

healthwatch

Kingston Upon Thames

Enter & View Visit: Kingston Hospital Royal Eye Unit

Report & Recommendations

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames

14.08.15

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 About Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames

Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames (from hereon referred to as Healthwatch Kingston) is the local, user-led organisation for involving local people in the design and development of local health and social care services and help improve patient experience. It was established in April 2013 under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

It provides reports and updates about local services to Healthwatch England, a body that campaigns on national issues and raises concerns to the NHS and the Department of Health.

Healthwatch Kingston gathers information and feedback from patients and service users about the experiences they have of health and social services, and use this to make improvements and influence the development of those services. It works with health and social care services to make sure that the voice of local people is heard, and it goes out into the community to listen to what people have to say.

In addition, Healthwatch Kingston signposts people to local health and social care services and provides information on how to make a complaint or give feedback about those services.

Healthwatch Kingston is a registered Charity, and is funded by the Department of Health through the local authority, the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. It is independent, and led by a board of Trustees who are local people with a keen interest in improving the health and social care system for local people.

1.2 Enter & View

One of the methods Healthwatch can use is Enter & View, which is a statutory function. This means that Healthwatch can visit any health or social care service in the borough of Kingston upon Thames or any that serves people in the local borough and observe how this service is delivered.

During an Enter & View visit, Healthwatch will talk to patients or service users and members of staff and make observations of the environment to ensure it is safe and clean.

After a visit, Healthwatch will prepare a report which will list its findings and any recommendations.

Where there are serious concerns, such as a health and safety issue or a safeguarding issue, this will be reported immediately to the service provider, the commissioner of the service or a relevant body such as the Care Quality Commission.

Enter & View participants receive full training, based on recommendations from Healthwatch England, and are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked. Upon completing this process they are then allocated status as Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representatives.

1.3 The Enter & View Team

- Philip Indge- Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representative supported by Sophie Bird- Healthwatch Kingston Community Engagement Officer
- Cathy Smith- Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representative supported by Helen Haywood- Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representative
- Jennifer Carpenter- Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representative supported by Amy Horrell- Healthwatch Kingston Volunteer
- Marita Brown- Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representative

Jennifer and Philip are registered blind and Cathy is visually impaired. Jennifer was using a wheelchair at the time of the visit.

2.0 Methodology

The Enter and View visit to the Royal Eye Unit (REU) at Kingston Hospital took place on the 27th of July 2015 for a 2 hour period from 10am to 12pm. This report reflects the views and observations gathered for this specific date and time only.

The focus of visiting the REU was to gain an insight into the service and patient experience being provided. Posters and Healthwatch Kingston signs were displayed at the entrance of the REU to explain the role of Healthwatch, the purpose of visiting the service and talking to patients. At the REU half the waiting room is allocated for A & E eye patients; the other half is for the outpatient appointments. Within this Enter & View visit the focus was on the outpatient's area of the waiting room. Authorised Representatives on the Enter & View team gathered information by talking to patients, completing patient questionnaires and recording observations about the environment.

2.1 Patient Questionnaires

The patient questionnaire was designed by the Healthwatch Kingston staff team and Authorised Representatives during the planning process of the Enter & View visit. Feedback about the REU was received by HWK from blind and visually impaired people in Kingston, from sources such as Kingston Association for the Blind. Feedback from a recent Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group public consultation on the service was also used. (See appendix A for the patient questionnaire). All questionnaires were printed in size 16 font and were designed to be readable for patients with visual impairment. Authorised Representatives approached patients sat in the waiting area to explain the role of Healthwatch Kingston, explain why we were carrying out the Enter & View and ask if the patient was willing to complete a questionnaire. It was stated that all information collected is treated in strictest confidence and is anonymous.

2.2 Observations

Authorised Representatives used checklists to make various observations of the environment in the Royal Eye Unit. They included the environment of the waiting area- ease of access, advice and information being made available and the quality of staff service. Observations were made from the perspectives of sighted persons, visually impaired persons and as a wheel chair user. This enabled the team to gather a varied range of observations.

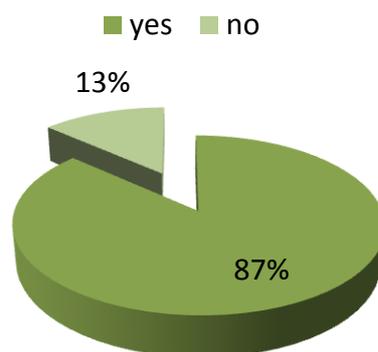
3.0 Findings

3.1 Patient questionnaires

16 patients were surveyed at the visit. 5 of those patients stated they were visually impaired, the others stated they were sighted. Out of the 5 visually impaired patients 3 said they had received letters and information about their appointment in large print. The 2 visually impaired patients who hadn't received information in large print stated they found the letters difficult to read as the font was too small.

87% of patients said their communications about appointments had been efficient. Patients commented they were happy with the timing of the letters they received and the information was clear.

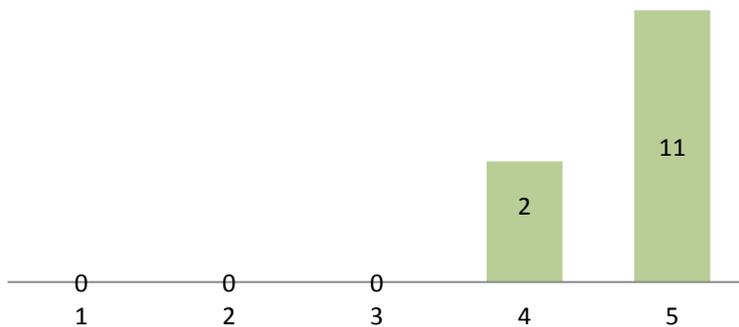
**Has the communication about appointments
been efficient?**



When asked if they found the signs giving directions to the RIU clear, 6 said they had found them clear, 1 said they did not find the signs clear and helpful, 2 said they rely on a carer to take them and the other 7 said they already know how to find the REU so do not need to observe the signs. The patient who said no stated they found it confusing finding the REU. Most patients could not make a judgement because they automatically walk into the Unit without paying attention to the signs.

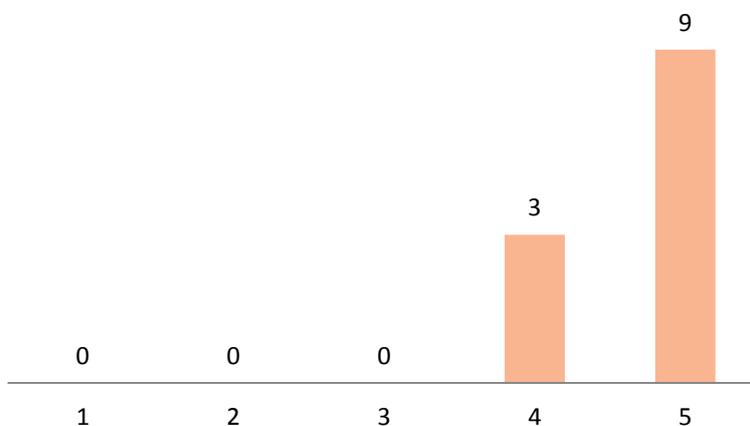
Patients were asked to grade (from 1 - 5 low to high) how helpful and friendly they found members of staff. As there was not a Thomas Pocklington Trust volunteer available on this visit Authorised representatives were unable to gain feedback on this service.

**How friendly and helpful would you rate the
receptionist today?
(1 - not at all) (5 -excellent)**



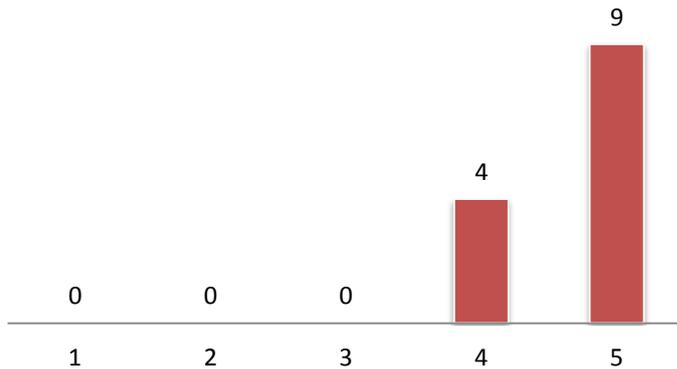
11 out of the 13 patients who spoke to a receptionist selected a grade of 5, 2 selected a grade of 4. The remaining 3 used the self service screens so could not comment.

**How helpful and friendly have you found the
nurse today?
(1- not at all) (5 - excellent)**



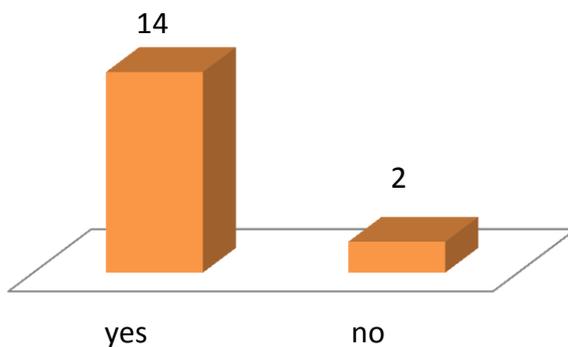
Out of the patients 13 patients who had spoken to a nurse 9 selected a grade of 5, 4 graded 4 and 3 said they hadn't seen a nurse yet so could not comment.

**How helpful and friendly have you found
the Doctor today?
(1 - not at all) (5 - excellent)**



Of the 9 people who had seen a Doctor, 8 graded them a 5. 1 patient graded a 3 as the Doctor was not able to find his MRI scan; he therefore had to go back out to wait in the waiting room which had caused himself and his wife to feel anxious as they were not reassured of whether this situation would be resolved.

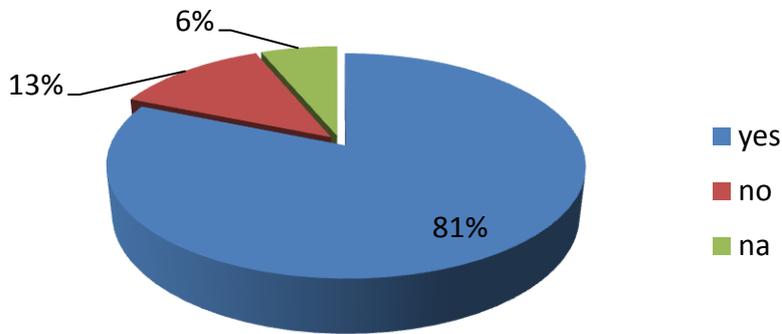
**Is the waiting room a pleasant and
comfortable environment to wait in?**



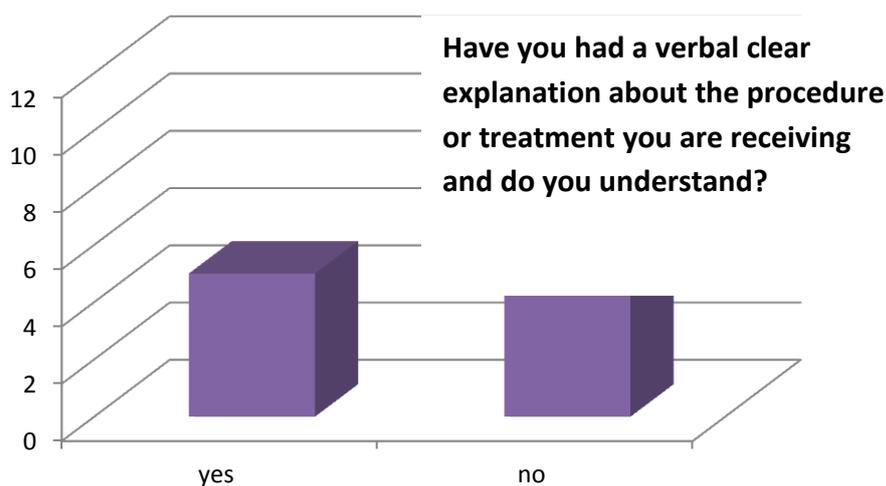
Patients were asked is the waiting area comfortable and pleasant, 14 of the 16 patients surveyed said yes. One patient commented they did not know there was a water dispenser available until after their appointment- the sign could be bigger.

The 2 patients who said no commented that the way in which patients are called for their appointments makes them feel uneasy as they do not know where they are being called from and feel anxious they may miss their appointment.

Do you think the way you are called for your appointment in the waiting room works well?

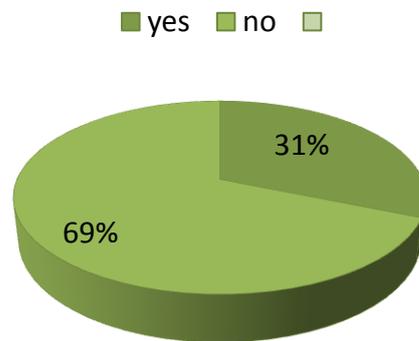


When asked whether they think the way they are called for their appointment in the waiting room works well 69% of patients surveyed said yes, 25% said no. 1 patient didn't comment as they had not yet been called. The patients who said no commented that it is very difficult to hear your name, as the doctor mumbled it and then just walked off. It was also commented by another patient that it is not a welcoming service - it is not a good way to be greeted by a Doctor. 2 Patients stated they had difficulty hearing their name being called.



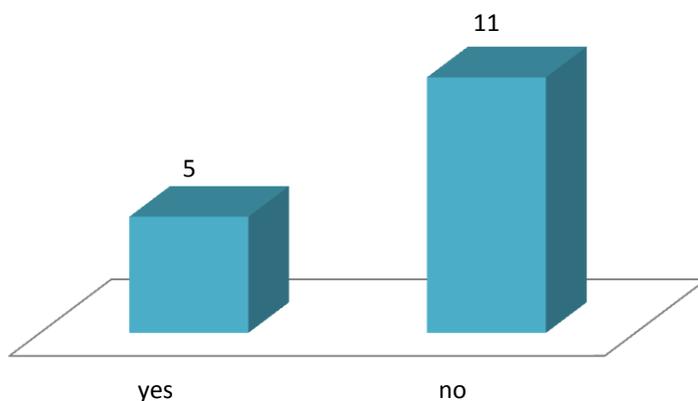
Patients were asked if they had a verbal clear explanation about the procedure or treatment being received and whether they fully understood. Out of the 16 surveyed 11 said they had, 2 said they hadn't, 3 said they had not yet seen the Nurse or Doctor.

**Did you have the opportunity to ask any questions
and if so were they well answered?**



Patients were also asked if they had the opportunity to ask any questions if so were they well answered, 11 said they had, 4 said they hadn't, 1 patient could not respond to these questions as they had not yet seen the Doctor.

**Have you been offered extra written information
about your treatment/ condition?**



Patients were asked if they had been given any written information about their eye condition and treatment, they were also asked if it was offered in large print if needed.

5 said yes they had been given extra written information, 11 said they hadn't. Of the 5 patients who were visually impaired 2 said they had received extra information in large print.

Patients were asked how long they had been waiting to be seen and how they feel about the waiting times at Kingston Hospital Royal Eye Unit

Out of the patients surveyed, the average waiting time was 30 minutes. The shortest was 10 minutes and the longest was 40 minutes.

3.2 Observations

Access

There were concerns raised from Authorised Representatives who are blind and visually impaired regarding the signage in and around the Royal Eye Unit. It was found that the signs are visible to sighted patients but due to the position, font, colour and size of the signs they may not be recognisable by patients who are blind or visually impaired.

It was observed in the waiting room that the aisles in between the rows of chairs are quite narrow. The team had some difficulty in manoeuvring the wheel chair around the isles in order to talk to patients. When walking past a consultation room there had been a wheel chair left outside in the corridor- this is a narrow isle and the wheel chair had to be moved into the consultation room with the patient in order for us to pass. It was also found to be a small space for an Authorised Representatives with a guide dog and a stick to walk down the isles, other patients had to retract their legs in order to let them pass.

Environment

The Royal Eye Unit was clean with no slippery services. The toilets were clean and well stocked with soap and toilet paper. The temperature was comfortable with fresh circulation of air in the waiting room. There were approximately 10 patients waiting at the queue at reception throughout the visit, with 2 members of staff at reception.

The waiting area in A & E was quite busy at the time of the visit; the Outpatients area had less patients. There was a calm atmosphere, staff members were busy but the service appeared smoothly run. There was a water dispenser for patients.

Advice and information

There was a small table at the side of the Outpatients waiting area with a variety of information leaflets about different eye conditions. This is where the Thomas Pocklington Trust Volunteer is normally based however at the time of this visit the Volunteer was unable to attend their shift. Many of the leaflets were in bright yellow and large print which would make them more readable for patients who are visually impaired.

Staff service

All staff appeared to be busy; staff members at reception were continually registering patients during the time of the visit. The service provided appeared polite. During the time of the visit we did not witness any patients being directed to the table with the information leaflets.

Patients who were sitting in the waiting room were called by the nurse/ Doctor into various consultation rooms around the outside of the waiting room. The standard procedure witnessed on the visit was the Health professional stepping out of their consultation room, calling the patients' name which wasn't loud or clear, then stepping back in. It was witnessed that on many occasions staff did not spend any time to check the patient had heard them. This practice was observed to be inappropriate by the Authorised Representatives and some patients who are potentially need extra support.

There was an occasion when 2 members of staff were calling patients names simultaneously- it was confusing and difficult to hear the names and where in the room they were coming from.

4.0 Recommendations

- There are various ways in which the signs could be changed to make them more visible to patients with impaired vision; this could include options such as using black text on a yellow background. There are many signs at Kingston Hospital which would require specific examination in order to recommend suitable alternatives. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames Sensory Team has the expertise to support this examination and recommendations for new signs. Healthwatch Kingston Authorised Representatives could be part of this process in testing out the signs on a specific visit with representatives from the sensory team, in order to propose recommendations for improvements.
- Nurses and Doctors who call patients in to the treatment rooms could walk in to the centre of the waiting room and clearly call the patients name, the patients can then hear clearly, and make themselves known. This could be aided by use of a microphone with a sound system in the waiting room. If the patient is visually impaired or needs extra assistance this can then be noted and provided accordingly by the staff member.
- The staff member could greet the patient with "Hello, my name is.. I am your nurse/ Doctor today". This greeting would significantly improve the customer service experience, and would help put the patient at ease.
- Although there is a small table with information leaflets which are usually staffed by a volunteer it was noted that REU staff are very busy. The volunteers at the REU could have a very important role in pro- actively handing out information about eye conditions, and also details of local clubs and groups such as the Macular Society in Kingston.
- Patients could be automatically updated as being visually impaired on their patient records, they could be asked what methods would help them read their letters (e.g. yellow papers, large print etc)

- A larger sign could be put above the water dispenser to let patients know it is there.

5.0 Next Steps

- This report will be presented to Kingston Hospital and we will provide adequate time for staff to respond. We expect that not all recommendations will be implemented straight away, but we anticipate that the management will provide us with a plan to address these issues.
- It will be presented to Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group to contribute to the redesign of Community Eye Services in Kingston.
- It will be presented to the Care Quality Commission to share information.
- We are planning our schedule of Enter & View visits and will return to Kingston Hospital to see other wards and departments, and in future to revisit the wards to see if our recommendations have been implemented.

6.0 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Kingston would like to give great thanks to Cathy Smith, Jennifer Carpenter, Philip Indge, Helen Haywood, Amy Horrell and Marita Brown for their work throughout this Enter & View, from the pre visit planning, participation on the day and the production of this report. It would not have been possible without your team work and effort.

We would also like to thank the Royal Eye Unit and staff at Kingston Hospital who took the time to explain the service and answer questions on the day.

7.0 Further information

This report was produced by Healthwatch Kingston upon Thames and will be made available to the public on our website, and hard copies will be made available on request. Should you require this report in a different format, please contact the Healthwatch Kingston office at:

Kingston Quaker Centre, Fairfield East, Kingston, KT1 2PT, Tel: 020 8974 6629,
Email: info@healthwatchkingstonuponthames.org.uk,

Website: www.healthwatchkingstonuponthames.org.uk

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8. Appendix

Patient questionnaires

1. Are you visually impaired? If so did you receive letters/ info for this appointment in large print? N/A YES NO

2. Has the communication about appointments been efficient? Was the information in the letter understandable?
YES NO (*Add more details*)

3. Do you find the signage giving directions to the Eye Unit clear?
YES NO (*Add more details*)

4. How helpful and friendly have you found the staff today? On a scale of 1 - 5 (1 not at all- 5 excellent)

Tick staff member seen and circle number

RECEPTIONIST	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
VOLUNTEER	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
NURSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
DOCTOR	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5

5. Do you find the waiting room is a pleasant & comfortable environment to wait in? *(Add more details)*

YES NO OK BUT COULD BE IMPROVED

6. Do you think the way you are called for your appointment from the waiting room works well? YES NO

7. Have you had a verbal clear explanation about the procedure or treatment you are receiving and do you understand? YES NO

8. Did you have the opportunity to ask any questions if so were they well answered? YES NO

9. Have you been given any written information about your eye condition and any relevant treatment? If needed has this been in large print? YES NO

10. How long have you had to wait to be seen today? How do you feel about the waiting times at Kingston Hospital Royal Eye Unit?