

Healthwatch Worcestershire's response to the Quality Account of the West Midlands Ambulance University NHS Foundation Trust (WMAS) for the financial year 2019/20

Healthwatch Worcestershire [HWW] has a statutory role as the champion for those who use publicly funded health and care services in the county. Healthwatch Worcestershire welcomes the opportunity to comment on the West Midlands Ambulance University NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account [QA] for 2019/20. Healthwatch Worcestershire's principal concern is that patients who live or work in Worcestershire receive safe and quality services from the Trust.

We understand that this year has been an exceptionally challenging year for WMAS due to the three major incidents declared as a result of the floods in Shropshire, Worcestershire and Herefordshire. There is also the impact of the global COVID-19 virus resulting in the highest Level 4 incident being declared by NSH England to be taken into account.

We have used national Healthwatch England guidance to form our response below

1. Do the priorities of the provider reflect the priorities of the local population?

Healthwatch Worcestershire has no direct evidence to suggest that the priorities of the provider do or do not reflect the priorities of the local population.

We are not aware of the extent of patient engagement by WMAS in Worcestershire but would welcome any contact with the Public Governors representing the West Mercia region.

We note the WMAS commitment to continuing to not only make improvements to their own services, but where possible, to align and connect with the services of other providers, sharing information to deliver seamless care for the benefit of patients. HWW also welcomes the revised 2020/21 Strategic Objective 5: Collaboration and Engagement commitment to working in partnership to deliver seamless patient care.

HWW welcomes the inclusion of the statement acknowledging that whilst it is premature to set out specific priorities in relation to Covid-19 at the moment, as the pandemic eases learning from the pandemic and national analyses need to be considered when identifying and monitoring future priority actions.



2. Are there any important issues missed?

Healthwatch Worcestershire welcomes the fact that although the West Midlands Ambulance Service is rated as outstanding by the Care Quality Commission the Trust still acknowledge that lessons can be learnt, and services improved. Healthwatch Worcestershire notes that the West Midlands Ambulance Service has continued to perform well, consistently exceeding the national average in all four categories of response and achieved highly in the Ambulance Quality indicators.

As one of Healthwatch Worcestershire's Healthwatch's statutory functions as a local Healthwatch is to enable local people to monitor the quality of health care services in Worcestershire it would be useful if the Quality Account provided information about performance, patient safety and quality at a more local level.

HWW welcomes the fact that all three priorities for Improvement 2020/21 whilst measuring against patient safety and clinical effectiveness also emphasise the importance of the patient experience and are looking for feedback from patients.

3. Has the provider demonstrated that they have involved patients and the public in the production of the Quality Account?

In the section on Quality Priorities for 2020/21 there is a statement that

“In deciding our quality priorities for 2020/21 for improving patient experience, patient safety and clinical quality, we have listened to our patients, staff and other stakeholders. We have done this through engagement events, surveys, compliments, complaints and incident reporting. “

There is no other evidence that patients and the public have been involved in the production of the Quality Account.

4. Is the Quality Account clearly presented for patients and the public?

Healthwatch Worcestershire understands the challenges in clearly presenting the Quality Account for patients and the public given the content required by NHS England. None the less the draft Quality Account is long, technically complex and the language used is not always clearly presented for patients and the public. We note that WMAS we do have some flexibility in the presentation of their response to the national standards and some of the other performance information and that they have tried to set these out more clearly in the QA.

We also welcome the stated intention to produce an easy read version of the QA showing just the priorities for the year and the performance against last year's priorities.

Yours Sincerely



Chairman
Healthwatch Worcestershire