



Enter & View Report

Whipps Cross University Hospital
Phlebotomy Department
Area 1, Outpatients Department
Whipps Cross Road,
Leytonstone
E11 1NR

25th July 2016



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Report Details

Address	Phlebotomy Department Whipps Cross Road, Leytonstone, London E11 1NR
Service Provider	Barts Health NHS Trust
Contact Details	Lorraine Durack- Deputy Supervisor
Date/time of visit	Monday 25 th July 2016, 10am-11am
Type of visit	Unannounced visit
Authorised representatives undertaking the visits	Sarah Oyebanjo - Enter & View (E&V) Coordinator - Lead Representative Ann Bertrand Hyacinth Osborne Naina Thaker - Project Coordinator
Contact details	Healthwatch Redbridge 5th Floor, Forest House 16-20 Clements Road Ilford, Essex IG1 1BA 020 8553 1236

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Redbridge (HWR) would like to thank the staff and residents at Whipps Cross Hospital for their hospitality.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed during our visit made on **25 July 2016**.

Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time of the visits.

What is Enter & View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter & View visits. E&V visits are conducted by a small team of trained volunteers, who are prepared as 'Authorised Representatives' to conduct visits to health and social care premises. These visits aim to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement or capture best practice which can be shared.

Enter & View is the opportunity for Healthwatch Redbridge to:

- Enter publicly funded health and social care premises to see and hear first-hand experiences about the service.
- Observe how the service is delivered, often by using a themed approach.
- Collect the views of service users (patients and residents) at the point of service delivery.
- Collect the views of carers and relatives through evidence based feedback by observing the nature and quality of services.
- Report to providers, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Local Authorities, Commissioners, Healthwatch England and other relevant partners.

Enter & View visits are carried out as 'announced visits' where arrangements are made with the service provider, or, if certain circumstances dictate, as 'unannounced' visits.

Enter & View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what a service does well.

Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch Redbridge (HWR) conducted an E&V visit to Whipps Cross phlebotomy department in response to concerns raised by local residents about the temporary closure of the Phlebotomy service at Wanstead Hospital on 11 July 2016. Healthwatch was not informed of the temporary closure and found out from patients who contacted us.

We asked for clarification from Barts Health that the service being offered at Whipps Cross Hospital can support the number of patients using the service whilst Wanstead Hospital is temporarily closed. Although we have been given assurances that the service can cope; we are still unsure of the length of disruption to the service.

The aim of this visit is to assess first hand whether the service is meeting the needs of the additional patients. We aim to use the information we identify to assure ourselves and service users that the service meets patients' needs.

Methodology

This was an unannounced visit so the service providers were unaware that the visit was going to take place.

Prior to the visit, HWR contacted Barts Health to find out when the phlebotomy service at Wanstead Hospital will be reopening. They responded with a statement confirming their plan to reopen the service 'as quickly as possible' but were unable to confirm timescales.

Upon our arrival at the department, the lead authorised representative approached the deputy supervisor to inform her about the visit. The deputy supervisor was given a letter which provided brief information about the scope of the visit and the role of the attendees. The supervisor then introduced the lead authorised representative to staff members. The lead representative spoke to staff members whilst the other representatives spoke to service users.

At the end of the visit, the supervisor was provided with a verbal debrief. She was also informed that a draft report would be sent and that they would have 20 working days to respond with their comments.

Results of the visit

The lead representative spoke to staff to find out about the number of staff members available, whether any additional resources have been made available and any issues that have been highlighted due to the current increase in demand whilst the Wanstead site was closed.

Three other representatives spoke with service users, using a standard set of questions to find out about their experience of the temporary closure of Wanstead hospital phlebotomy site.

Observations

On arrival at the department, number 40 was the next number to be seen by the phlebotomist but number 76 was the next ticket available.

After conducting the visit, the ticket machine had gone round to number 99 then started again from 1 and was on number 19 but the next number to be called was 72 from the previous round.

There was a notice on the wall advising patients of the 45 minutes waiting time.

Due to the increase in patients, there wasn't enough seating for patients and some people were standing.

Trust Response:

There is extra seating approx. 15-20ft away in the main corridor adjacent to Area 1 which is the main waiting area. An additional digital display unit is installed in this second waiting area to keep patients informed of their place in the queue.

Healthwatch Response:

Healthwatch visited the site again and are happy to confirm that further seating is available in the main corridor adjacent to Area 1.

There was no water dispenser in the waiting room

Trust Response:

There is a water cooler sited at the beginning of the entrance leading directly into Area 1.

Healthwatch Response:

Healthwatch visited the site again and, upon further investigation, can confirm that there is a water dispenser which is sited on the right hand side on entering Area 1 next to the toilet.

Speaking to staff members (see Appendix 1 for questions):

The lead representative spoke with five staff members. Two of the staff members usually work in Whipps Cross Hospital while the other three were from Wanstead hospital.

All staff members confirmed that there are usually four staff working in one room but due to the temporary closure, another room had been opened and there are now five people working. The deputy supervisor mentioned that of the three staff members from Wanstead, two finish at 12pm and one finishes at 2pm.

Staff said that they do not provide patients with a list of alternative centres to go to as this is available in their GP information sheet.

All staff members said that they have noticed an increase in the number of patients visiting the hospital however they are not having to withdraw tickets at an earlier time than usual.

Staff said that the opening hours haven't been extended because Wanstead residents are supposed to visit between 8am-2pm (normal opening times of Wanstead hospital) which is when the staff from there are available at Whipps Cross hospital. However, members of staff do not turn patients away if they come later.

Staff mentioned that one of the main issues that has been highlighted by patients is that doctors are not informing patients about the temporary closure of the Wanstead site. The deputy supervisor said that the head of department told them an email had been sent to doctors about a fortnight ago (mid-July). However, Healthwatch Redbridge contacted a number of practice managers who told us they did not receive any information about the temporary closure.

A staff member mentioned that on the day of the closure at Wanstead hospital, there were about 30 patients waiting but they had to be sent home because everyone had to evacuate the building. Staff told us that the temporary closure of Wanstead hospital wasn't a problem due to the additional staff members from Wanstead working there. The supervisor also mentioned that they have dealt with a similar situation before so they are able to support the patients accordingly.

Patients also told staff that the car park in Whipps Cross hospital was further away and made it difficult for older people coming from the Wanstead area.

Trust response:

The sudden closure of the Wanstead site came unexpectedly during the Friday session. Temporary signage was put in place that same afternoon and improved signage was placed at the site the following Monday at 07:30hrs. Patients were requested to attend Whipps Cross Out-Patients Department (OPD) and not encouraged to go to sites in Waltham Forest as these sites are already over attended.

Speaking to service users (see Appendix 2 for questions):

Representatives spoke to 23 service users of which 12 were regular service users at Whipps Cross Hospital. Of the regular service users, eight said that it was busier than usual. One service user said that when he came a month ago, there was an hour and half wait so this visit was less busy.

On average, service users said that they had been waiting for 45 minutes. One of the main issues which was highlighted was the problem with parking. Several service users said that they were unable to find a parking space and even one patient with a disabled/blue badge mentioned that he was unable to find a parking space and thus had to park further away.

Some service users also mentioned that the signage was poor and they didn't know how to get to the department.

Trust Response:

All signage has been improved at Whipps Cross OPD recently directing patients to Area 1 for blood testing.

Healthwatch Response:

Healthwatch visited the site again and can confirm that laminated signage has now been added.

Several patients told us that they were not aware of the closure of the Wanstead service until they arrived at the premises. One patient told us that when she attended the Wanstead clinic and found out it, she decided to return in a few days assuming that it would be open by then. However, when she went back she realised that it was still closed so she decided to go to Whipps Cross hospital.

A service user mentioned that he checked the website for information about the opening times and it still showed that the Wanstead site was open as usual.

Recommendations

- Better information should have been made available for patients. Staff could have provided printed information for patients attending the service to identify other phlebotomy services in the area. The information on the website was not updated until after we visited and made the provider aware of the issue. We can confirm that it has since been amended.
- Information about the temporary closure should have been sent to GP Practices as the surgeries we contacted in the Wanstead area said that they hadn't received any information.

Trust Response:

I think the update of the website must have been overlooked in the haste of closing Wanstead. I must admit I didn't think of it myself until recently.

I have been waiting day to day to be able to re-open Wanstead. We are just waiting for the Digital display to be re located into Galleon. Apart from that we are ready to go.

Service Provider Responses

We thank Whipps Cross Hospital and Barts NHS Trust as the service provider for their responses and have incorporated them within this report.

Healthwatch Update:

After 12 weeks, the Phlebotomy service at Wanstead Hospital re-opened on Wednesday 5 October 2016.

Distribution

- Whipps Cross Hospital
- Barts NHS Trust
- Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group
- Redbridge Health and Wellbeing Board
- Redbridge Health Scrutiny Committee
- Care Quality Commission
- Healthwatch England

Appendix 1- Questions for Staff members

Healthwatch Redbridge (HWR) has the power to Enter and View any publicly funded Health or Social Care service to review the quality of their services and to gather patient's feedback.

We are conducting this visit today due to the temporary closure of the Phlebotomy Service at Wanstead Hospital. Healthwatch wants to find out whether the service being offered at Whipps Cross hospital can support the needs of the additional patients.

Questions for Representatives speaking to staff members

1. Do you normally work in this hospital?

Yes No

2. Are there staff members from Wanstead hospital supporting the team here?

Yes No

Any comments?

3. Has the number of staff members working in this department increased due to the temporary closure of Wanstead Hospital?

Yes No

Any comments?

4. Do you provide patients with a list of alternative centres to go to for their blood test?

Yes No

Any comments?

5. Have you noticed a difference in the number of patients visiting Whipps Cross hospital since the closure of Wanstead Phlebotomy service?

Yes No

Any comments?

6. Have any concerns or compliments been raised by patients about the service since the temporary closure of Wanstead Phlebotomy service?

Yes No

Any comments?

7. Are you having to withdraw tickets at any earlier time than usual?

Yes No

Any comments?

8. Have you extended the opening hours since the temporary closure of Wanstead Phlebotomy service?

Yes No

Any comments?

Thanks for completing the survey.

Appendix 2- Questions for Service users

Healthwatch Redbridge (HWR) has the power to Enter and View any publicly funded Health or Social Care service to review the quality of their services and to gather patient's feedback.

We are conducting this visit today due to the temporary closure of the Phlebotomy Service at Wanstead Hospital. Healthwatch wants to find out whether the service being offered at Whipps Cross hospital can support the needs of the additional patients.

Questions for Representatives speaking to service users

1. Do you have regular blood tests in Whipps Cross Hospital?

Yes No

2. How long have you been waiting for?

- a) If you are a regular user of this service, is it busier than usual?

3. Did you have any problems getting to the hospital? (i.e. transport)

4. Do you use any other blood test centres?

Yes No

If yes, which one?

- a) If Wanstead hospital, did you know that it is temporarily closed and is that why you decided to come to this hospital?

Thanks for completing this survey.

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