

Response to Enter & View
Queen's Hospital: Outpatients' Departments
1st October 2015

1 INTRODUCTION

Healthwatch Havering is the local consumer champion for both health and social care. Their aim is to give local citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for all individuals locally. Under Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Healthwatch Havering has statutory powers to carry out Enter and View visits to publicly funded health and social care services in the borough, such as hospitals, GP practices, care homes and dental surgeries, to observe how a service is being run and make any necessary recommendations for improvement.

2 HEALTHWATCH HAVERING REPORT DATED 1 OCTOBER 2015

The visit was undertaken as part of a series of visits to out-patient, discharged in-patient and visitors' facilities at Queen's Hospital to enable Healthwatch Havering volunteers to view how patients and visitors were dealt with. This report should be read in conjunction with the reports on the Ambulance Waiting Area, Discharge Lounge and Pharmacy. This visit was concerned only with "meet and greet" issues – further Enter & View visits and reports will deal with issues specific to particular clinics.

3 BHRUT RESPONSE TO HWH RECOMMENDATIONS

• **3.1 Urgent review of staffing to ensure that demand is met and does not spiral out-of-control**

Specialty service reviews have been undertaken and additional clinician support has been identified to meet current and anticipated demand. Each specialty is currently in the process of appointing additional Consultants and funding has been identified and agreed for support services e.g. Appointments, Reception, Clinic Preparation, Medical Secretaries, etc. We are in the process of recruiting these additional staff

• **3.2 Effort be made to provide a custom-made storage area for clinical supplies**

We are aware of the current storage space issues in Team two and there is a service review underway looking at several factors including storage. We are also working with our procurement department to have more frequent deliveries of stock so that we do not have to store large quantities of dressings.

• **3.3 The appointments system be reviewed, addressing issues raised by patients wherever possible is urgently required.**

As part of our Patient Administration review, one work-stream is currently reviewing the appointments systems and processes, which includes themes from patients' concerns and compliments. Process mapping has been completed and following a service review with the Ophthalmology Department, re-design work is progressing to enhance patient referral flow. We would be happy to share the results of the service review with you.

• **3.4 Urgent consideration be given to follow up appointments, when investigative scans etc. have been carried out**

Due to pressures on waiting times, Clinical Divisions have introduced Referral to Treatment (RTT) tracker staff to ensure the results of all patients referred for diagnostic tests are reviewed by the appropriate clinician.

The results are communicated to patients either by follow-up appointments, advice letters or telephone clinic conversations, if treatment is required and next steps of care will be discussed. This means that clinic appointments will be utilised more effectively.

Other identified improvements/updates relevant to the report include:

- Additional seating for team two has been purchased and we are awaiting a quote for installation
- Patient pagers are now in place in team two to alleviate overcrowding pressures in waiting areas
- We have adapted a special waiting area for children in the eye clinic including the purchase of wall activity toys
- When identified, location errors in appointment letters are corrected to ensure accuracy when inviting patients to attend OPD clinics

4 CONCLUSION

We would like to take the opportunity to thank Health Watch Havering for undertaking this Enter and View visit and for the feedback provided in the report. We are aware of some of the issues identified and are managing these as part of the on-going aim to improve patient experience when visiting our Out-Patient Departments.

3 June 2016

