



Details of visit

Service address:

Service Provider:

Date:

Authorised

Representatives:

See list at the end of report

St Marys Hospital

IW NHS Trust

February/March 2015

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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Isle of Wight would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

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, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.



Purpose of the visit

This visit was arranged as part of the ongoing complaints work plan. The visit was designed to look at the accessibility of the complaints procedure throughout the hospital.

Methodology

The visits took place unannounced. The IW NHS Trust were made aware that healthwatch may undertake visits related to the complaints workplan but were not informed when, or what the visits would involve.

The visits framework contained 2 sections.

Section 1 looked at the accessibility. The walls, leaflet stands, desks, tables were observed to see whether information was available informing people of the complaints procedure.

Section 2 focused on staff knowledge of the complaints procedure. Staff members were approached and asked questions related to making complaints and their comments recorded. When asking how to make a complaint, the volunteers did not offer an insight into what they would like to complain about. They either informed the staff member that they were from Healthwatch or stated they would prefer not to discuss their issue at this time. This was to ensure that 'false' complaints/concerns were not raised within the NHS Trust as this would be a waste of their time and resources.

The IW NHS Trust provided full support and cooperation to Healthwatch Isle of Wight.



Results of Visit

Accessibility

Complaints Procedure Posters

Throughout the 24 areas that were visited only 5 were displaying posters relating to concerns.

A total of 6 posters were displayed throughout the 5 wards.

2 of the 6 posters were 'how did we do' posters with the remaining 4 being posters that were perhaps old Pals posters. The panel reported that the posters do not contain the word complaints and in general do not provide enough information to ensure the reader is aware of how to raise a complaint.

Timescales for complaints handling did not appear on any of the posters, meaning people are not aware of when to expect responses to their complaints.

Half of the panel members felt that the size of the text on the posters could be larger as they were not readable with ease.

Complaints Procedure Leaflets

On the 24 wards that were visited only 4 were displaying leaflets relating to concerns.

Roughly 40 leaflets were displayed throughout the 4 wards but unfortunately the majority of these were located in Laidlaw and were due for review in January 2014 and therefore were unlikely to contain the correct information.

The other areas in which complaints leaflets were available were Shackleton and Maternity. The leaflets were different which could give the impression that different services have different processes to follow.

Timescales for complaints handling did not appear on any of the leaflets again meaning people are unaware of when to expect responses to their complaints.

The size of the text in the leaflets was generally felt to be appropriate.

The leaflets are available in other languages, when requested by an English speaking person, but other formats such as braille or large print appear not to be available.

Staff Conversations

During the visits conversations were held with 29 staff members 17 staff members indicated that complaints could be handled by any member of staff or the PALS team if people would prefer. 4 Staff members indicated that staff and line managers handle complaints and did not mention the PALS team. The remaining 7 staff members stated that PALS are the ones who deal with complaints and made no reference to staff members having an involvement in complaints handling.

All the staff were found to be polite and were keen to encourage the volunteers to share their experience. The majority of staff were also very confident in their response when asked 'how can I make a complaint'.

25 of the staff members said that complaints could be made on behalf of relatives or strangers (some of them went into detail about how consent may need to be sought but that an initial concern could be recorded).



Recommendations

Healthwatch Isle of Wight Recommends the following:

1. Posters and leaflets should clearly state all the information a person would need to make a complaint, (including potential timescales involved)
2. All staff should be trained in the handling of complaints and a consistent message given to all service users.
3. PALS leaflets and posters should be redesigned to provide a fuller explanation of what the service provides.
4. Independent advocacy should be widely advertised throughout the hospital and included on hospital designed posters and leaflets to ensure service user choice.
5. Complaints literature (posters and leaflets) should be available at every department in the hospital and should be clearly visible to the public.



List of areas visited within St Marys Hospital

Whippingham Ward	-	04/03/2015
Eye Department	-	03/03/2015
Day surgery	-	03/03/2015
Beacon and A&E	-	24/02/2015
Fracture Clinic	-	24/02/2015
Rehab Unit	-	21/02/2015
Stroke Unit	-	24/02/2015
St Helens Ward	-	24/02/2015
Colwell Ward	-	04/03/2015
Cardiac Care	-	24/02/2015
Maxillofacial Clinic	-	05/03/2015
Outpatient Clinic	-	24/02/2015
Endoscopy	-	05/03/2015
ENT/Audiology	-	05/03/2015
Luccombe Ward	-	24/02/2015
Alverstone Ward	-	24/02/2015
Pathology	-	03/03/2015
PALS office	-	03/03/2015
Shackleton	-	30/03/2015
Laidlaw	-	30/03/2015
Maternity	-	30/03/2015
Seven Acres Reception area	-	30/03/2015
Sevenacres Osbourne Ward	-	30/03/2015
Childrens Ward	-	31/03/2015