

Enter and View report

Forest of Dean Minor Injury & Illness Unit

29 November 2023



Contents

Page

About Healthwatch Gloucestershire	3
What is Enter and View?	3
Details of the visit	4
Key findings	5
Recommendations	6
Observations and findings	6
What people told us	8
Acknowledgements	8
Provider response	8
Contact us	9

© Healthwatch Gloucestershire

The material must be acknowledged as Healthwatch Gloucestershire copyright and the document title specified. Where third party material has been identified, permission from the respective copyright holder must be sought.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

You can download this publication from healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

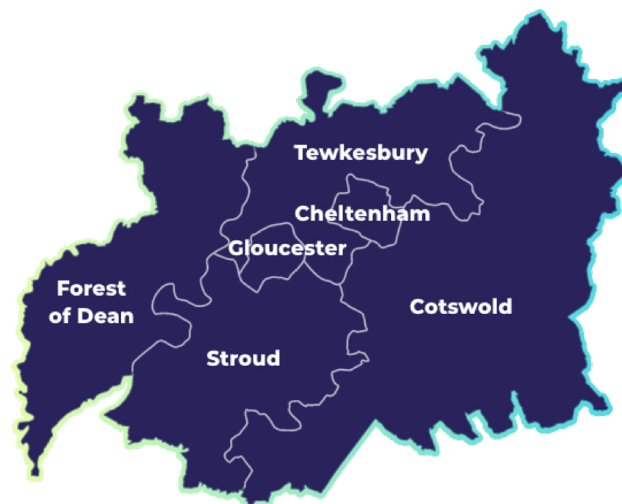
The Healthwatch Gloucestershire service is run by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch Brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement

About Healthwatch Gloucestershire

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is the county's health and social care champion. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure that NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to your feedback and use it to improve standards of care.

We're here to listen to your experiences of using local health and care services and to hear about the issues that really matter to you. We are entirely independent and impartial, and anything you share with us is confidential. We can also help you find reliable and trustworthy information and advice to help you to get the care and support you need.

Healthwatch Gloucestershire is part of a network of over 150 local Healthwatch across the country. We cover the geographical area of Gloucestershire County Council, which includes the districts and boroughs of Cheltenham, Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Gloucester, Stroud, and Tewkesbury.



What is Enter and View?

One of the ways we can meet our statutory responsibilities is by using our legal powers to Enter and View health and social care services to see them in action.

During these visits we collect evidence of what works well and what could be improved to make people's experiences better. We do this by observing the quality of service, and by talking to people using the service, including patients, residents, carers and relatives.

Enter and View visits are carried out by our authorised representatives who have received training and been DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked. These visits are not part of a formal inspection process or audit.

This report is an example of how we share people's views, and how we evaluate the evidence we gather and make recommendations to inform positive change, for individual services as well as across the health and care system. We share our reports with those providing the service, regulators, the local authority, NHS commissioners, the public, Healthwatch England and any other relevant partners based on what we find during the visit.

Details of the visit

Service visited: Forest of Dean Minor Injury & Illness Unit (MIIU)

Visit date: 29th November 2023

About the service

This MIIU is located in Lydney and is a department within the Lydney & District Community Hospital. The unit is based on the ground floor. There is car park available for patients to access. There are six community based MIIUs across Gloucestershire.

MIIUs in Gloucestershire provide support for patients with a variety of new or recent minor illnesses or injuries. If there are ongoing issues, or long term conditions, patients are expected to contact their GP.

The unit is open from 8.00am until 8.00pm, seven days a week. Patients can access the service by 'walking in', an appointment as a result of using the MIIU telephone triage option, or an appointment for a return visit (for example, an X-ray or dressing/wound management).

It is noted that the Lydney & District Community Hospital is closing and moving to new, purpose built, premises in Cinderford in Spring 2024.

Purpose of the visit

This visit was part of our ongoing partnership working to support improving the patient experiences across the county. It is also supporting a wider project being undertaken by Healthwatch Gloucestershire in relation to Urgent and Emergency Care Services.

How the visit was conducted

The MIIU was told about the visit in advance. During the visit information was collected from observations of the communal areas used by patients, including accessibility of the premises and by talking to patients and staff. Ahead of the visit there was also a conversation with the Clinical Team Lead of the unit to help inform the visit.

Authorised Representatives

- Helen Esfandiarinia (Staff member and Lead Authorised Representative)
- Fred Ward (Volunteer)
- David Pugh (Volunteer)

Disclaimer

This report relates to this specific visit to the unit, at a particular point in time. It is not representative of all patients who access the services provided by the unit. We recognise the following limitations of our visit:

- We only spoke to patients who attended the unit during our visit.
- Observations are based only on those parts of the unit that are communal, for example, reception, waiting area, patient toilets, car park etc.
- We did not ask patients to share any information about the medical/health reason for their visit.

This report is written by the Lead Enter and View Authorised Representative who carried out the visit on behalf of Healthwatch Gloucestershire.

Visit overview

The MIIU was advised that the visit would take place and the date for this. They were therefore expecting us.

Ahead of the visit the Lead Authorised Representative spoke, and met with the Clinical Team Lead for the unit. The information gained from this discussion helped to inform the visit.

The visit was carried out over two sessions on the same day; one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Three Authorised Representatives were involved. There were seven staff, including the Clinical Team Lead, on duty for the duration of the visit. Across the two sessions we spoke to 21 patients and four members of staff.

Ahead of the visit the unit had shared details of our visit by putting up Healthwatch Gloucestershire posters in the waiting area.

During the visit, information was collected from observations of the communal areas of the unit, including the reception area, and via conversations with patients and staff. Due to the unit relocating in Spring 2024 we did not undertake the same level of observations of the premises.

At the end of each session there was a team discussion to review and collate findings and recommendations. Initial feedback was provided verbally to the Clinical Team Lead towards the end of the visit.

Key findings

The following are the key findings from the visit and should be considered alongside the further information provided later in the report:

- The visiting team was warmly welcomed into the unit and there was a calm and friendly atmosphere in the unit across the visit.
- The feedback received from patients was, without exception, positive; they felt listened to, understood possible next steps and were complimentary of all staff.
- There was evidence of good team working with staff working together, for example, staff covering reception (regardless of role) and triage.
- Patients were seen quickly, even during busier times. Short delays were only experienced when X-rays were needed or further advice was being sought.
- The majority of patients spoken to on the day of the visit were walk-ins. A number of these reported attending the unit rather than accessing their GP practice. (See Observations and findings, Patients/Accessing services, page 6.)
- Premises:
 - The waiting room and toilet facilities were clean. There was information available for patients in relation to the MIU process and other NHS services. Information appeared to be up-to-date and relevant.
 - There was a list of staff on duty on the day of the visit and this included their role.
- There was some choice of seating for patients to use, including access to a couple of wheelchairs that patients could use while in the hospital.
- The unit is clearly embedded in the local community and a number of patients expressed their concern about it relocating to Cinderford in Spring 2024. Some patients told us they would find it easier to travel to Gloucester or Newport.

Recommendations

Due to the overwhelmingly positive feedback received during the visit the recommendations are based on the upcoming move to Cinderford:

1. Consider how you can make mobility aids available to patients accessing the unit (this is based on an observation during the visit and covered in Observations and findings, Patients/General observations, page 6).
2. Undertake regular reviews with patients when the unit relocates to Cinderford to ensure that the current positive culture and feedback is maintained.

Observations and findings

These are based on what was observed on the day of the visit, the conversations that took place with the unit ahead of the visit and conversations with patients and staff during the visit.

Patients

Accessing services provided by the unit

There are a number of ways that patients can access the services provided by the unit; as a walk-in during opening hours, as a result of calling the countywide telephone triage service and being allocated an appointment at the unit or as part of a planned return. During the visit most of the patients attended as walk-ins; some patients were returning for X-rays and one patient had an appointment as a result of the telephone triage service.

We asked patients why they had opted to access the this service rather than another service, such as a GP. There was a mix of responses to this:

- Some patients had a clear understanding of their issue and that the unit was the best place to address this, for example sprains, minor injuries.
- Some patients had used the service before and felt comfortable to return.
- A number of patients, however, told us that they had not gone to their GP due to the difficulties with getting appointments. Some patients had tried to get an appointment, others felt, from experience, it was unlikely they would be able to get an appointment in a reasonable time frame.

Feedback about experience in unit

The feedback from patients was, without exception, positive. Some of the themes were:

- A concern about this unit relocating to a new premises in Cinderford. Patients were concerned about their ability to get to the new premises due to transport challenges.

General observations

- There was a calm and friendly atmosphere in the waiting room. This was the case during the busier times as well.
- Patients were responded to quickly, both at the reception desk and then being called in for triage and any follow up treatment.
- We did observe one patient being brought into the unit by their parent. Due to the nature of the issue they were not able to walk and so were given a piggyback until they entered the unit. Once in the unit there was a wheelchair available for them to use.
- We observed patients leaving with mobility aids, such as crutches, as necessary.

Staff

All interactions observed between patients and staff were professional and patients were communicated with in a calm manner.

Feedback from patients

Without exception all patients were complimentary about the staff. The themes of the feedback were:

- Staff were patient, compassionate and made patients feel comfortable.
- Staff spoke directly to the child (if they were the patient) rather than via the parent/guardian.
- Patients felt listened to.
- Staff were thorough and patients understood either how to manage the issue or what they needed to do next.

Training and support

We spoke to four of the eight staff on duty at the time of the visit. They represented different roles within the unit and had worked for the unit from a few months to a number of years. All staff described feeling supported in their role by the whole team and senior management. Some of the themes were:

- Staff have been given opportunities to develop in their role with training that is beyond statutory and mandatory training.
- There are regular 1-1 and clinical supervision sessions, staff meetings and appraisals.
- Staff feel comfortable to raise concerns/issues and are confident these will be listened to.
- Staff described that there can be some verbal abuse from patients but this is often as a result of managing expectations of patients and more likely to be on the phone rather than in person.

Staff clearly enjoy working in the unit and described good team working. A friendly and cheery atmosphere was observed throughout the visit. We observed the team supporting each other by covering various roles as needed, for example, the reception desk, triage duties etc.

Premises

As already acknowledged the unit is relocating to a new and purpose built premises in Cinderford in Spring 2024. Therefore, while we did undertake some observations, this was not done in the same way as usual. Some key points are covered below:

- The reception desk was staffed for most of the visit; there is a bell patients can use if no-one is there.
- The waiting room was warm, functional and clean. There was some limited choice of seating available.
- There were some key elements of information available to patients. For example, the names and roles of staff on duty, the process of accessing services at the unit (in the form of a map), signposting to other services etc.
- There was water freely available to patients and vending machines with snacks and drinks.
- There were two toilets available for patients to use. One of these was a designated disabled toilet.
- There was a radio station being played via a TV screen in the waiting area. A couple of patients told us that they didn't like this.

What people told us

Below are some quotes from patients during conversations that took place during the visit.

Positive feedback included:

- “Had a very caring and gentle approach, asking questions sensitively but thoroughly.”
- “We came here as we heard the MIU had a good reputation.”
- “I’m very happy with the consultation and treatment.”
- “Been here a lot as have four kids. [They] always are very good staff.”
- “[Appointment went] very well, unbelievably well. Made to feel very comfortable and reassured.”
- “Good experience, wouldn’t change anything.”
- In relation to the member of staff seen – “Brilliant.”
- “Really good, very friendly. [They] make a point of talking to child rather than me.”
- “Wonderful; puts your faith back in the NHS.”
- “Can’t fault it, absolutely brilliant. Don’t close it.”

In relation to accessing other services:

- “Considered calling my GP but wanted to be seen some time this year.”
- “Didn’t try and go to GP as can’t get appointments.”
- “Thought about A&E but didn’t want to wait for five hours.”
- “GP impossible.”

Acknowledgements

The Healthwatch Gloucestershire Enter and View team would like to thank Forest of Dean MIU for working with us and enabling us to speak to patients/staff to seek their feedback.

Provider response

“Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to host Healthwatch Gloucestershire and receive a report and recommendations on our patient accessibility and service.

“Following your recommendations and comments within the report we will:

- Review seating options and wheelchair accessibility when moving into the new premises in Spring 2024.
- Continue with our Friends and Family Tests (FFT) that are sent to all patients attending MIU and consider any feedback, specifically those relevant to locality that we could influence and manage when moving to the new hospital site.
- Patients raised concerns accessing GP appointments and therefore opted to attend MIU. Patients who attend MIU where we are unable to provide appropriate care are assessed and signposted/referred to the most appropriate service for their health needs and these incidents are reported via Datix to the Trust Executives and the Integrated Care Board.”

Contact us

Healthwatch Gloucestershire

13 Wheatstone Court,
Waterwells Business Park,
Quedgeley, Gloucester, GL2 2AQ

info@healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk

0800 652 5193

healthwatchgloucestershire.co.uk