

Healthwatch Worcestershire

Response to Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Quality Account 2016/17

Does the draft Quality Account reflect people's real experiences as told to local Healthwatch by service users and their families and carers over the past year?

The Quality Account reflects the patient experience that has been told to, and observed by Healthwatch Worcestershire during the past year. During the course of the year both the interim Chair and new permanent Chair have acknowledged the poor performance of the Trust and expressed their personal commitment to address safety and quality issues that have been identified by the Care Quality Commission to improve patients experiences.

Whilst the focus is necessarily on improvement it must be acknowledged that many patients report very positive experiences, such as those associated with experience of the temporary arrangements for maternity which were introduced for safety reasons have attracted praise and appear to have been well received.

From what people have told local healthwatch, is there evidence that any of the basic things are not being done by the provider?

The Trust has been in Special measures since the CQC reported on its inspection of the Trust in 2015. The reports that people have made to Healthwatch during the year under review have supported the CQC's judgement of the Trust.

In February and March 2017, in response to reports of patients experiences of being cared for in the corridors of the Trust's Accident and Emergency Departments, Healthwatch Worcestershire made unannounced visits to those departments to speak to patients about their experiences of being cared for in a corridor. The report, with 38 recommendations has been shared with the Trust will be published in June 2017. The report evidences basic things that are not being done by the Trust in the A&E Department at the Worcester Royal Hospital.

The Quality Account appears to provide an honest assessment of the situation and establishes a bench mark for improvement.

Is it clear from the draft Quality account that there is a learning culture within the provider organisation that allows peoples real experience to be captured and used to enable the provider to get better at what it does year on year?

Since the Trust was placed in special measures there is evidence of the Trust seeking to put in place arrangements for continuous learning. This has included a number of iterations of a Patient Care Improvement Plan which have not delivered the planned outcomes. Healthwatch notes the Chief Executive's plans to pursue a culture change program across the Trust.

As Healthwatch identified in our response to the Trusts 2015/16 Quality Account there is still limited evidence that any learning culture extends to learning from patient experience. There is an opportunity for the Trust to involve and engage with public, patients, carers and service users in a much more co-produced and co-designed way. Healthwatch therefore welcome the recent commitment to revising the arrangements for public/patient involvement across the Trust and will be monitoring progress in 2017/18.

Are the priorities for improvement challenging enough to drive improvement and is it clear how improvement has been measured in the past and how it will be measured in the future?

Healthwatch Worcestershire, as the independent public/patients champion has been given oversight of the arrangements that have been put in place to monitor the quality and safety of services and their improvement.

These arrangements bring together a number of organisations including NHS Improvement, NHS England, Worcestershire's Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Care Quality Commission to support improvement.

The Quality Account sets out challenging priorities for improvements in quality which the public expect to be delivered at pace.