

Healthwatch Lincolnshire - Thematic Escalation Report

Statement regarding:	Pain Management Service and on-going patient concerns
In response to:	Patient feedback and response from commissioners
Statement prepared:	22 May 2018
Statement circulation:	<p>For action - Four Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups; United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust; SET for STP</p> <p>For Information - Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee; Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board; Healthwatch England; NHS England</p>

The Background: Why is Healthwatch Lincolnshire (HWL) bringing this to your attention?

In June 2017 HWL undertook a visit to the pain services in Lincolnshire to collate patient experiences. The patient feedback from the clinics told us:

- Only 1 in 4 people thought they had spoken to the person who could help with their pain.
- Only 1 in 4 people felt involved in the development of their pain management care plan.
- Only 8% felt the interventions/treatments/help given was appropriate and helped them manage the pain.

We were then informed in 2017 that commissioners intended to change the patient and service pathway for Pain Management to make it more community based with care closer to home and greater focus on the psychological impact of pain.

In April 2018 we were contacted by commissioners to review the patient, clinician and stakeholder communication for the planned changes around service. At that point HWL were told there would be no changes to services until early 2019 and that patients would be communicated with during that process.

However during May 2018 we have continued to hear patient feedback that does not reflect the feedback given by the Commissioners. An example of patient experiences are given below:

May 2018

Could you tell me what has happened to Grantham's Pain Clinics? I have six-monthly spinal injections with review O.P appointments in between. I had injections in January but have not had my April review appointment and after making enquiries just managed to get one for July. This will be 1 month before my next injections are due. It is just not fair to have patients in considerable pain waiting without explanation as it affects their whole life and those of their family too. I don't know how I will cope if I have to wait a further 6 months for treatment.

May 2018

My relative has been told that the Lincoln pain clinic has now closed and so their appointment will be in Louth. Only trouble with that is the treatment they are having means they can't drive. Volunteer transport are willing to drive them back home to Lincoln because they won't be allowed to drive but they won't take them to the appointment because technically they are ok to drive there as they won't have had the treatment yet.

May 2018

Further to your comment on a post re pain clinics my partner was told by their GP that there wasn't any pain clinics anymore, this was after they had asked to be referred to one. This was about four weeks ago.

How does Healthwatch Lincolnshire feel this affects patients?

It is clear from the patient feedback that the messages going to the patients either from the provider (ULHT) or the referring bodies are not consistent in terms of what services are being delivered and where.

We are concerned that patients may not be able to attend appointments and receive their treatments if they are unable to travel.

There is in effect an inequality of service being provided across the county most certainly for those having to travel to Louth.

We have not only heard the physical impacts on people not being able to access treatments but also the impact mentally on patients and the impact to the wider families for instance the impact on their employment which accompanies the need to support someone living with a long term pain.

Patients are now required to travel as ULHT have transferred the treatment element (Day case - pain injections) to Louth and although it looks as if outpatients and follow-ups are continuing to be delivered in Lincoln, based on the number of 1st appointments versus the number of day case procedures 60 to 70% of patients go on

to have a procedure which is a lot of patients that will need to be redirected to Louth or Pilgrim.

Patients are only being told of the changes if they need an injection. We understand this service change happened in February 2018 with no specific communication going out to patients beforehand.

We are concerned that there will be ongoing issues related to patient care as it's not clear whether Louth have capacity to offer additional provision or how this will be staffed, this is also true for Pilgrim if patients are redirected to there instead of Lincoln.

Next steps and actions (response to the points below from 4 Lincs CCGs, ULHT and the STP)

Healthwatch Lincolnshire feels that the messages and communications between providers, commissioners, patients and Healthwatch are inconsistent and as such are causing concern as to what the real picture is for the Pain Management service in the short, medium and long term and we would ask:

1. For some transparency and clarity concerning the areas raised above.
2. We also seek assurance that patients will be engaged in the process to determine service change.
3. That a full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out which includes engagement with current patients of the service.
4. We would also like confirmation as to what the specification for the new services will include. For example, we believe Lincoln as a delivery site will now need to be addressed.
5. Finally, we understand that ULHT made their recent changes to this service without the knowledge of their communications department and also without the knowledge of commissioners. We would be grateful if you could communicate what the changes to contract management structures and processes will be made to ensure that this situation does not occur again.

This statement has been prepared on behalf of Healthwatch Lincolnshire Public Experience Committee by:

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