

The Walton Centre at Healthwatch

Partnership Engagement Event,
8 February 2022



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Introduction

Healthwatch Liverpool, Healthwatch Sefton and The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust organised an online engagement event on 8 February 2022. We invited patients, relatives and patient groups to tell us about their own experiences and to learn more about the work that goes on at the Trust.

In total 15 people attended, including staff from The Walton Centre's Patient Experience Team, staff from Healthwatch Sefton and Healthwatch Liverpool, representatives from the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society and the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA), as well as individual patients.

We would like to thank The Walton Centre for their support in organising this event.

The Event

The Walton Centre's Patient Experience Team – presentation (please see the appendix for the presentation slides).

Staff from The Walton Centre's patient engagement team talked about the health services that it provides, and what the patient experience team does. Staff also explained how they collect patient feedback about their services.

In the presentation the team showed some of the successes The Walton Centre has had, including the positive patient feedback from the annual National Inpatient Survey where the Walton Centre was in 8th place nationally.

The team also talked about some of the difficulties as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. For patients this included no visitors being allowed apart from in exceptional circumstances, and many more online or phone appointments for outpatients.

The patient experience team explained how they supported inpatients by for example making sure that 'virtual' online visits could happen, and by delivering emails from families to patients. Two patient support assistants were employed to act as go-betweens between patients, staff, and families.

Other things the team did was to make sure that inpatients had a birthday celebration, with cake, as their families couldn't visit. The Walton Centre also gave patients memory boxes, and 'sleep well packs' with ear plugs and eye masks. The patient experience team made sure that comments from patients and relatives were shared quickly with other staff. This led to some improvements, like for example having longer visiting hours in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

After the presentation from The Walton Centre's Patient Experience Team the people at the event provided comments and asked questions, including:

- Much positive feedback about the presentation and the excellent work that The Walton Centre does.
- Some people said that they would have liked to hear more about the Trust's outpatient services in the presentation.
- 'Attend Anywhere' outpatient appointments (online or by phone) can be difficult for people who don't have access to/ don't feel comfortable using computers.

In response Patient Experience Team staff said that there are now more face to-face in person appointments available again, and that there is a consultation ongoing about a new strategy that also looks at appointments.

- A question was asked about where the funding for the Patient Experience team initiatives that were mentioned in the presentation came from.

Patient Experience Team staff replied that some funding came from NHS England Innovation funds, while the funding to employ the patient support assistants came from charities including the Walton Centre Charity.

- There was a comment about how the pandemic had made the linking up of community services with The Walton Centre more difficult.
- Further questions asked how the Trust made sure it was inclusive, and how it engaged with groups and individual people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities (the term used on the day and used by Healthwatch Liverpool)/ Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds (the term used by Healthwatch Sefton).

Patient Team staff responded that a Quality Inclusion Group at The Walton Centre is looking at this and working on a new strategy. Also, a new Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is working with Alder Hey and Clatterbridge Hospitals to develop a new strategy and overview. Staff also mentioned that The Walton Centre has LGBT+ and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff groups in place.

- Another question was about services for patients with Long Covid; The Walton Centre staff said that the Trust is supporting patients with Long Covid along with other Trusts such as LUFHT and Mersey Care.
- Problems with finding parking spaces at the Trust were mentioned, but staff said that this had now improved because staff working patterns had changed.

Discussions in smaller groups – main points raised

After the presentation everyone split into two smaller groups to talk about people's own experiences, and the experiences of patients who were represented by the MS Society and the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MND).

The main points raised were about:

- Getting appointments
- Getting (emotional) support
- Information and signposting
- Getting other services (for example physiotherapy)
- The importance of peer support
- Better integration/ working together of services across the NHS
- More learning from good examples across the NHS

A representative from the Motor Neurone Disease Association said that online appointments can be very helpful, but that it is also necessary to see the whole body, not just the face, especially for people with Motor Neurone Disease; face to face/ in-person contact was important. Also, patients who have just been diagnosed may need help to prepare questions, as a diagnosis often comes as a shock. Having information to take away and look at when ready would be really useful.

A representative from the MS Society mentioned they had hosted an online workshop in November 2020. During this workshop patients had mentioned some difficulties with communication with the Trust, and that they would like to see more and better promotion of helplines and other available services.

Some people had said they felt there was no – or not enough – emotional & psychological support, and that they hadn't felt supported effectively by staff, especially at the point of diagnosis or when getting bad news – but they said this was a problem across the NHS, not just at The Walton Centre.

MS Society and the Motor Neurone Disease Association representatives both mentioned that services should work together better. They also mentioned that if knowledge and expertise like that at The Walton Centre could be shared more with other organisations, including hospital trusts like Arrowe Park, LUHFT and GPs, standards of care for patients with neurological conditions would improve across the board.

Patients had shared the difficulties of finding services that they needed nearer to where they lived with the MS Society and Motor Neurone Disease Association representatives. When services did exist patients didn't always know about them. This included the Walton Centre's nurse advice line, and a suggestion was made that information about services like this should be provided at appointments, for example business card style information with phone numbers for advice lines. Just having information available on websites was not enough.

In both smaller discussion groups suggestions were made to create a patient directory, which could be handed to patients when they were given a diagnosis for example.

Both MS Society and Motor Neurone Disease Association representatives mentioned the importance of peer support (support from people who have had similar experiences) and that the NHS should use the resources, knowledge and experience of patient organisations by linking in with local groups.

Individual comments included that of someone who had been a patient at The Walton Centre for more than 20 years, and who said that it was a model hospital.

They said that the hospital doesn't stand still, was always developing, and was patient-centred. They had recently had face to face and online appointments, and thought that a mixture of those worked best. They said that the One Stop Shop in the outpatient's department was very good.

They felt that the only problem with online appointment consultations was that referrals, for example for physiotherapy, could often not be actioned and were delayed, but they said that the consultant was great. They felt that the patients came first and were listened to. If they had to rate it out of 5 stars, with 5 being the most positive, they said they would give it 5 – or 100 stars if they could.

Another patient who had been attending the Motor Neurone Disease department at The Walton Centre for 5 years said that inpatient services were brilliant, but that they had experienced difficulties with referrals to other services like physiotherapy. The patient also mentioned that there was a lack of mental health support, such as counselling referrals for patients attending the Motor Neurone Disease clinic. Signposting to research trials was not made available. The patient said that if these concerns were addressed, and small changes made, this could lead to big improvements. The patient rated the Walton Centre as 3 out of 5 stars.

Conclusion

Even though this was a small event, the feedback received was useful and can help to pinpoint where services are doing well, and where some improvements can be made.

There was a lot of praise for The Walton Centre, and some suggestions for improvements, especially about information and signposting for patients. We have added some recommendations below.

The Walton Centre's patient experience team will listen to feedback from groups and individuals and try to address any concerns, including by raising them at the Trust's Patient Experience Group meeting. Their contact details are below.

Recommendations

Information and signposting were mentioned several times at the event. We recommend that The Walton Centre:

- For conditions such as MND and MS, provide information packs at the point of diagnosis, so that people can read and take the information in when they are ready (with relevant telephone numbers for The Walton Centre helplines, as well as information from other organisations that can provide support);
- has information about mental health support readily available to all staff and patients;
- check when patients are discharged and at each outpatient appointment that patients are aware of contact numbers for nurse specialists where these exist for specific conditions;
- ensure that information from/about organisations that can provide help and support -including peer support- like the Brain Charity, MNDA and the MS Society are readily available to patients.

What is Healthwatch?

Every local authority area in England has its own local Healthwatch.

We are independent from the NHS. We gather feedback from patients and service users to find out where health and social care services are working well, and where they could be improved. By presenting this feedback as evidence to commissioners (organisations that plan and buy health and care services), as well as to the organisations that provide these services, we try to influence change and improve services for everyone.

Healthwatch also provides information and signposts people to health, care and wellbeing services. Our complaints advocates give information and - where necessary - support to people who want to make a complaint about NHS services.

Response from The Walton Centre

The Patient Experience Team were delighted to work in partnership with Healthwatch colleagues to engage with patients and families during lockdown.

Following the event in February, the recommendations were discussed with teams and specialist nursing colleagues. They confirm that the Specialist Nurses for the services aim to be present when patients receive a new diagnosis to provide support and all relevant information including the nurse advice line. At this point they sign post to external partners and websites including MS society/ MNDA, as these are trusted resources for information, support and for help including mental health support such as counselling and peer support. Patients are then referred to the MS /MND nurse services and they are followed up within approximately 4 weeks.

We strive to continuously improve the services we provide for patients, and this includes mental health support. In addition, we now have three patient representatives with long term conditions, including MS, MND and Parkinson's Disease on the Neuroalliance Programme Board working with colleagues across Cheshire and Merseyside.

The Patient Experience Team would like to thank patients, families, and Healthwatch for their feedback and are very much look forward to colleagues coming back on-site undertaking face to face engagement events in the future.

Lisa Judge

Head of Patient and Family Experience, The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust

Appendix: presentation by The Walton Centre Patient Experience Team



Partnership Engagement Event Healthwatch Liverpool – Sefton

Lisa Judge & Emma Sutton

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Aims of Session



- Provide an overview of the Trust and services
- Overview of Patient Experience Team
- Governance & Assurance
- Engagement & Feedback
- CQC Inpatient Survey 2021



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Background

The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust is the leader in treatment and care of neurology and neurosurgery. Formed in 1992 and achieved Trust Status in 2009.

The only specialist hospital trust providing neurology, neurosurgery, spinal and pain management services.

Rated – **Outstanding** by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)



Background cont....

With approximately 1,450 staff, the hospital treat more than 127,000 outpatients and 18,000 inpatients each year with conditions including:

- **Head and spinal trauma injuries**
- **Tumours of the central nervous system, both cranial and spinal**
- **Neurovascular diseases**
- **Epilepsy (including a full surgical programme)**
- **Movement disorders (including the provision of a deep brain stimulation service)**
- **Pain, with a particular focus on trigeminal neuralgia**
- **Multiple sclerosis and motor neurone disease**
- **Chronic neuropathic pain, facial pain, headache and migraine**

Our Pain Management Programme is regarded as a model of best practice for helping patients deal with severe and chronic pain

We offer Complex Rehabilitation services which support patients who need a high level of support to recover from a neurological trauma or illness. Our Complex Rehab Unit is also part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Rehabilitation Network (CMRN).



What do we do?



- Provide on-going support to patients, families and carers
- Listen to enquiries & concerns take these forward to reach a resolution
- Providing emotional support and signpost to services
- Resolve concerns in partnership with staff
- Collect and act on feedback – Lead on Friends & Family Test
- Facilitate meetings both formal/informal between patients, families & staff



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ACTION PLAN			
WHO	WHAT	WHEN	HOW

- Promote and support of culture of learning and quality improvement across all aspects of patient care, safety, culture and services
- Support the Medical Examiner in their role in the review of inpatient deaths and embed the Learning from Deaths/Mortality Process
- Ensure actions/learning from all interactions are recorded and managed via the appropriate division/platform



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- Lead on the police enquires, HM Coroner and legal claims
- Provide post bereavement support
- Support people with enhanced needs
- Involved in the investigation of serious incidents
- Manage and recruit and retain our volunteer service
- Attend and support during best interest/ MDT or complex discharge meetings
- Manage our onsite Home from Home accommodation for relatives



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Engagement and Feedback



- ✓ CQC Inpatient Survey - 8th for overall patient experience
- ✓ FFT Survey
- ✓ Compliments – Q3 – 51 formal compliments
- ✓ Feedback via Health watch – Winter Engagement Event Planned in partnership with Liverpool & Sefton in Feb 22
- ✓ Patient Experience Group – Governors, External Stakeholders

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CQC Inpatient Survey 2021

- ✓ Rated Better than Expected
- ✓ 56% response rate (vs 45% for other organisations)
- ✓ Scored Better, Much better for 9/10 sections of survey
- ✓ 8th out of 75 for overall positive score – moved up in rank



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CQC Inpatient Survey 2021

Table 11: Section Scores

Section	2020 Score	Band
Section 1. Admission to hospital	8.2	
Section 2. The hospital and ward	8.5	Better
Section 3. Doctors	9.2	Somewhat better
Section 4. Nurses	9.1	Better
Section 5. Care and treatment	8.6	Better
Section 6. Operations and procedures	8.5	
Section 7. Leaving hospital	7.7	Better
Section 8. Respect and dignity	2.2	Better
Section 9. Overall experience	9.6	Better
Section 10. Feedback on quality of care	9.0	Much better

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CQC Inpatient Survey 2021

- ✓ 99% of patients treated with respect and dignity overall
- ✓ 99% of patients had confidence and trust in the doctors and nurses
- ✓ 92% Rated overall experience as 7 out of 10 or more

Results as a result of Walton initiative such as:

- ▶ Service improvement projects e.g., patient flow, discharge
- ▶ Action plans following concerns/engagement events
- ▶ Patient & Family Stories
- ▶ Daily Safety Huddle – local huddles
- ▶ Matron/Patient Experience Rounds

During 2021/22 and beyond we will continue to build on this work to ensure we are working together with patients and their families as equal partners in care, in line with The Walton Way.

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CQC Inpatient Survey 2021



The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust

- 😊 'Good care from Nurses when short of staff. Rooms kept clean thank you to all staff & domestics.'
- 😊 'Nothing is too much trouble for the staff here; each and every one of them is to be commended for their professional manner.'
- 😊 'PROBABLY THE BEST EXPERIENCE I HAVE HAD IN HOSPITAL'
- 😊 Particularly difficult to go through a Brain operation with no family allowed to visit (due to Covid19)... but I have to say, the Staff at the Walton Centre are outstanding, friendly, helpful, and caring...
- 😊 'Since 2015 I've been visiting The Walton Centre Having numerous operations. In sept 2020 I was patient for day during pandemic I felt extremely safe The staff on Caton were 100% helpful Respectful etc. Nothing was too much And because of this I have left legacy in my Will to the spinal unit.'
- 😊 Walton is the beacon of good practice from a nurse of 45 years
- 😊 The nurses were really kind and very attentive! They made me feel calm when I felt overwhelmed and were just all round lovely!

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Feedback about our Team



The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust

December 2021

'Sorry to email first thing but I can't thank you enough for your help. My mum rang last night and was able to speak to the team and they have invited her in. I really can't thank you enough for your help and response - is there anywhere I can leave a review'

'Thank you for the support I received during the time I was making my complaint, your team are amazing, and I can't thank you enough - Happy New Year to you all'

'I raised a concern but PET have supported me all along the way. It makes such a difference when staff have good communication and keep patients up to date. I feel like I have been let down lately but it really helped with my stress levels to know that I have PET to call for support - I can't thank you enough for the job that you do'

'You are amazing, warm, kind and caring people - thank you for being an oasis of calm support when I needed it most. From the bottom of my heart keep on doing what you are doing'

Thank you for the speedy response to my complaint. I receive my appointment letter a couple of weeks ago and understand that it is your action following my complaint that has made this happen. I empathise with your service and completely understand the internal and external pressures of the NHS. Continue fighting the good fight!'

'thank you for your input and your continued support throughout the complaints process - you make a difference'

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WE ♥ CARE.



Staff Support

NHS
The Walton Centre
NHS Foundation Trust



Departmental specific training to be delivered to empower staff to deal with difficult situations

Our door is always open



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The Patient & Family Experience Team

- Lisa** Judge - Head of Patient Experience
- Emma** Sutton - Patient Experience & Engagement Manager
- Jen** Makin - Patient Experience/Accommodation Officer
- Emma** Griffiths - Patient Experience Assistant
- Julie** Elwill - Legal Claims Manager
- Pat** Crofton - Governance Lead for Mortality
- Emily** Nolan - Volunteer Manager
- Isabel** Moreno - Meet & Greet Concierge

patientexperienceteam@thewaltoncentre.nhs.uk

0151 556 3090 / 3091 / 3093

Monday-Friday 9.00 am – 4.00 pm



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