

HEALTHWATCH MEDWAY: REPORT ON PATIENT EXPERIENCE AT MEDWAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST 2013/2014

Purpose of the report

To provide an overview of Healthwatch Medway activity during 2013-2014 in relation to understanding the patient/consumer experience in connection with the provider Medway NHS Foundation Trust.

Role of Healthwatch Medway

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 set up Healthwatch as the new consumer champion to give citizens and communities stronger influence over the health and care services provided in their locality. The Act itself outlines two forms of Healthwatch. Healthwatch England, which was established in October 2012 by the Care Quality Commission; and local Healthwatch organisations; which started on 1 April 2013, and were based in upper-tier and unitary local authority areas in England.

When awarding the local Healthwatch Medway contract, a decision was taken by Medway Council to award the three functions of 'local' Healthwatch to two different providers – SEAP (who would provide the complaints advocacy function for NHS services) and Medway Citizens Advice Bureau (who would provide local Healthwatch functions of information & signposting, and the promotion of citizen engagement) commencing in April 2013.

This briefing provides an overview of Healthwatch Medway's activity during 2013 – 2014 in relation to understanding the patient/consumer experience pertaining to the provider Medway NHS Foundation Trust.

Defining Patient (consumer) Experience

'Transforming Participation within Health and Care -The NHS Belongs to Us All'(DH 2013) defines patient experience as "a term used for individual and collective feedback - about experiences of care or a service". In the most simplistic of terms, from the perspective of a patient/consumer, patient experience can be described as the following "this is what happened to me and this is how I feel about it".

Healthwatch Medway is uniquely positioned in Medway to understand patient/consumer experiences as it actively collects from Medway individual citizen's experience of health and care services in Medway – in order to develop local real-time intelligence and local trends that can be used to improve patient experience.

To a Medway patient/consumer the experience of a provider often begins with an initial provider contact (e.g. letter, telephone call and the access to the provider's services) and ends when the patient/consumer no longer accesses the provider's service or feedback mechanisms. It is with this scope, that the remit of Healthwatch Medway extends further than the NHS targets for measuring the performance of NHS provider organisations (e.g. CQUINS and Quality Metrics used for the provider's yearly Quality Accounts). Healthwatch Medway thus has a unique understanding of patient/consumer 'whole' experience of a provider.

Healthwatch Medway Quality Assurance Methods for gathering intelligence about individual experiences

When collecting the experiences from citizens, Healthwatch Medway will always check:

- Date of experience e.g. today – so that the experience is current.
- Location of the experience e.g. site.
- Name of service being provided e.g. clinic
- Whether it was the individual's experience or family member's experience
- Whether the individual has reported the issue and any other action taken
- Consent from the individual to collect their experience for Healthwatch Medway – which will be kept anonymously, safely and will be used, with other citizen experiences to feedback to services.
- Details of the experience.

Healthwatch Medway does not collect experiences that are over a year old and the vast majority of experiences that are shared at the Medway NHS Foundation Trust have occurred on the day the Listening Event takes place.

Healthwatch Medway approach taken to listening to patient experience at the Medway NHS Foundation Trust

The Healthwatch Medway approach to collecting experienced was influenced by:

1. The Medway structure that had been established by NHS England and local agencies e.g. Monitor, Medway Clinical Commissioning Group, Care Quality Commission to monitor the Medway NHS Foundation Trust Keogh Report (2013) action plan and the subsequent Care Quality Commission Inspections of the hospital.

At the centre of this monitoring process was the NHS England Kent and Medway Team's Quality Surveillance Quality Improvement Sub-Committee which checked, every month, via a multi-agency approach, that the Medway NHS Foundation Keogh Action Plan was being delivered.

Healthwatch Medway, as a key stakeholder, was invited to attend this meeting and feedback real-time intelligence regarding patient experience at Medway NHS Foundation Trust on a monthly basis.

Timelines in relation to the Medway NHS Foundation Trust 2013/2014 – Healthwatch Medway comment on these accounts can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

2. Key research about patient feedback in health services and the need to understand ‘real-time’ patient experiences in order to feed into key ‘points of influence’ in order to improve services.

Key research in relation to patient feedback about their experiences of health services

Care Quality Commission research (2013)ⁱ about complaints and patient feedback found that one in nine people would be reluctant to speak out about poor care. The main reasons that people gave for not speaking up were:

- Not wanting to be thought of as a troublemaker (26%);
- Believing that complaining wouldn’t make a difference (25%);
- Thinking that members of staff were so stretched that complaining wouldn’t help (15%);
- Fearing that their care would get worse or they would lose services they valued if they spoke up (11%).

Healthwatch England Research (2013)ⁱⁱ found:

- 48% of people do not have the confidence that formal complaints are actually dealt with (rising to 60% among the 55+ age group);
- 54% of people who had a problem with health or social care in the past three years did nothing to report it;
- 49% of consumers surveyed have no trust in the complaints system

Healthwatch Medway approach to Listening to the voice at Medway NHS Foundation Trust

In light of the Care Quality Commission (2013) and Healthwatch England (2013) research and other national reports (Francis Report DH 2013, Berwick Report DH 2013) connected to patient feedback, the Healthwatch Medway’s approach to collecting patient experience was:

- ‘Light-touch’ – allowing patients to have control and to share as much or little of their experience as they wished
- Reassuring – people could share their experience anonymously if they wished
- Non-judgemental – experiences were recorded by verbatim by independent staff from Healthwatch Medway
- Open and transparent – any Listening Event activity undertaken at Medway NHS Foundation Trust would clearly display all patient feedback at the Listening Event – so patients, staff and the public could read the feedback that had been given.
- Supportive – so if required Healthwatch Medway could provide individuals with immediate information and signposting about relevant services, and information about the various options regarding Medway NHS complements and complaints services.

- Timely – as close to the date of the ‘point of influence’ as possible (such as NHS England Kent and Medway Quality Surveillance Subgroup ‘Keogh Action Plan’ monthly meeting) where the information on patient experience was to be feedback in order to support system oversight and quality improvement activity.
- Solution-focused – Listening Events would actively seek, via engaging activities to capture the experiences of patients on that day e.g. ‘What one thing would you improve your patient experience today?’

Understanding Patient Experience of Medway NHS Foundation Trust in 2013/2014

During the period between 17th October 2013 and 31st July 2014 Healthwatch Medway has collected in excess of 550 patient experiences/insights at 9 ‘pop-up’ Listening Events at Medway NHS Foundation Trust hospital. 114 (32.8%) ‘Positive’ patient experiences were recorded and 233 (67.1%) of ‘negative’ patient experiences were recorded.

Examples of positive comments (for the period from the beginning of May to the end of July 2014) have included:

“I’ve had a lovely experience today”

“Stayed on McCullough and Post-Operative Care Unit – everyone excellent food good, staff and shop staff friendly – have just sat down and written thank you cards to everyone”

“Care - very good – Accident and Emergency”

“Great nurses, support – Cancer Unit”

“Pleasant, straight in – hearing test in Audiology”

“Smack on! X-ray team, pleasant, easy going”

“Friendly, happy – very on time – Magpie Ward”

“Helpful, thorough and on time – Keates Ward”

“Very good, tablets sorted – Harvey Ward”

“Admin, my doctor and information for my Cardiology appointment great – very positive experience”

“We’ve no complaints at all”

“Oliver Fisher are absolutely amazing”

“Chest clinic, very positive experience – I’ve been coming here for years”

“Family Breast Cancer Clinic appointment, good admin, appointment on time, friendly. Nurse who made me feel at ease and explained things well, ‘Hello, my name is Hester...’ – Wow she introduced herself!”

“Gynaecology – Mr Norman the consultant – I couldn’t have wished for better”

Examples of negative comments (taken from the period beginning of May to the end of July 2014) have included:

Communication:

“I need large print leaflets here, so I can read them”

“Just explain how long, what time I will be waiting for – be honest with me and tell me”

“Please can they be honest about the waiting times, I’ve got children at home waiting”

“Arrgh, I’m not happy before I even get into the hospital – car park and bad basic communication”.

Hygiene:

“Air conditioning here – the lack of it is absolutely annoying – makes you feel ill in Maternity”

Administration:

“Eye Clinic – need to get their appointments right, you always wait over an hour”

“Speed up booking procedures please – the queue was ridiculously long”

Staff attitudes:

“Let people speak - they put word’s into people’s mouths”

“Accident and Emergency receptionist was stroppy when asked the waiting times”

“Tennyson Ward – buzzers are ignored whilst the nurses talk”

“Doctor on SAU needs to read notes on patient care and get it right; I deserve to be treated better”

Staffing level:

“The Accident and Emergency department is diabolical, my baby waited six hours for a paediatrician”.

“Sunderland Ward – more doctors at the weekend. I ended up discharging myself because I hadn’t been seen by a doctor and then they asked to me to come in again to see a doctor.”

Clinical:

“There are no water machines here, I am thirsty”

“I’m hungry and thirsty and been here for ages – it’s not good enough”

“Do meal deals in the shop – it’s expensive and I’m hungry”

Inequitable access to health care provision:

“Costs of disabled parking here is too much, I’m on benefits, I can’t afford to come here”

“It costs a lot of money here, too much, just to visit someone – I would visit them more often if it was cheaper.”

Equipment:

“X-ray machine’s not working – this is my second consecutive visit when it’s been broken. They could have phoned me and told me to come for the x-ray machine if they knew it was broken today”

2013/2014 Patient Experience Trends – Identified via Healthwatch Medway Listening Events at Medway NHS Foundation Trust

There are consistently recurring patient experience themes that have been shared during the Healthwatch Medway Listening Events, and which have influenced significantly influenced patient experience of the service:

- Staff attitude
Feedback at Listening Events consistently shows that this appears to be the largest the largest contributor to a patient having a positive experience at Medway NHS Foundation Trust.

Over the past year feedback from patients about this issue has been mixed with Medway citizens citing experiences such as;

“I couldn’t have been treated better”;

”Very positive experience with staff”;

“My experience in Accident and Emergency wasn’t good in July 2014 – ‘we need your bed’ is not the way to start a conversation with me – I just needed a bit time to wait for my relatives to come and help me get home– they just wanted to get rid of me quick”

“My doctor said to me ‘in our country you just get on with it’ he has a sarcastic attitude’ – (July 2014),

- Inequitable access to healthcare
Patients experience has been negatively affected by the difficulties of accessing the car parking facilities at Medway Foundation Trust. This issue was at its most prevalent at the May 2014 Listening Event with 44% (50) of people who shared their experience at the May Listening Event citing that this was the ‘one thing that Medway NHS Foundation Trust could do to improve their patient experience’ was to improve the car parking situation.
Healthwatch Medway continue to have concerns regarding the high car park cost and the lack of accessible information for patients about reclaiming parking fees – which is resulting in some patients (particularly those on benefits or with disabilities) feeling unable to access the service due to cost: citing in July 2014: “Parking is expensive here – it’s a tax on the sick”, “It’s too expensive to even get into the hospital – car parking fees” and “I’m on benefits, I can’t afford to come here because of the parking fees”.
- Staffing level
Feedback from patients at Listening Events consistently shows that lack of staff and high use of agency staff at Medway NHS Foundation Trust impacts negatively on a patient’s experience citing in July 2014: “The agency staff didn’t even know where to find a blanket and we were cold on the ward”, “POCU – general sense of disempowerment for agency staff there”.
- Public Perception that there is not a ‘culture of listening’ to patients within Medway NHS Foundation Trust
Feedback at Listening Events consistently shows that Medway citizens do not perceive the hospital as having a listening culture to patients, and when asked patients are largely unable to mention changes that have taken place at the hospital based on patient feedback.

The introduction of 'You said, We did' boards onto wards have been welcomed by patients; however this initiative has not been extended to clinics and main areas of the hospital (e.g. Reception, café) missing a vital opportunity to demonstrate to patients that the Trust is responsive to their concerns and takes their issues seriously.

Healthwatch Medway welcomes the introduction of the Friends and Family Test at Medway NHS Foundation Trust in order to provide more information about patient experience, and notes its use as an indicator of performance. Healthwatch Medway is however, concerned at the limited scope of patient experience that this indicator captures, particularly given that many aspects of the patient experience shared through listening's to date, would fall outside this and other quality metrics in use.

Healthwatch Medway is also concerned that there is a lack of information e.g. large print, audio, community language or Easier to Read based information on the Friends and Family Test at the hospital. In addition Healthwatch Medway at the July 2014 Listening Events received feedback from patients that the 'free' SMS text, which is used to reply to the text-based Friends and Family Test for patients, is not free and charges the patient for their comment – leading to an income inequality issue for patients providing feedback on their experience.

- Digital communications that are not 'Patient Experience Friendly'
Patient experiences shared at Listening Events consistently evidence that patients, on an ongoing basis, find the Medway NHS Foundation digital communications problematic and difficult to use.

Patients have shared their experience of finding basic service information on the website (for example the cost of parking fees, contact details of the Medway Independent NHS Advocacy Service and Healthwatch Medway) as very difficult to do.

Patients are positive that there are Medway NHS Foundation Trust social media channels e.g. Twitter and Facebook; however patients have expressed that they have a negative patient experience about the lack of relevant information provided on these sites, the lack of patient feedback methods advertised and that patient feedback on these sites are not responded to. In addition, there is a concern about the appropriateness of key personnel blurring personal and professional comment on Twitter related feeds, particularly in the context of such high level concern about the performance of the Trust.

- Clinical effectiveness and safety issues:
Patient experiences through Listening Events demonstrate that patients experience is often affected by clinical effectiveness and safety. Healthwatch Medway welcomes being a participant on the Medway Clinical Commissioning Patient Quality and Safety Committee.
Recent examples of patient experiences on this issue that have been shared with Healthwatch Medway include:

“I was on a ward manned by agency staff – they tried to give me the wrong medication, one nurse upset me so much I walked out in tears – POCU Ward” (July 2014)

“Ophthalmology – I have cataracts in both eyes so had an operation and was seen by the consultant afterward. My consultant told me the lens had been put on the wrong way round, so I was given a follow up appointment, seen by a surgeon and he told me I was ok – I had a follow up as I still can’t see well out of my eye. The doctor who saw me hadn’t read my notes, I had to tell him, now I have another appointment in October – what a mess!” (July 2014)

- “A & E – manic, painful and stressful – they were treating patients in the corridor, it was undignified – I was so overwhelmed by how badly they treated me.” (June 2014)
- Lack of reasonable adjustments for people with protected characteristics
Healthwatch Medway has collected patient experience that frequently reflects that the Medway NHS Foundation service provides limited ‘reasonable adjustments’ for people with ‘protected characteristics’. Inaccessible information is frequently cited as an issue negatively affecting patients with a learning disability and the difficulty in reclaiming the cost of car parking fees as a negative impact for patients with a disability.

Identification of trends relating to patient experience over the last 3 months (May to July 2014)?

During this period there has been 4 Healthwatch Medway Listening Events at Medway Foundation Trust.

Details of 7 May 2014 Healthwatch Medway Listening Event

114 patient experiences collected: 23% (20) patients said that there was nothing that could be done to improve the hospital experience citing: “It’s been fine, Haematology trial team fantastic”, “Dolphin Ward was quite good actually”.

The main issue that was negatively affecting patient experience was the ‘car park situation at the hospital’ – with 44% (50) of people who shared their experience at the May Listening Event citing that this was the ‘one thing that Medway NHS Foundation Trust could do to improve their patient experience’ was to improve the car parking situation. This dissatisfaction in patient experience was an increase from 33% (up 11%) from the April 2014 Listening Event.

Medway patients cited that their patient experience linked to parking was:

- Too expensive for citizens access – causing inequality in local healthcare provision for Medway people.
- Causing patients to unnecessarily miss appointments - there were lengthy onsite waiting times for car park e.g. over an hour in the car park queue, which resulted in patients missing appointments and not being seen by clinics, who then recorded the patient as ‘not attending’ on their hospital records and which would result in a length wait for another appointment.

4. Communication in advance, via appointment letters, that there may be queues to get into the hospital car park and advising people to consider this when planning travel time.
5. Accessible and accurate information on car parking costs and signage in locations where patients can easily access this.
6. Information in the main areas of the hospitals 'You said, we did' – situated near the Friends and Family Test information pull-up banners
7. A water and food machine with signage to enable people to access a drink of water or food at all times in the hospital
8. Information on Medway NHS Foundation Trust website encouraging patient, as well as staff, feedback on services – listing opportunities to get involved.
9. Accessible information about how Medway NHS Foundation Trust ensures that patients with 'protected characteristics' have reasonably adjusted' health service provision e.g. Large print, audio enabled, and easier to Read information on the Friends and Family Test.

Report Conclusion

Healthwatch Medway has provided a raft of patient experience related information directly to Medway NHS Foundation Trust, and to key stakeholders within the quality improvement system. This experience ranges from that reflecting excellent standards of health care to that which reflects a service that is failing in its most basic duties of protecting the health and safety of patients. Healthwatch Medway has a real concern at the failure by Medway NHS Foundation Trust to evidence consistent progress with quality improvement action, and has shared this with the relevant regulators and inspectors.

4 August 2014

ⁱ CQC research – Full ICM report at: April 2013 research report for CQC

ⁱⁱ REFERENCE TO Healthwatch England annual report; YouGov complaints survey.

http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/default/files/health_and_social_care_complaints_systems.pdf

APPENDIX ONE – HEALTHWATCH MEDWAY STATEMENT TO MEDWAY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST QUALITY ACCOUNTS 2013/2014

Within the timescale of these Medway NHS Foundation Trust Quality accounts a range of high-profile independent Government reviews (Francis Report (2013), Berwick (2013), Keogh (2013) and Clwyd Hart (2013)) took place all highlighting the critical need to 'put patients first' and for services to have mechanisms in place to continually learn from patient experience.

Healthwatch Medway is the 'independent consumer champion' of Medway residents who use care and health services in Medway. As a result of the role is to champion rights in health and care and the comment for these Quality Accounts focuses on the systems and processes which Medway NHS Foundation Trust has in place to hear, learn and improve from patient experiences.

Medway Foundation Trust Performance during 2013/2014

Healthwatch Medway welcomes Medway NHS Foundation Trust:

- Engaging with Healthwatch Medway as a stakeholder and providing regular NHS Foundation Trust communications e.g. press releases.
- Allowing Healthwatch Medway to undertake monthly 'pop up' Listening Events at Medway Maritime Hospital.
- Endeavouring during this difficult period to increase its engagement modes used to capture patient experience.
- Including information on Medway NHS Foundation Trust complaints, compliments and serious incidents.
- Receiving 961 WOW Award nominations in relation to the excellent care of their staff which enhanced patient experiences.
- Including Healthwatch Medway in the Independent Review by Cambridge University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, of Medway NHS Foundation Trust Complaints Procedure.
- Increasing the number of Medway NHS Foundation Trust PALS contact to improve opportunity for immediate resolution of issues raised by patients.
- Opening a new unit on Milton ward for patients with dementia.

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- Enhancing patient experience of the hospital services by undertaking building refurbishment based on patient feedback.
 - Introducing volunteers as 'directional navigators'.
 - Introducing staggered waiting times for operations.
 - Increasing the number of spaces available and a new payment method in the hospital car park to improve patient experience.
 - Holding a Listening Event in Medway in connection with the Trust's Emergency Department.
 - Producing an action plan to rectify areas connected to poor patient experience and care that were identified by the Care Quality Commission Inspectors during this period.

Healthwatch Medway notes:

- In 2013 the Care Quality Commission took enforcement action against Medway NHS Foundation Trust in connection with their Maternity and Emergency Department services. Some of the enforcement action and compliance notices that were as a direct result of the identification of poor patient experience.
- Healthwatch Medway has been a participant at the NHS England Local Area Team Quality Surveillance Group meetings.
- Within the NHS Foundation Trust Quality Accounts there appears to be no agreed definition regarding key terms in connection with patient experience for example 'patient experience', 'patient involvement'.
- There is lack of clarity within the Quality Accounts about what and how Medway NHS Foundation Trust identifies are the 'priority issues' from patients to improve patient experience.
- It is evident that a lot of change is happening at Medway NHS Foundation Trust. Effectively communicating these changes is important to ensure that patient feedback is unintentionally negatively affected. It is noted that there is a lack of clarity within the Quality Accounts detailing how changes, driven by patient feedback, have been communicated to patients (including those patients who have or identify as having protected characteristics).
- During this period Healthwatch Medway has regularly gathered patient experience insights from people who use services of Medway NHS Foundation Trust. A reoccurring theme from the insights that have been gathered is that patients consistently state that they do not know how to identify changes based on patient feedback. A practical example that illustrates this issue may be seen by the introduction of the new Medway NHS Foundation Trust car park ticket machines. These were introduced as a result of patient feedback however when the Trust introduced the machines, moving this new facility from outside to inside the hospital, they did not successfully communicate this change to patients via signage and this caused patient confusion/frustration (negative patient experience) – plus in addition the Trust missed an opportunity to celebrate change occurring as a direct result of patient experience.

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- Medway NHS Foundation Trust has made changes to its car parking systems and signage; however feedback of patient experience to Medway Healthwatch from people using this service remains that in excess of a third of patients accessing Medway NHS Foundation Trust services have experienced a negative experience of the service before they get to their appointment/clinic.
 - The Tea trolley service has been extended to all output clinic areas in 1-7; however feedback to Healthwatch Medway regarding patient experience at the trust remains that some patients and carers continue to be unaware about how to access a drink or food whilst at the hospital.
 - Medway NHS Foundation Trust Quality Accounts 2013/2014 use a lot of 'service-based language' which as a direct result means that they are inaccessible to many Medway residents.
 - Medway NHS foundation Trust has not produced an Easy-Read or any alternative versions of their 2013/2014 Quality Accounts – limiting the accessibility of the Quality Accounts to Medway citizens.

Medway NHS Foundation Trust Priorities for 2014/2015

Healthwatch Medway welcomes Medway NHS Foundation Trust:

- Seeking the views of Healthwatch Medway for its Quality Priorities for 2014/2015.
- Positively encouraging stakeholder engagement in 2014/2015 to ensure the hospital listens and responds to feedback on patient experience and acts in a timely manner to improve areas of concern.
- Extending its Listening into Action Programme.
- Acknowledging the need to understand what patients find important about their surroundings before making improvements where possible.
- Establishing and taking a thematic approach to reviewing complaints and all other patient feedback.
- Continuing to implement the Friends and Family Test through its services – to provide comparable data to improve Patient Experience.
- Commitment to undertaking PLACE assessments.
- Commitment to reduce waiting time for patients.

Healthwatch Medway notes:

- There remains a lack of clarity about how Medway NHS Foundation Trust understands what matters most to consumers, especially those least included and those who have or identify as having protected characteristics.

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- There remains a lack of clarity about whether Medway NHS Foundation Trust's Listening Into Action and Transforming Medway plans will produce, in partnership with patients, an agreed standard definition of the terms of 'patient experience' and 'patient involvement' across the Trust'.
 - It is unclear how and what is being communication to feedback to patients about what is being feedback to patients about improvement to hospital changes that are happening due to patient feedback.
 - The Quality Priorities for 2015 do not appear to address the ongoing Healthwatch Medway findings (which have been regularly shared with Medway Foundation Trust in 2013/2014) which identify that in excess of a third of patients accessing Medway NHS Foundation Trust services at Medway Maritime hospital have experienced a negative experience of the service before they get to their hospital appointment/clinic.
 - Medway NHS Foundation Trust does not state whether it's 2014/2015 Quality Accounts will be provided in alternative formats – in order to extend the reach of citizens that are able to access this information.

Conclusion/comment

- **Healthwatch Medway believes that it is important to understand what matters to consumers, especially those least included or who have protected characteristics, by always starting with their needs and rights. Healthwatch Medway is disappointed that Medway NHS Foundation Trust Quality Accounts lacks clarity about this important issue**
- **Healthwatch Medway welcomes the opportunity to engage with Medway NHS Foundation Trust in 2014/2015. In addition, Healthwatch Medway looks forward to learning about the action that has been taken by the Medway NHS Foundation Trust following the Healthwatch Medway comments on its 2013/2014 Quality Accounts.**
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