

## Healthwatch Kingston Outreach Report

<b>Place visited</b>	<b>Kingston Hospital Royal Eye Unit &amp; Day Surgery</b>	<b>Date of Visit</b>	<b>17/07/14</b>
<i>Purpose of visit</i>	To promote Healthwatch Kingston; to undertake mini surveys of patients in the Royal Eye Unit and Day Surgery.		
<i>HWK representatives</i>	Jenny Pitt, Research & Information Officer Naushad Ally Suffee, Affiliate and volunteer Abdu Muhammad, Volunteer Rianne Eimers, Manager		
<i>Notes</i>	We spent most of our time in the Royal Eye Unit as Day Surgery was very quiet.		
<i>Questions and observations</i>	<p>We made some general observations of each area we visited such as cleanliness, layout, signage, toilets and accessibility.</p> <p>When we spoke to patients, we introduced ourselves and told them about the role of Healthwatch. We provided them with some information and explained how people can be involved.</p> <p>Our questions were in two parts; the first about the patient's appointment, and the second about their general impression of the waiting area and how they are treated by staff.</p>		
<i>Feedback received</i>	<p><b>Royal Eye Unit</b></p> <p>This area is accessed through automatic doors with the reception desk directly in front. To the right is the Eye Emergency waiting area and to the left is the waiting area for people with appointments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patients felt the clinical treatment is generally very good</li> <li>• Most patients agreed that the nurses and consultants explain everything, and they feel they are involved and can ask questions. They felt they were given enough time with the nurse/ consultant.</li> <li>• People feel they are treated with respect and dignity</li> <li>• Where applicable the patient's family and / or carers were involved and could ask questions.</li> <li>• Waiting times vary, sometimes people are seen very quickly, sometimes there's a long wait. However, most appointments were on time on the 17<sup>th</sup>.</li> <li>• Reception staff were friendly, and made themselves known so anyone with a visual impairment would know someone was there.</li> <li>• We noted there were tablets on the reception desk to record feedback (Friends &amp; Family Test) but they weren't used during our visit.</li> <li>• Environment is clean and tidy but it was quite warm (however, it was a very hot day).</li> <li>• The water cooler was not in a prominent position, and perhaps a big unit such as the Royal Eye Unit ought to have two?</li> <li>• Most people found transport links good. One person who has a freedom pass noted that as his appointment was before 9:30 he had to pay the peak rate on the train. He could afford this but he acknowledged many older people would struggle if they had regular appointments before 9:30 (9am on the buses).</li> </ul>		

- There were enough parking spaces in the morning, but later in the day some people had problems finding a space. Most considered the charges were on the high side. One person noted that it would be better to pay when leaving, rather than paying when parking as it's sometimes very difficult to know how long someone might be at the hospital. She mentioned St George's Hospital has this system.
- Some signs have good contrast (black and yellow) but others are less visible. Some signs hung very close the ceiling and wouldn't have been obvious to everyone but we accept this is partly due to the layout of the area.
- We noted the display screens were working and displayed information about the hospital, making complaints/ compliments etc
- There is a clearly marked toilet in the emergency area, but no signs at the other end of the waiting area, so anyone with a visual impairment may not know where it is.
- Children's area was bright, clean and tidy. One young patient was very impressed with the poster of the colourful skeleton.
- The self check-in units were not working so at times there were long queues going outside the entrance. We were told they hadn't been working for a year. However, other staff stepped in to help reduce the queue.
- Emergency eye services ran well and on time, people didn't feel they were waiting too long
- Accessibility was highlighted by many patients as a problem:
  - In the appointment waiting area, the long rows of seats in the middle are difficult to navigate. When it's busy, people get stuck in the middle. Those with mobility problems can't use those seats.
  - When staff call out patients' names, they don't always check to see if that person needs assistance. One elderly lady couldn't see where she needed to go; we ended up helping her because the nurse who called her didn't go to her.
  - Staff would come out from the area behind reception and call out the patient's name. Not all staff were as easy to hear as others, especially when the reception area was busy.
  - The contrast between the seats and the floor isn't strong enough (both pale colours) so those with a visual impairment have to guess where the seats are. Similarly several patients said that when they have eye drops put in and are sent back to the waiting area, their sight is blurry and they cannot always make out where the seats are.
  - Most people roughly know where the reception desk is, but it's only due to the staff that they have an indication of where to go. There is a dark blue panel at the lower front of the desk which contrasts well with the pale blue floor, but the rest of the desk is made of wood and cannot easily be distinguished.
  - Some people noted there is a fairly steep slope from the main entrance to the Royal Eye Unit which is difficult to navigate with a visual or physical impairment.

	<p><b>Day Surgery</b> This area is located next to the maternity unit. The reception area is separate from the waiting area, and was staffed by one person when we came in. The waiting area is just off the reception area to the right.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reception staff were welcoming and friendly</li> <li>• The waiting area was bright, clean and tidy and relatively cool due to ceiling fans</li> <li>• The waiting area had comfy sofas and seats and plants, which made it more welcoming. It was also accessible and spacious.</li> <li>• Patients felt they were listened to and were given enough information about the treatment they were receiving</li> <li>• One patient noted that when she came in, there was no one on reception and anyone could have walked in. She was concerned about the safety of patients.</li> <li>• Another patient said she could see no sign for the waiting area, although the reception staff pointed out where to go</li> <li>• Although the toilets were just off the main reception area, there were no signs for the toilets in the waiting room. Not all patients had noticed they were there; some said because they were focused on/ worried about their imminent treatment they didn't take notice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Findings</b></p>	<p>For Healthwatch Kingston:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Very few people had heard of Healthwatch so this was a very useful exercise for us to get ourselves better known.</li> <li>○ Some people were concerned that we were being paid per survey, so we must clearly explain our role as a local voice for people and not a privately run company. Also we need to make it clear how we use people's feedback and input and that it helps to shape local health and social care services.</li> </ul> <p>For Kingston Hospital:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accessibility was one of the main concerns being raised. Given that the Royal Eye Unit deals with people with visual impairments it is vital that more measures are taken to make the area as accessible as possible.</li> <li>○ People were generally very happy with the clinical treatment and felt they were included, and treated with respect and dignity.</li> <li>○ The areas we visited were clean and tidy, although signage could be improved. Toilets were clearly marked but signs not always visible from, or placed in waiting rooms or other areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendations for Kingston Hospital</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RNIB and the Thomas Pocklington Trust offer advice and training on improving accessibility for people with visual impairments. Kingston Hospital will be working with the Thomas Pocklington Trust at the Royal Eye Unit, so it would make sense to get advice from them. Some of the improvements are quite simple and cost little, such as changing the seating arrangements.</li> <li>• It might be useful to get input from people with a visual impairment to help improve the waiting area and access to the Royal Eye Unit from other parts of the hospital. HWK is keen to be involved in this.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The contrast between the floor and the chairs, some of the signs and the reception desk could be improved so patients with a visual impairment can orientate themselves better</li> <li>• The layout of the waiting area for eye appointments could be changed so people don't get caught in a long row of seats.</li> <li>• It would be helpful for staff to be aware a patient needs assistance when they have a visual or physical impairment - can this be added to a patient's notes? This would apply to any impairment.</li> <li>• It is important that patients can hear the staff when they are being called - especially during busy times. This could be as easy as reminding staff to speak up a little, and double check their patient doesn't have a hearing impairment or other needs that could affect them.</li> </ul> <p>Other recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We thought the suggestion for paying for parking when leaving was a very good one as it means people don't have to worry about topping up their parking ticket, or having to worry about a fine. It also means no one will pay more than necessary. We're aware that parking has been an ongoing issue and this may have already been considered.</li> </ul>	
<b>Actions</b>	<p>What:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report and recommendations to be sent to Reinette Nell at Kingston Hospital</li> <li>• HWK to work with Thomas Pocklington Trust and Kingston Hospital to improve access</li> <li>• HWK to further promote its services and clearly explain its role and purpose</li> </ul>	<p>When:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Week of 4<sup>th</sup> of August 2014</li> <li>• RE to contact Michelle Baxter-Williams at TPT, liaise with Reinette Nell, week of the 11<sup>th</sup> of August</li> <li>• Report to go to Board with recommendations 14<sup>th</sup> of August</li> </ul>

**Figures:**

We completed 27 surveys during our visit, 24 in the Royal Eye Unit and 3 in Day Surgery. We spoke to more patients and relatives but on several occasions, patients were called in for their appointments so we were unable to complete the survey.

**Royal Eye Unit**

Waiting time from referral	Less than 4 weeks	More than 4 weeks	Annual Check up	Emergency	Didn't say
	<b>32%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	-
Enough info given?	Yes	No			Didn't say
	<b>71%</b>	<b>29%</b>			-
Waiting time for the appointment on that day	On time	Up to 30 mins	Up to 1 hour	More than 1 hour	Didn't say
	<b>8%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>21%</b>	-	<b>29%</b>
Enough time to talk to doctor?	Yes	No			Didn't say
	<b>75%</b>	<b>4%</b>			<b>21%</b>
Did the doctor listen to your concerns?	Yes	No			Didn't say
	<b>79%</b>	-			<b>21%</b>
<i>Unit Rating</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Poor</i>		<i>N/A</i>
Clean, Safe, Friendly	<b>88%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>		-
Transport/ parking	<b>58%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>21%</b>		<b>8%</b>
Dignity & Respect	<b>96%</b>	<b>4%</b>	-		-
Involved in decisions	<b>67%</b>	<b>8%</b>	-		<b>25%</b>
Family & Friends can be involved	<b>67%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>		<b>25%</b>
Standard of treatment	<b>67%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>		<b>25%</b>

**Day Surgery**

Due to the small number of patients present at the Day Surgery Unit we only completed 3 surveys. We don't feel this is enough of a sample size to include into his report but their comments and our observations have been included above.