

# Young People's Healthwatch Paediatric Menu Tasting Event

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14/10/2015

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## About Healthwatch Kingston

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.

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 ensures the voice of local people is heard, and it goes out into the community to listen to what people have to say.

Our Young People's Healthwatch has been set up to gather the views of teenagers aged 12-18, and we currently have seven teenagers aged 13 and 14 from Coombe Girls School who are volunteering with us and helping us with our work.

The Young People's Healthwatch team carried out an Enter and View visit to Kingston Hospital NHS Trust's Paediatric wards back in August 2015 and had gave their feedback on the draft menu. The team was kindly invited back by the Trust on 14<sup>th</sup> October for the official launch of the menu, to taste the food and share their opinions with the catering staff, senior nurses and the Director of Nursing.

### The Team

For the menu launch six young teenagers and one member of staff visited the Trust. We were looking at nutritional value, taste, smell, convenience and value for money. The team comprised: Jess King, Ivy Ould, Alicia Herrera, Abbie Morris, Maddy Pitt & Alex Pitt

### Paediatric Menu Launch Event

We met with the Trust's Catering Manager Nassrin Joseph who explained how the food is heated and served, along with an explanation of costs per patients (around £2 per meal, and around £6 per day including cake, snacks and tea and coffee). She pointed out that a specific calorie count has to be matched, and that the menu has to meet nutritional guidelines. The pasta bakes and meat pies were excellent, although feedback from some of the girls was that the vegetables had a metallic aftertaste.



The team thought the laminated menus were bright and colourful, and easier to read than when they last saw them at their Enter & View visit in August. The text was clearer (black font on an orange background), with a fun graphic.



Also available were snack boxes for children on the wards who don't want to eat a hot main meal. These were very popular with the team, as they consisted of jelly, a sandwich, an oreo bar, fruit and cheese, and were ideal for children who felt they couldn't eat a great deal. Senior Sister Hind Thomas explained how the menu could be flexible, in that a child may have a snack box, but also a dessert from the main menu if they wished. The team thought that this flexibility was ideal on the ward. They also thought the packaging was attractive and practical, in that it could be closed up easily for storage in the fridge.



The range of cakes and puddings were wide and varied and the team were impressed with the quality: “The éclairs were delicious,” commented Maddy Pitt. Bearing in mind a healthy eating plan, the team did wonder if more fruit could be made available as part of the menu, alongside the cakes. “Perhaps a fruit salad might be nice, too?” suggested Jess King.



### **Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Kingston would like to thank the Trust for inviting the Young People’s Healthwatch team to the event, especially Senior Sisters Hind Thomas and Sarah Shade and Catering Manager Nassrin Joseph. Our thanks also go out to Ms Buchanan at Coombe Girls School for her help in arranging the girls’ absence, and to school mini bus drivers Mr Pounds and Mrs Knight.

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