

Mystery Shop Activity: June 2023

Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust:

*based at Urgent Treatment Centres (Boston, Gainsborough,
Louth, Lincoln, Skegness, Spalding)*

Executive Summary

Urgent Treatments Centres, Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (2023)

Introduction

Healthwatch Lincolnshire has received feedback from the public and through monitoring of statements on social media that Lincolnshire residents are experiencing difficulties in accessing face-to-face appointments at primary care centres (surgeries) and do not always know what can be treated at an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC). Patients when contacting NHS 111 are not always given information to present with non-life-threatening illnesses or conditions at the nearest UTC. Many of these patients are being signposted to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department (A+E) inappropriately and with longer waiting times.

Purpose

The primary aim behind the Mystery Shop Visits was to make observations at the six UTC sites across the county at various times of day or day of the week within the agreed time. This would help Healthwatch Lincolnshire to be better informed about the situation and better inform members of the public who may be accessing these services.

Objective

- To observe the service and how it runs.
- To identify best practice or areas of concern.
- To provide a short report, including recommendations that will be made available to the service provider Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS), Commissioners and the Public.

Methodology

Healthwatch Lincolnshire and LCHS agreed on a three-week period (19 June to 7 July 2023) for the Healthwatch Involvement Officer and a team of Authorised Representatives to visit the six UTC across the county.

- Each day was divided into three-time slots: morning (8 am to 11.30 am), afternoon (12 noon to 4 pm) and evening (4 pm to 8 pm).
- Twenty individual visits were made across the six sites in the county. A timetable was set up to coordinate the visits during the time which reflected the availability and location of Authorised

Representatives resulting in three visits to Boston, two visits to Gainsborough, four visits to Lincoln, three visits to Louth, two visits to Skegness and six visits to Spalding.

- Each visit lasted for a maximum of two hours by the Authorised Representative.
- Each Authorised Representative has an enhanced DBS check and photographic identification.

Each visit was unannounced and the Authorised Representative completed an Observational Sheet recording: Quality of Care, Interaction and Communication between Staff and Patients, Environment and Cleanliness, Signage, Car Parking, Food and Drink, additional needs such as Accessibility, Comfort and Toilets. All observations were collated, a report written and LCHS given the opportunity to provide a response.

Findings

- **Good Practice:** an awareness of the people in the department and additional support provided for patients when required or appropriate.
- **Good clear communication:** good clear signage across all sites except Boston; limited information provided to patients on the service provided within the department (except Spalding); no evidence of alternative formats available to patients.
- **Arrival and Reception:** professional and friendly staff across all sites.
- **Car Parking:** varied across the sites.
- **Staff:** interactions between staff and patients are very professional and caring. Though at the Boston site, interactions were more functional, and task orientated; ID badges being worn inconsistently across the sites.
- **Food and Drink:** water and cups provided across all sites; vending machines available at three out of the six sites, with two sites having access to a café area within a short distance of the department.
- **Environment and Cleanliness:** overall exceptionally clean and tidy. Boston area in need of refurbishment.
- **Patient Comfort:** variation in size of waiting areas from a very cramped area (Boston) to a designated waiting area; seating generally uncomfortable across the six sites especially if patients had a long wait for treatment.

Recommendations

- Ensure NHS 111 has up-to-date information on opening times and what can be treated at each centre (e.g., UTC/A+E) so that patients can be directed to the best possible service for their needs.
- Review the consistency of messages and information provided across the Trust. e.g., large Information Banner as seen at Johnson Hospital, Spalding.
- Review consistency to Accessibility to Information for those people who do not have English as their first language, people living with Learning Difficulties, sensory impairment in different formats such as plain English, Easy Read formats, or use of symbols.
- Review the recognition for staff who are ambassadors for the values of the Trust.

Conclusion

- Overall, the Volunteers were able to observe the services at six Urgent Treatment Centres across the county.
- Healthwatch Lincolnshire will liaise with the Trust to carry out further Mystery Shops at regular intervals over the next 12 months.
- Healthwatch Lincolnshire will liaise with the Trust to carry out announced E+V Visits to the Urgent Treatment Centres to get feedback directly from the Patients/Carers and Families using the services.

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Healthwatch Lincolnshire

Healthwatch Lincolnshire is your Health and Social Care Champion. We make sure NHS leaders and other decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care. We are part of a national network of 152 local Healthwatch in England.

We have three principal areas of work:

- **Listening to feedback** we listen to people's experiences and seek out views as part of larger research projects. Healthwatch has legal powers to undertake Enter and View visits to NHS services and care settings. This is to observe and hear how users are experiencing the services.
- **Influencing Providers and Commissioners of Health and Social Care** we also spend a lot of time building relationships and attending meetings within the local health and care system so that the patient's voice can be heard in the right places, at the right time.
- **Advice and information** we help people to navigate health and care services.

Your experiences matter, we strive to be a strong voice for local people to help shape how services are planned, organised and delivered.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lincolnshire would like to thank Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS) for accommodating the Mystery Shop visits to the six sites across the Trust (Boston, Gainsborough, Lincoln, Louth Skegness and Spalding).

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to the findings by the Healthwatch Lincolnshire Representatives during the period between Monday 19 June to Friday 7 July 2023. This report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users.

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Lincolnshire has the statutory right under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to carry out “**Enter and View**” visits to NHS Health and Social Care Services.



Healthwatch Lincolnshire Staff and Volunteers (known as Authorised Representatives) work together to carry out these visits.

The primary aim of the visits is to listen to the feedback of the service users, their families, carers and staff and observe service delivery and the facilities available for patients.

The feedback and observations are collated and a report written including any suggestions or recommendations. The service given the opportunity to comment on the report before publication.

A service can be visited for several distinct reasons such as:

- the public has provided feedback about the provision.
- it is part of a rolling programme of visits to similar services.
- a service is running well and good practice could be implemented in other places.



What is a Mystery Shop Activity?

Mystery Shopping is a technique used by retailers, market research and consumer watchdogs to measure the quality of customer service and to collect information about products and service delivery.

The Aim of the Mystery Shop Activity across Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS) Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs)

Background

Here at Healthwatch Lincolnshire we have received feedback from the public and through monitoring of statements on social media that Lincolnshire residents are experiencing difficulties in accessing face-to-face appointments at Primary Care Centres (surgeries) and do not always know what can be treated at an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC). Patients when contacting NHS111 are not always given information to present with non-life-threatening illnesses or conditions at the nearest UTC. Many of these patients are being signposted to the nearest A+E department inappropriately and with longer waiting times.

The primary aim behind the Mystery Shop Visits was to make observations at the six UTC sites across a number of days and separate times within that time. This would help Healthwatch Lincolnshire to be

better informed about the situation and better inform members of the public who may be accessing these services.

These visits will be part of a rolling programme of Mystery Shopping Activities to visit the Urgent Treatment Centres in the Trust and would form the basis of a planned Enter and View programme of announced visits to obtain feedback from the service users themselves.

Having a new team of Authorised Representatives, its secondly function was to give the Volunteer Team an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Urgent Treatment Centres, to practice their observational and recording skills before embarking on Enter and View visits and interacting with patients, carers and their families, as well as staff.

Objectives

- **To observe the service and how it runs.**
- **To identify best practice or areas of concern.**
- **To provide a short report, including recommendations that will be made available to the service provider (LCHS), Commissioners and the Public.**

Glossary and Abbreviations Used in this Report:

Abbreviation	Definition
A+E	<p>Accident and Emergency Department</p> <p>An emergency department, also known as an accident and emergency department, emergency room, emergency ward or casualty department, is a medical treatment facility specialising in emergency medicine, the acute care of patients who present without prior appointment; either by their own means or by that of an ambulance.</p>
E+V	<p>Enter and View</p>
E+V Authorised Representative	<p>An Authorised Representative is a trained Volunteer who participates in Healthwatch Lincolnshire's 'Enter and View' activities, alongside other Healthwatch Lincolnshire Volunteers and Staff.</p>
LCHS	<p>Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust</p> <p>The primary community healthcare provider in Lincolnshire delivering community-based services aimed at supporting people to manage their own health at home and reducing the need for people to go into hospital.</p> <p>By providing community-based services aimed at preventing health problems from getting worse, the Trust help to reduce the need for people to go into hospital. The Trust works closely with other health and care</p>



	<p>professionals to support a shift from care in acute hospitals, into more joined-up care in the community, closer to home.</p>
<p>UTC</p>	<p>Urgent Treatment Centre</p> <p>Urgent Treatment Centres provide medical help when it is not a life-threatening emergency.</p> <p>Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs) are GP led, open at least 12 hours per day, every day, offer appointments that can be booked through NHS 111 or through a GP referral and are equipped to diagnose and deal with many of the most common ailments people attend A+E for.</p> <p>UTCs will also ease the pressure on hospitals, leaving other parts of the system free to treat most serious cases. The UTC offer will result in decreased attendance at A+E, or in co-located services, offer the opportunity for streaming at the front door.</p>

Details of Visits:

<p>Service Address</p>	<p>John Coupland Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre Ropery Road Gainsborough DN21 2TJ</p> <p>Johnson Community Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre Spalding Road Pinchbeck PE11 3DT</p> <p>Lincoln County Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre Greetwell Road LINCOLN LN2 5QY</p> <p>Louth County Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre High Holme Road Louth LN11 0EU</p> <p>Pilgrim Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre Sibsey Road BOSTON PE21 9QS</p> <p>Skegness and District General Hospital Urgent Treatment Centre Dorothy Avenue Skegness PE25 2BS</p>
<p>Service Provider</p>	<p>Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust Beech House Witham Park Waterside South Lincoln LN5 7JH</p> <p>Telephone: 01522 308686</p> <p>email LHNT.enquiries@nhs.net</p> <p>Website: https://www.lincolnshirecommunityhealthservices.nhs.uk/</p>

Date and Timings	<p>Monday 19 June 2023 to Friday 7 July 2023</p> <p>Morning session 8 am to 11.30 am Afternoon session 12 noon to 4 pm Evening 5 pm to 8 pm</p>
Healthwatch Representative	<p>Oonagh Quinn Healthwatch Involvement Officer Simon Parker HWLincs Volunteer and Members Officer</p> <p>HWLincs Volunteers: Alison Cadman Ann Morgan Anna Pastuszko Jacqui Sclanders Louise Southgate Maria Bright Rosina Nash-Smith</p>

Methodology

- Healthwatch Involvement Officer and Volunteer Officer identified suitable and interested Volunteers to participate in the Mystery Shop Activity. They also provided suitable training and background information. 
- Healthwatch Lincolnshire liaised with Anna Kuszyb, Patient Experience Support Officer.
- To confirm the period of Mystery Shop Visits in the diary so that they did not clash with other visits to the Trust.
- All Healthwatch Representatives issued with an Authorised Representative Enter and View Badge (with photographic ID) prior to first visit to the site. 
- During the period Monday 19 June 2023 to Friday 7 July 2023 a timetable was devised allocating a maximum visit of 2 hours per Representative to each site.
- Each day was divided into three sections: morning (8 am to 11.30 am), afternoon (12 noon to 4 pm) or evening (5 pm to 8 pm) and an Authorised Representative would visit during one of these time slots on that individual day.

- Each unannounced visit completed by one Volunteer at the allocated time slot.
- Each Representative was issued with an Observational Sheet for recording throughout their visit and this was to be returned to the Healthwatch Involvement Officer as soon as possible after their visit.
- Throughout each visit, the Representative recorded their observations on quality of care, interaction and communication between staff and patients, the environment and cleanliness, signage, car parking, food and drink, additional needs such as accessibility and comfort and toilets.
- 20 individual Mystery Shop Activities made across the 6 UTCs by the E+V Team during a 3 week period (19 June to 7 July 2023). The team consisted of the Healthwatch Involvement Office, HWLincs Volunteer Officer and HWLincs Volunteers.
- Mystery Shop Activities took place across the 6 UTCs based at Boston (Pilgrim Hospital), Gainsborough (John Coupland Hospital), Lincoln (County Hospital), Louth (County Hospital), Skegness (Skegness and District General Hospital) and Spalding (Johnson Hospital).
- Each session was for a maximum of 2 hours by a Representative to observe and record what they found in each of the departments during their visit. Once collated, a report to be written and information/findings to be shared.



Dates and Times of Mystery Shop Activity across each site

- **Boston** **3 visits in total**
- **Gainsborough** **2 visits in total**
- **Lincoln** **4 visits in total**
- **Louth** **3 visits in total**
- **Skegness** **2 visits in total**
- **Spalding** **6 visits in total**

	Boston	Gainsborough	Lincoln	Louth	Skegness	Spalding
Week 1						
19.06 to 23.06.2023				2		1
8 am to 11.30 am						
12 noon to 4 pm	1		2	1	1	1
4 pm to 8 pm	1				1	
Week 2						
26.06 to 30.06.2023		1				
8 am to 11.30 am						
12 noon to 4 pm			1			2
4 pm to 8 pm						1
Week 3						
03.07 to 07.07.2023	1		1			
8 am to 11.30 am						
12 noon to 4 pm		1				1
4 pm to 8 pm						
Total Visits	3	2	4	3	2	6

Findings/Observations: Summary of Findings

	Boston	Gainsborough	Lincoln	Louth	Skegness	Spalding
Good Practice	Awareness of people within the department	Awareness of people within the department	Awareness of people within the department Additional support given when required or appropriate	Awareness of people within the department Additional support given to patients when required or appropriate	Awareness of people within the department Additional support given to patients when required or appropriate	awareness of people within the department Additional support given to patients when required or appropriate
Good, clear communication	Outside UTC confusing signage Limited information on service provision No evidence of information in	Good, clear signage outside and inside to the UTC Basic information given to patients on the service (e.g., not a 24 hour service) Some leaflets available No evidence of information in	Lots of information on site about the service provision No evidence of information in	Use of red lines around site as a guide to UTC Clear signage to the UTC A large board in waiting area informed patients who was on duty and their different roles Some evidence of symbols used (e.g., toilets)	Good, clear signage outside Clear signage to the UTC Large banners and A3 poster explain the services on offer No evidence of information in different formats	Good, clear signage outside and inside the site Clear signage to the UTC Large banners and A3 poster explain the services on offer

	Boston	Gainsborough	Lincoln	Louth	Skegness	Spalding
	alternative formats	alternative formats	alternative formats			No evidence of information in different formats
Arrival / Reception	Professional and friendly staff	Professional and friendly staff	Professional and friendly staff Lack of privacy	Professional and friendly staff	Professional and friendly staff	Professional and friendly staff
Car Parking	Shared car park with ULHT site Limited disabled parking	Small car parking area No designated disabled bays	Shared car park with ULHT site Many patients struggled with distance to UTC	Limited outside the UTC, however, main car park within easy reach of the UTC	Limited car parking on site	Ample car parking
Staff	Interactions functional and task orientated Not all wearing PPE	Interactions between staff and patients very professional and caring; between staff to staff very professional and respectful.	Interactions between staff and patients professional and caring. ID was visible Clinical staff were seen to be checking on patients whilst they were waiting	Interactions between staff and patients very professional and friendly All staff wearing ID	Interactions between staff and patients very professional and friendly Not all staff wearing ID (or it was not visible to the observer)	Interactions between staff and patients very professional and friendly Not all staff ID was visible

	Boston	Gainsborough	Lincoln	Louth	Skegness	Spalding
Food and Drink	Water and cups available Patients would have to go to Main Hospital for food	Water fountains and cups Vending machines	Water fountain available	Water fountains available Vending machine in main corridor	Water fountains and cups available in main waiting area Vending machines in main waiting area	Water fountains and cups available An onsite café available within a 100 m walk from the UTC on the site
Environment / Cleanliness	Overall clean but area in need of TLC	Overall, clean and tidy	Large amount of food debris on floors	Overall, clean and tidy Some equipment stored in the main waiting area in an alcove	Overall, clean and tidy	Overall, clean and tidy
Patient Comfort	Waiting area cramped Signage for toilets confusing Disabled toilet out of use	Waiting area is small and seats can be removed if required	Plenty of comfortable chairs in the waiting area	A designated calm space provided for those people who might feel overwhelmed Seating was uncomfortable for a long wait	Chairs in waiting room were comfortable for a short period of time	Comfortable seats available for patients Wheelchairs available if required

	Boston	Gainsborough	Lincoln	Louth	Skegness	Spalding
	Storage of equipment in corridor limiting access for patients			but could be moved to accommodate mobility issues		

Boston (Pilgrim Hospital) Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

Good Practice/Observation of Person Centred Care:

“Reception staff approached the Authorised Representative from Healthwatch as they had noted that they had not checked in at Reception. The staff were made aware that it was part of the arranged Mystery Shop Activity.”

Good, clear and friendly communication:

- In general, effective communication observed between staff and the patient/carer.
- The biggest issue at the site in Boston (Pilgrim Hospital, located at front of the A+E Department) is the signage both outside and inside the building.
- Confusion over where patients and carers need to check in. No one was at the Navigation Desk to ask for support in the Main A+E Department.

Arrival and Reception



- Patients were very confused where to check in – check in at the Main Reception area within the A+E Department area or directly at a poorly signposted UTC Reception area.
- Building and construction of the new A+E Department added to the confusion and additional noise levels. UTC is being accommodated in the Outpatient Department at Pilgrim Hospital during this phase of the rebuilding of the A+E Department. There was a guide outside the UTC entrance who supported people once they identified where they needed to be.
- Limited information available to patients about the service provided there (unlike other UTCs).

Car Parking

- Car parking at the Boston site can be difficult depending on what time you arrive.
- Limited Disabled Parking and many patients were seen struggling through the car park. Authorised Representatives could not confirm if these people were registered with the Blue Badge Scheme and the potholes in car park, other obstacles and volume of cars parked added to the challenges faced by people with mobility issues.

Staff



- Staff interactions observed were as functional and task orientated.
- Not all staff were wearing appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment), such as gloves when handling containers used for collection of human urine.

Food and Drink

- Water and cups available but not necessarily clear where attendees could get food if needed.
- Access to food was limited if required. Patients would have to go to the Main part of the Hospital to access food. Authorised Representatives did not observe if patients were offered food or drink whilst waiting in the department.
- There is also a vending machine in the Outpatient Department.

Environment and Cleanliness



- Overall, the area that is housing the UTC looked uncared for and in need of refurbishment. Due to the building and construction of the new A+E Department, UTC is being housed in an Outpatient Department. Area was not very inviting and in need of a refurbishment. (e.g., walls looked dirty, peeling paintwork)
- There was evidence of cleaning in the department as a number of yellow A-frame boards in place warning patients/carers of wet floors. However, this could make navigating through this area challenging for a number of patients with mobility or sensory impairment and did not allow for two-way traffic of people.
- Signage for toilets very confusing with the disabled toilet out of use during the visits and no alternative information given. Not all taps worked correctly in the wash areas with little or no hand towels or soap – this would not encourage people to handwash correctly. Notices were handwritten and stuck on walls etc. in a haphazard manner, looked very tacky and unprofessional.
- No information acknowledging the disruption to patients/carers during this period of construction. No communication from United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT) visible as it is their site.
- The waiting area was very cramped and a number of notices on display with instructions (such as one child with one parent) not being adhered to. On one visit, there were two pushchairs in the area that reduced access for anyone using a wheelchair in this area.

Patient Comfort

- During a number of the visits, cars were parked on the yellow/red lines outside the building which impacted on people trying to access the facilities.
- A number of pieces of equipment were stored in the corridor which caused issues with access, especially people with mobility issues or using a wheelchair.

Gainsborough (John Coupland Hospital) Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

Good Practice/Observation of Person Centred Care:

“Staff were observed checking in with patients in the waiting room before they went for tests, observations or consultations.”

Good, clear and friendly communication:

- No display screens inside the UTC but a number of leaflets and small posters on walls displayed in a random order. Information was not available in other formats other than English.
- An A3 poster was available at the entrance to the UTC.
- Yellow lines on floor support people with visual impairment.
- On entrance, information is given informing people that it is not a 24-hour service and that they may have to contact NHS111 or 999 in an emergency.

Arrival and Reception at UTC



- Receptionist staff were kind and there was effective communication with patients/carers.
- Area within the hospital is small and could be challenging for people with sensory impairment or learning difficulties to navigate through to the department.

Car Parking

- Area is small with thirteen spaces in total and ticket machine out of order.
- No designated disabled car parking spaces.

Staff




- All staff spoke to patients in a friendly and caring manner, including once they had been called through for treatment. It was observed that some staff were keeping an eye on some patients within the waiting area and the receptionist, once the patient had been seen, called a taxi for them.

- All staff were wearing ID Badges.
- The receptionist was very friendly and professional to all patients and carers who checked in to the UTC. It was also noted by the Receptionist that one of our Authorised Representatives had been sitting waiting for a while and did not appear to match the checked-in patients. Our Representative was able to provide the receptionist with HWLincs/Healthwatch ID and explain why they were there.
- When staff did not close the door to the Triage Room, it was possible for people within the waiting room to overhear the conversations between the staff and the patient. Little privacy in the area due to the size. During visits, no visible information available to patients to request a more confidential place to discuss their needs. No patients were observed asking for privacy, nor was it observed being offered.
- Effective communication between nurse team and reception team, keeping the receptionist up to date with progress on patients (in relation to where they were going, if they had been referred to the main hospital or were waiting for transport (taxi or hospital transport)).
- When sitting in the waiting room, conversations between staff could be overheard by the Authorised Representatives. During our visits, no conversations were heard relating directly about patients, so no confidentiality was broken/disclosed.

Food and Drink

- Water fountains available but no cups available to patients.
- There was a vending machine for patients to access which had a variety of sweets, chocolate, crisps and drinks to purchase. Payment can only be made using a card.

Environment and Cleanliness

- 
- Good signage to the department both outside and inside the hospital.
 - All signage and information were in English only.
 - Signs to toilet were not immediately obvious.
 - Although the area is clean and tidy, it is very dated and in need of a refurbishment. Needs a bit of TLC (tender loving care!)
 - The waiting area itself is small and seats can be removed to make more space if required.

Patient Comfort

- Waiting area has a number of comfortable seats if the patient has a short stay. Not so if it is a long wait to be seen and treated. Some of the chairs have armrests.

- The area is a little dated but appears to be clean and tidy.
- Area is accessible for people with mobility issues or using wheelchairs as it is situated on the ground floor.

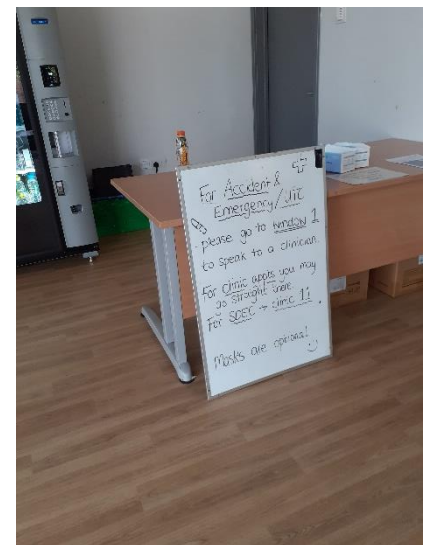
Lincoln (County Hospital) UTC

Good Practice/Observation of Person Centred Care:

“Patient was given additional support by staff in waiting area who was displaying a lot of pain. Patient was dealt with in a very professional, but friendly, way acknowledging their needs.”

Good, clear and friendly communication:

- Lots of information for patients about service offered, limited leaflets. Lots of handwritten sheets on cubicle doors – patients would need to be up close to be able to read the information.
- No evidence of information in different formats such as Symbols, Easy Read or non-English.



Arrival and Reception at UTC



- UTC was clearly signposted and on arrival Receptionist dealt with patients and their carers in a very friendly and professional manner.
- There is a Perspex Screen in place and patients/staff are having to speak louder than normal to be heard. This does mean that everything that is being said can be overheard by others in the area. Authorised representatives did not observe patients being offered or asking for a more private place to discuss their needs on arrival. Lots of personal information (such as date of birth, address, telephone numbers and GP contact details) could be overheard.

Car Parking

- On most of the visits, the car park was at 75% capacity full in main car park and around 90% full in the UTC car park. Many people with Blue Badges not able to access the disabled car parking spaces as these were full and were then accessing other spaces further away from the UTC.
- Many elderly patients were struggling to walk through from main car park to the UTC area with frequent stops observed.

Staff



- All staff had their ID badges clearly visible on all visits.
- All staff seen to be treating patients and their carers in a very caring but professional manner. Receptionist was supportive of the patients on their arrival and when dealing with their enquiries.
- Authorised Representative witnessed one staff member speak across the waiting room to a patient and asking them if they had had their x-ray. No attempt to make this personal to this particular patient.

Food and Drink

- Water machine in waiting area with cups available, as well as snacks and cafe close by. Further drinks machines by main entrance to the department.

Environment and Cleanliness



- During visits, Authorised Representatives saw a large amount of food debris on the floors with a number of small children moving around the department eating and dropping food over the floor. Parents were not cleaning up after their children. No evidence of cleaning during the visits.

Patient Comfort



Enough seats, which were comfortable and well-maintained.

Disabled toilet was out of order for 2 weeks - limited signage telling people where the next closest one was.

- Ample space for people with mobility issues or wheelchair access.
- There was a cleaning station in main waiting area.
- One patient who was in a lot of pain was being checked on a regular basis by a member of staff as they waited to be seen by a clinician.
- One patient who was waiting to be seen, was called by the nurse with a wheelchair, but no attempt was made by the nurse to go across to the back of the waiting area to assist the patient into the wheelchair. The patient had to struggle across the waiting room and get themselves in the chair.

Louth (Louth County Hospital) Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

Good Practice/Observation of Person Centred Care

- **No observations recorded on good practice during the visits.**



Good, clear and friendly communication:

On entering the Hospital, there is clear signage to the UTC and the use of red lines on the roadway that takes you directly through the site to the UTC area.

Clear signage on site to the UTC including the car park.

- Within the department, there was a large staff information board that gave information on who was in the department including a photograph of the staff member their name and role within the department e.g., Staff on duty Board by Reception Area: List of Doctors, Physicians Associate / Health Care Assistant Shift Lead / Practitioners Clinical Team Lead/Clinical Surgical Lead, Receptionists, Student Nurse, Nursing Staff and Housekeeper.

Arrival and Reception at UTC



- Patients and Carers are directed to the UTC from the outside following the red lines on road and pathways. As Louth Hospital is made up of a number of buildings across the site, this was particularly useful to follow to find the UTC as it could be very confusing to find where you needed to go within the site.
- Reception staff are friendly, professional, and once checked in the patient is buzzed through the waiting area. If more than one patient comes in at the same time, there is little privacy. On none of the visits did we witness how they deal with more than one patient at a time.
- Authorised Representatives were asked to provide ID and the Receptionist spoke with Deputy Manager. On all visits we were asked how long we would be staying in the department.

Car Parking

- There is a limited amount of car parking directly outside the UTC but ample parking in the main car park. This is a short distance away from the UTC on a level area. Observations outside the UTC recorded some patients were being dropped off whilst their escort found a parking space in the main car park.

- There were about five disabled car parking bays outside the UTC with another thirteen in the main car park.
- The payment machines were not working with little information to the user. On asking at Reception, we were informed that they had been not working for a long time and no one checked on the car parking anyway.

Staff



- Reception staff very polite and friendly, and very professional.
- All staff were wearing ID badges and many had lanyards.
- To enter the UTC, you need to check in at Reception and the inner doors are then released to the waiting room.
- On all visits, our Authorised representatives had to identify themselves and show ID. On each occasion the Reception staff went to speak with the Duty Manager before we were allowed into the department. No photographs were allowed once inside the department.
- When patients were called to be seen, the staff waited in the corridors for them to come to them.

Food and Drink

- Water and cups available for patients to access but no information available if the person needed to get food.
- There was a vending machine available along a long corridor or people would have to go into the main part of the hospital.

Environment and Cleanliness



- Signage only in English but areas such as toilets and handwashing had some symbols used. Where posters had been attached to the walls, there were visible signs of blue tack previously used to secure the information sheet to the walls and had left an impression of a tatty look to the environment.
- The information on notice boards/walls – no other formats such as symbols or sensory information available.
- Overall, the department was clean and tidy though looked dated and in need of some TLC (tender loving care).
- Wheelchairs and other equipment were stored in an access room off the main waiting area which was not part of the main throughflow of the corridors.
- Medication was stored in a room in the clinical area and had the door left open.
- Toilets were housed in the main waiting area looked clean and tidy, but the cleaning regime/rota had not been updated for a number of days or not used at all depending on the time of the

visit. There is only one cleaner employed within this area and Authorised Representative was informed that it was not necessary to complete these. There is a housekeeper on site.

Patient Comfort

- Nurse came out to give pain relief to girl in pain whilst waiting.
- There was a room off to the side painted in green which was a good place for people living with sensory issues, Autism, Learning Difficulties or dementia (calming) and less cluttered.
- Private, quiet area within clinical areas that could be utilised for people who needed a calmer area to be seen in.
- Effective use of colour-coded signage to get to the department - red line painted on floor to UTC was particularly useful.
- A small waiting area with limited amount of availability of chairs and difficult to put many more inside the area. Chairs would not be comfortable for a long wait. Some seats had armrests.
- There was some space for people with mobility or wheelchairs to move around the area provided that other patients did not move the chairs around too much.
- It was a small waiting area and might be challenging to people living with sensory impairment, wheelchair access (if the department was busy) and patients with Learning Difficulties. It is an old building and would be incredibly challenging to the Estates Department. However, some reasonable adaptations have been made (e.g., chairs not fixed to floor).

Skegness (Skegness and District General Hospital) Urgent Treatment Centre

Good Practice/Observation of Person Centred Care

“A young patient and their responsible adult came into the Reception area and while waiting for triage was reassured that if they were in pain or discomfort, to let the Reception staff know so that they could support them. Young patient was distressed when they first came in but was reassured by the staff in a professional and appropriate way. Adult reassured by the staff that they would not be waiting too long to be seen.”



Good, clear and friendly communication:

On entering the building and walking towards the Reception area, there is a large banner giving information to visitors of what can be treated in the UTC. This information also displayed on an A3 poster outside of the main Reception area.

Inside the area, there were a number of information boards with a variety of notices up behind sealed and locked wall cabinets. There were also a number of A3 posters on the walls. Some of the information although important to share, seems not to be linked together and put up in a random order.

Arrival and Reception at UTC



- The Reception area is a small area with a small number of chairs for patients. Most patients are directed to another slightly larger area along the corridor to wait to be seen. The main waiting area is “the Oakes.”
- The Oakes area had a large air conditioning unit which had a continuous humming noise omitting from it.

Car Parking

- Small and limited car park on site. Many people would have to access off street parking and then walk to the UTC.
- Car parking meter was not working on our visits.
- There was a trip hazard at the main entrance not sectioned off and had a loose mat in place.

Staff



- Reception staff were friendly and polite.
- Not all staff were wearing ID badges – those who were had them at waist height so you could not see them easily or wore lanyards.
- All our Authorised Representatives were asked to identify themselves at the Reception area.
- When patients were called the staff waited in the corridor for the patient. Patients with sensory loss, for example, may not know where they needed to go.

Food and Drink

- Water fountain, vending machine in Oakes waiting room which patients had to pay for by card only. Fizzy drinks, crisps and chocolate available as well.

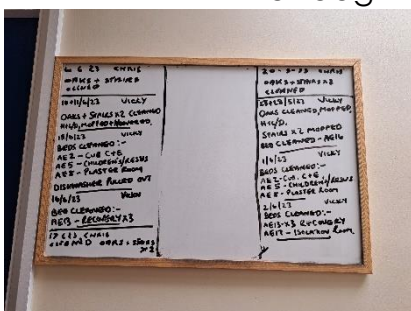
Environment and Cleanliness



- Signs only in English - patients with Learning Difficulties and sensory impairments would have struggled to access this information.
- Potential trip hazard due to missing pavement/concrete and a loose mat at entrance with no signage to warn people of potential hazard.
- Effective use of yellow tape to mark floor for those with visual impairments.
- Patients could be heard when talking to the Receptionist with little privacy. Patients could ask to go somewhere else to talk in confidence. This was not observed on the visits.
- Blue lighting used in the toilets to make it harder for people to inject substances.

Patient Comfort

- The chairs were a mixed range of small and large and some had arms. Comfortable for a short period of wait but might be uncomfortable over a longer period.
- During this period, the weather was quite warm and the department had an air conditioning unit emitting a low hum constantly. The windows were open but did not seem to allow enough fresh air through the department.



- There was evidence that cleaning had taken place: a whiteboard with cleaning schedule was on display and there were yellow caution cones in the corridor, however, the floor was now dry and these cones were still placed in the middle of the corridors. This could be a hazard for people with sensory impairment or people trying to navigate through the corridor using mobility aids.

Spalding (Johnson Community Hospital) Urgent Treatment Centre

Good Practice/Observation of Person Centred Care

“The standout highlight was the behaviour and care, the maturity and effectiveness of the receptionist on duty. She epitomised good practice and her ability to engage with and support patients was standard setting. She went out of her way to treat each new patient as a

treasured guest and deserves acknowledgement for her ambassadorship of the UTC". This was observed by all the Authorised Representatives on all of the visits.

Good, clear and friendly communication:

- A large roll out poster stand outlined what the UTC offers. There was a display screen showing operational times of the unit too. There was a map on the wall showing which departments are on the ground floor and which are on the first floor.
- Leaflets giving information on cancer and related services are available.
- Checking in at the Reception area, there is little privacy and it is possible to overhear the conversation between the Reception staff and the patient/carer.
- Lack of confidentiality when a patient is checking into the UTC at the Reception area.
- Clear information given to all patients verbally when staff spoke with them.

Arrival and Reception at UTC



- Professionalism of the Reception staff. One observation recorded that a child accompanied by an adult (English not their first language) supported by the Receptionist to answer the questions around personal information by directly talking to the child themselves.
- Separate reception desk gave more privacy (if required).
- Good signage on the road network into the UTC.
- Signage from the road leading into the site is slightly obscured by tree overgrowth (due to time of year), once in the ground signage was large and clear.

Car Parking

- Ample car parking on site with several disabled bays and motorcycle bays available. The UTC shares the car park with the main hospital on this site.
- Observations were made that some motorists were not using the designated bays for their vehicles and were parking in the motorcyclists' bays.

Staff



- Reception staff were, kind, friendly and caring – good, positive interactions with patients and carers. Lots of reassuring smiles offered by the staff team.

- Most staff were wearing ID Badges but not all Staff ID badges were visible for the staff wearing black trousers and polo shirts.
- One patient was offered a wheelchair immediately on arrival at the Reception due to experiencing chest pains which allowed easy mobility when called later by clinician.
- Patients were seen in private consultation rooms so no observations made on interactions between staff and patient.
- From the patients' point of view, it is not always possible to identify what role the member of staff holds in the organisation as no Identification Chart on display for patient information.

Food and Drink

- Water and cups available.
- There is a café approximately one hundred metres away from the main waiting area and is not easy to see. Patients can access it through a covered walkway.

Environment and Cleanliness



- Department was clean and maintained.
- Department appeared accessible for those with mobility needs.
- If a patient or carer needed additional support, such as English not their first language, it was not clear how they would access this support.

Patient Comfort

- Large rollout banner /stand with information relating to LCHS Urgent Care Services.
- Large clear sign to different departments.
- Seating was comfortable, well maintained, and easy to keep clean.
- During all the visits, the department was busy, with most of the seats occupied by waiting patients. On a few of the visits, there were patients standing as there were no seats available for people. Authorised representatives observed less able patients being offered seats on these occasions.
- Wheelchairs were available to transport patients when required.

Emerging Themes

General

- ID badges clearly displayed by staff across most of the sites most of the time. The exception was at Johnson Hospital, Spalding.
- All sites were clean and tidy with comfortable seating for patients waiting.
- All UTC Staff communicated well with the patients and their carers.
- Some UTCs require a private area for patients to book into to ensure confidentiality and provide data protection.
- There needs to be some way of identifying who the different staff members are e.g., an information board showing the different uniforms.
- All UTCs had access to toilet facilities, water and cups.

Recommendations:

- Ensure NHS111 have up to date information on opening times and what can be treated at each centre (e.g., UTC / A+E) so that patients can be directed to the best possible service for their need.
- Review consistency of messages and information provided across the Trust. e.g., large Information Banner as seen at Johnson Hospital, Spalding.
- Review consistency to Accessibility to Information for those people who do not have English as their first language, people living with Learning Difficulties, sensory impairment in different formats such as plain English, Easy Read formats, or use of Symbols.
- Expand the use of the red line navigation/directions across all sites (as used in Louth).
- Review the recognition for staff who are ambassadors for the values of the Trust.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- Overall, the Volunteers were able to observe the services at six Urgent Treatment Centres across the county.
- Healthwatch Lincolnshire will liaise with the Trust to carry out further Mystery Shops at regular intervals over the next 12 months.
- Healthwatch Lincolnshire will liaise with the Trust to carry out announced E+V Visits to the Urgent Treatment Centres to get feedback directly from the patients/carers and families using the services.

Service Provider Response

We would like to thank the Volunteers at Healthwatch Lincolnshire for working alongside us to review the care we provide at our Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs).

At Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS) we are committed to listening to our patients, and taking forward their feedback to improve the care we provide.

We will look to review the emerging themes and recommendations in this report, to further improve our services.

We are open to partnership in the future if you decide in a few months time that you would like to check if we have addressed the topics included in the report.

Distribution

The report is for distribution to the following:

- Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS)
- Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Lincolnshire County Council (LCC)
- NHS England
- Healthwatch England and the local Healthwatch Network

Published on www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk

Appendices

Healthwatch Lincolnshire: Lone Working Risk Assessment

Healthwatch Lincolnshire Enter and View and Mystery Shopper Authorised Representative Volunteer Role

Assessment Carried out by:		Date of Assessment:	
Job Title:		Duty Holder Name:	
Department/Location:			

Ref No		Yes/No	Comments	Action Required
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EQUIPMENT

1	Can equipment be safely transported/carried - information stands, banner and clipboards.	Yes	Includes use of vehicle to and from location set up and take down at venue	
		N/A		
		No		
		N/A		
2	Have the Volunteers had correct lifting and erecting awareness techniques shown to them	Yes		
		No		
		N/A		
3	Is there sufficient space to erect the promotional stand/banner without causing damage to people or property?	Yes		
		No		
		N/A		

PEOPLE

1		Yes		
		No		

	Has the Volunteer been advised of how to conduct engagement with members of the public?		N/A		
2	Is the Volunteers own health adequate for the activity		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		

INFORMATION STAND /BANNER

1	If promotional stand/banner being used after erection are people able to pass properly without prospect of a tripping hazard?		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		
2	Is the stand/banner safe from being knocked or blown over?		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		

FIRE SAFETY

1	Is a fire drill due during the period you are there		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		
2	Are fire exits clearly signed?		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		
3	Are evacuation routes and exits free from obstruction?		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		
4	Are you aware of their nearest evacuation route and their assembly point?		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		
5	Make a note of who to raise any concerns with		Yes		
			No		
			N/A		

Ref No		Yes/No	Comments	Action Required
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INTERNAL ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY FACTORS

1	Are the premises reasonably comfortable in relation to temperature and ventilation most of the time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
2	Are lighting levels adequate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
3	Is the area free from loose floor coverings or unexpected changes in floor level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
4	Are low head heights appropriately marked?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
5	Are you familiar with personal needs, - drinks, toilets, first aid, staff room	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
6	Are the noise levels adequate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
7	Are you Volunteering alone if yes have you signed in at the appropriate place/area and are you familiar with the protocol for lone Volunteering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
8	At the end of your Volunteering session sign out at appropriate place/area and advise HWL contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	No		
		<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A		
		<input type="checkbox"/>			
		<input type="checkbox"/>			
		<input type="checkbox"/>			
		<input type="checkbox"/>			
		<input type="checkbox"/>			

Assessor Name:		Duty Holder Name:	
Signature:		Signature:	
Date:		Date:	

Observation Sheet

Name:

Hospital:

Date:

Time:

Part 1 – Quality of care, information and communication

	Yes	No	Comments
Are staff wearing name badges that are clearly displayed and clearly identifiable uniforms?			
Are reception staff treating patients in a friendly and caring manner?			
Whilst at reception, can patients discuss their concerns without being overheard by others?			
Do staff check on patients in the waiting areas?			
Are patients in waiting areas responded to if they are clearly in pain or distressed?			
Are medical staff treating patients in a friendly and caring manner?			
Are staff providing patients with clear information? (e.g., explaining what will			

	Yes	No	Comments
happen next; what treatment patients are receiving & why)			
Is this information appropriate for those with language difficulties, sensory impairments or learning disabilities?			
Are patients able to discuss personal issues/concerns in private?			
Is patient dignity protected? (e.g., whether curtains provide adequate cover and are used appropriately)			
Any other comments:			

	Yes	No	Comments

Part 2 – Environment and cleanliness

	Yes	No	Comments
Are medical supplies and equipment safely stored? (e.g., is medication stored securely)			
Is the department clean? This includes:			
Floors			
Walls			
Toilets			
Chairs			
Waiting Area			
Treatment Area			
Ward			
Are there enough seats?			

	Yes	No	Comments
Are the seats comfortable?			
Is the department accessible for people with mobility difficulties?			
Are there clear places for patients and staff to wash their hands?			
Are patients able to access food/drink?			
Are there clear signposts/directions to the department?			
Is there clear information available to patients about the service provided here? (e.g., signs, display screens, leaflets)			
Are there enough car parking spaces?			
Are there enough disabled spaces?			

	Yes	No	Comments
Any other comments:			



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