13. Do the hospital services provide transport services? (Please circle)

YES

NO

14. Could travel to the hospital (urology department) be improved? (Please circle)

YES

NO

15. In what ways could the travel to the hospital (urology department) be improved and why?

Any final comments:
