

Healthwatch Worcestershire's response to the Quality Account of the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (HWH&CT) for the year 2021/22

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 Herefordshire & Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust Quality Account [QA] for 2021/22. We meet with the Trust regularly to discuss issues and actions arising from our work and the responses that they provide to the recommendations within our reports, as identified on page 16 of the Quality Account.

This has been another extraordinary and difficult year for providers of NHS services and Healthwatch Worcestershire appreciates and acknowledges the effort and commitment of the staff at the Trust who have been working hard to do their best for patients under difficult circumstances.

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?

The five identified improvement priorities for 2021/22 should reflect the priorities of the local population:

- **Workforce:** continuing the priority from 2020/21 - we recognise the importance of staff feeling valued and the correlation with delivering the best outcomes for everyone.
- **End of Life Care (EOL):** continuing the priority from 2020/21 with a sustained focus on consistently supporting all teams across all services to ensure there is high quality end of life care for all.
- **Identify and address inequalities in Mental Health services:** we welcome the involvement in a Royal College of Psychiatrists initiative to advance equality in mental health services and address the systemic inequalities that people face, by supporting those services to meet the needs of the populations they serve.
- **Harm reviews for people who are on waiting lists:** highlighting the active review of harm to patients who have experienced delays to assessment and treatment as a result of having longer waits than the targets that are monitored through performance metrics.
- **Shared care decision making and consent:** We support the Trust's commitment to do more work around this to ensure shared decision making

is at the centre of the work with each individual patient and is clearly recorded in the patient's clinical record.

We welcome the priorities for 2022/23 which are clearly designed to improve service delivery and the quality of patient experience. Healthwatch Worcestershire's principal concern is that patients who live or work in Worcestershire receive safe and quality services from the Trust.

2. Are there any important issues missed?

We note the intention outlined on page 9 to continue a focus on Learning from Deaths, as part of the Trusts' action plan, however, this has not been brought forward as an improvement priority for 2022/23 and therefore progress in this important area of continuous learning will be difficult to evaluate going forward.

Healthwatch Worcestershire acknowledges that the priorities for 2022/23 are positive: however, they are widely drawn, there are few measurable targets attached to the priorities, and consequently it will be difficult for the public and stakeholders to evaluate progress. It would be beneficial to see an improvement plan for each of the priorities, included in the Quality Account for clarity. For example, it would be valuable to see tangible targets for addressing existing Mental Health inequalities.

We would welcome the involvement of service users and carers in the development of these plans.

It is good to note the Patient Experience Feedback survey is relaunched, however, it would be useful to include data and summaries of patient and carer views.

HWW welcomes the inclusion of our reports in relation to your service areas during 2021/22 and would like to see a link to the response you provided to our recommendations.

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

It is not clear how the public or patients and carers have been involved in producing the Quality Account or setting the Priorities for 2022/23.

It would be useful to know how patients and the public are made aware of the Quality Account report.

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. However, the document as presented is long, complicated, and the language used is not always accessible for patients and the public.

The inclusion of a glossary of terminology would be helpful along with the avoidance of acronyms where possible.

Healthwatch Worcestershire suggest that the Trust consider producing an Easy Read version of the Quality Account in an accessible format. In addition, we would welcome the document being made available in other community languages.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Ringshall'.

Jo Ringshall
Chair
Healthwatch Worcestershire