

Ophthalmology Action Plan following Healthwatch Visit

Overview

In January 2015 Healthwatch Leicestershire staff, board members and volunteers supported by Healthwatch Leicester staff and volunteers spent 'Four Days at LRI' listening to 262 patients and talking to staff in:

- A&E on 30 January
- Discharge Lounge on 29 January
- Ophthalmology Eye Clinic and Eye Casualty on 28 January

This action plan relates to the findings, specific to ophthalmology, detailed in that report.

	Action Note	Action	Lead	By When	Progress Update	RAG Status*
1	Eye Clinic 58% of patients had experienced cancellation of previous appointments. 76% of those patients were 65 years of age or over. When asked how much notice they were given, it ranged from as little as a few hours (same day notice) to five months. However 83% of the cancelled appointments were rescheduled at the same time as the cancellation	The department is looking to implement a 'partial booking' style system to reduce the number and frequency of hospital cancellations. NB partial bookings are when we book a patient into a time slot in the future but follow up nearer the time of the appointment to confirm it. In this way we have a clearer	Martin Watts	Original date November 2015 Revised date of Summer 2016	The current facilities within the booking centre do not allow a straight transfer of Ophthalmology bookings given the very high volumes involved. However as part of the hospital's overall estates strategy the booking centre will be relocated and expanded and Ophthalmology bookings will then be handled from the new centre. This is due to take place in the summer of 2016	2

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RAG Status Key:	5	Complete	4	On Track	3	Some Delay – expected to be completed as planned	2	Significant Delay – unlikely to be completed as planned	1	Not yet commenced
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		sense of the volumes of patients on a given day and the patient is able to fit the appointment around other considerations like childcare, work and other commitments.				
2	Eye clinic 7% of patients struggled to find the department on their first visit	To discuss the issue with Interserve re signage and review the information in patient letters to improve the directions given.	Pat Bingley	June 2015	In April 2015 the department launched new letters that were clearer about the location of the department and this seems to have helped patients find the department more easily. Separately, signage across the Balmoral Building at the Royal Infirmary is currently being reviewed as part of the wider estates strategy and improvements are expected in the New Year.	5

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3	<p>Eye clinic Many patients spoke about the lack of space. This was particularly acute for wheelchair users, especially if multiple users were present at the same time as occurred on the day we visited. There were also comments about the general lack of space in the department.</p>	<p>This is a recognised issue within Ophthalmology and in the short term there is not a great deal that can be done about it. The longer term plan as described in the Trust's 5 year strategy is to relocate Ophthalmology and other 'high volume' services into a dedicated 'Day Hospital'... specifically designed to carry out our more routine procedures in a more spacious and purpose built environment.</p> <p>In the interim the space has been cleared as far as possible, with all unnecessary clutter removed.</p>	Martin Watts & James Deane	TBC by Trust Executive Board	The plans for a 'Day Hospital' will be shared with the public later this year as part of the Better Care Together consultation. Assuming that they are supported a timetable for the construction of the Day Hospital will be developed	1

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4	Eye clinic Modernising the waiting room was an issue for many patients. This included brightening up the room and the need for more comfortable seating, especially as the waiting times are quite lengthy and there were many elderly patients that would benefit from armchairs. Wi-Fi and TVs were also mentioned to help entertain patients and the temperature of the room was often very warm with no ventilation or water machine.	1) The department has recently installed TV's in both Windsor and Balmoral outpatient departments. Water machines have also been installed in both areas as well as in the Orthoptics department.	Pat Bingley	April 2015	Complete	5
		2) The seating in the department is fairly dated. New seating options are being investigated and a price sought.	Pat Bingley Sophie Snelson	June 2015	28/10/2015 – the department is currently looking at seating options and subject to the quotes being affordable new seating will be ordered in the new year.	3
5	Eye clinic Many of the comments that we received were based around communication. Patients told us that they would like improved information, especially if appointments are running late. They also thought that reception staff should	To be discussed with the admin and nursing team about the information relayed to patients and when.	Martin Watts	May 2015	06/05/15 – Discussed with the admin team and agreed that we must do more to explain if there are delays to the clinic and generally keep patients better informed.	5
		We agreed that new clinical staff would be recruited to help manage the	Martin Watts	May 2015	5 new consultants and two new clinical fellows have been appointed and are working in the service.	5

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	communicate important information and not just write it on a board, as some people are visually impaired. Other comments that were made included: More doctors are needed as the clinic felt understaffed. A speaker service to call patients would be helpful.	increasing numbers of patients using the service				
		A new speaker system to be investigated and quoted	Martin Watts	June 2015	The speaker system was discounted in favour of a simpler approach of just expecting clinic co-ordinators to speak clearly and loudly at frequent intervals informing patients of the current waiting times.	5

Summary:

Our eye services are amongst the busiest services we run and they are becoming even busier. We recognise that waiting times in the clinics are too long and we have therefore invested over £600,000 in new staff to help us see more patients, more quickly. We also recognise and agree with Healthwatch colleagues that the clinical environment is poor i.e. busy and crowded. In the short term there is not an easy answer to this not least because the Royal Infirmary site is landlocked and has no spare space. In the longer term we intend to move some of these kinds of service off the Royal and into a purpose built 'Day Hospital'.... This will make the whole experience for patients and staff far more efficient and comfortable.

We would like to thank our Healthwatch colleagues for the time they took to hold a mirror up to our services; their feedback whilst sometimes uncomfortable is always constructive and we welcome it.

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