



Details of visit

Service address:	Sexual Health Clinic Arndale House, The Mall, Luton, LU1 2LJ
Service Provider:	NHS Luton
Date and Time:	28 th June 2019
Authorised Representatives:	Amy Eymor (HWCB) Dave Simpson (HWCB) Brooke Young and Kirsty Foster (YHWCB) Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire
Contact details:	Capability House, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HR Tel: 0300 303 8554

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire and Healthwatch Luton would like to thank the service provider, Luton Sexual Health Clinic and Andrew Trowbridge, for accommodating the team on this visit.



Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical), only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

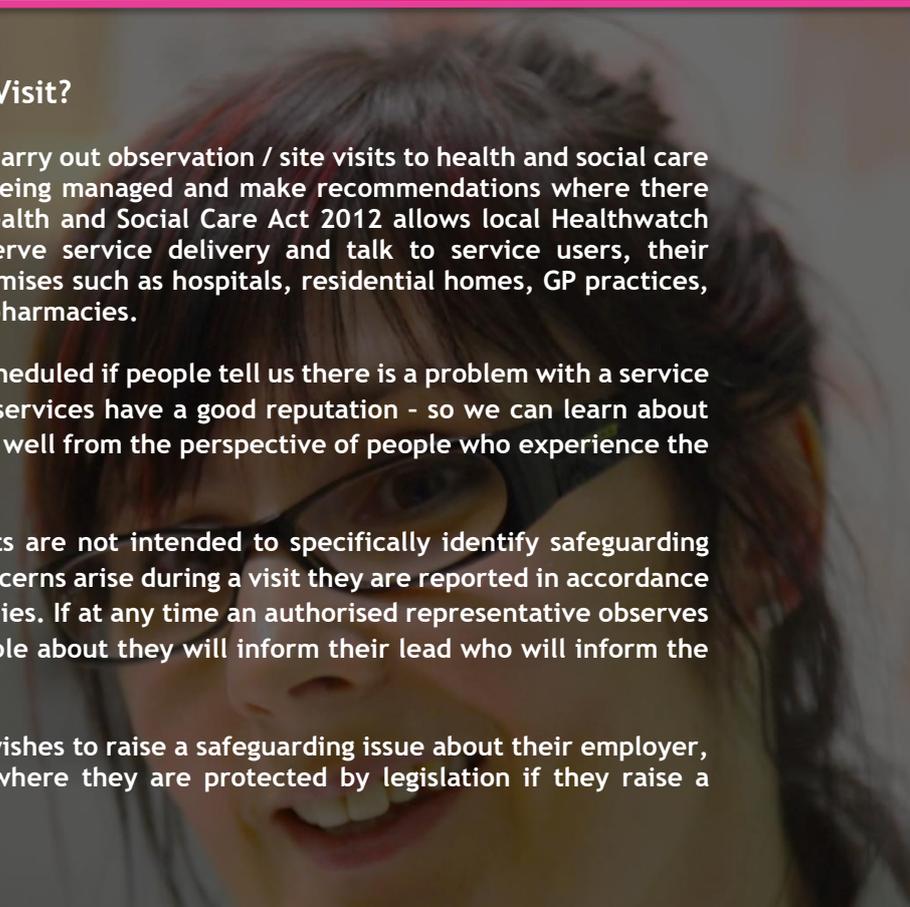
What is an Observation / Site Visit?

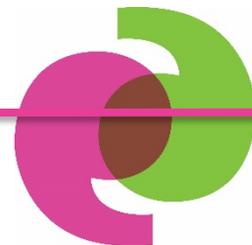
Local Healthwatch representatives carry out observation / site visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being managed and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, patients and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

Observation and site visits can be scheduled if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch observation / site visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they will inform their lead who will inform the service Manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.





Purpose of the visit

- To observe the working practices of the Sexual Health Clinic.
- Identify examples of good quality services offered and how they are communicated.
- Identify any areas, from a young person's perspective, that could be changed or improved.

Strategic drivers

- A new location, and streamlined Sexual Health Service (the Sexual Health clinic was previously located at the Luton and Dunstable University Hospital however as the hospital is sited across a large area, patients felt that access to the clinic did not allow for privacy).
- Young People invited to visit and view the service.
- Local Healthwatch remit to advise, challenge and support service providers to maintain and improve health and social care services.

Methodology

This was an announced and invited visit to the clinic following a workshop held at Dunstable College with a group of students.

The management team of the clinic were very keen for a group of young people to visit the clinic to provide a young person's perspective on services offered including their observations about the venue, location and environment.

Young Healthwatch attended on a Friday afternoon at 4pm, when the clinic was closed to the public, for staff training. Although observations usually take place in a working clinic, due to the nature of the service and the need for confidentiality, it was agreed this would be the best time to visit to avoid putting service users in an uncomfortable position.





Summary of findings

The clinic is based at Arndale House in Luton and entry to the clinic is via several entry points. Access can be gained from the roof car park via a lift or stairs, or through the main shopping area in the Mall. If accessing through the Mall, although the clinic is easy to locate, there are no obvious signs to indicate the clinic is a Sexual Health Clinic which can provide reassurance to service users who may be feeling anxious about attending the clinic or being seen entering the clinic. Entry to the clinic is on the first floor via the main doors or a discrete side door.

Upon entry to the clinic, two self-check in screens are available for use. However, at the time of HWCB's visit staff were experiencing technical issues and neither screen worked. Another option for service users is to sign in at reception. This involved being handed a selection of documents to complete. Using this method gives clients the opportunity to relay information without the need to talk to a member of staff at the desk.

Attached to the waiting room was a reception area which provided a selection of informative and discrete leaflets. In addition, a 'quiet' waiting room is available for any patients who are feeling particularly anxious. The waiting room(s) also has WIFI access and information displayed which allows people to use their phones or tablets to help them feel at ease.

Privacy

Four waiting rooms in total are available for use by patients. This allows patients to remain out of view from most other users and reduces the chance of people seeing someone they know.

In the clinical corridor additional rooms are used which range from interview rooms to treatment rooms. The interview rooms have several uses, but their main use is as a private space where questions can be asked and answered honestly without the pressure of being overlooked or heard by others. Adjacent to this are three toilets each containing a hatch with access to the laboratory. This is important for both infection control and discretion. Using this method limits the chance of infection being spread and allows patients to leave their samples in the bathroom, avoiding the process of carrying them into the clinical room.

When the clinic collect personal information, this is stored under an ID number to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This also assures privacy and reassures patients that their information is being stored safely. If staff need to share any information due to safeguarding or other issues, they will ask for consent first. In certain circumstances they must share information whether they have permission or not, however this is a rare occurrence.

The clinic manage a very efficient service when patient results are relayed to individuals; each patient is provided with a unique number at Reception and attendance activity is then logged on to the system. The results for blood sampling are usually received within 1 - 15 working days. The format of the results is discrete; positive results are not sent via text message, patients will receive a personal telephone call. Positive HIV results are always relayed face to face.

The clinic has its own automated 24-hour results line which allows patients to have access to their results at any time. Dependent on which test is carried out, results can be generated on the next day or within a few weeks.

Other Observations

The Clinic and Services offered:

Screen & Go Walk In & Wait

Screen & Go appointments are for people who would like a sexual health screen and are not experiencing any symptoms. They will be tested for Chlamydia and Gonorrhoea. A blood test will be taken by a Health Care Assistant or Nurse if a test is needed for HIV and/or Syphilis.

Booked Screen & Go

Several Screen & Go appointments are available each day to pre-book in advance.

Booked Appointments

There are a number of appointments available to pre-book either by calling the clinic or by booking online. These appointments are for a variety of needs such as symptomatic sexual health screening or contraception. Booked appointments are not available on a Saturday.

Walk In & Wait

If a service user does not have a pre-booked appointment, they can attend the Walk In & Wait clinic which operates daily Monday to Saturday. The service can see a user for any kind of sexual health or contraception related query in the Walk In & Wait clinic - excluding non-emergency coil fitting.

24 & Under

At certain times, dedicated clinics are run specifically for patients who are aged 24 and under. Within this service, the following is offered:

- information and advice on any sexual health issue or concern
- one-to-one support
- self-esteem, sex, relationships and sexual health choices support
- advice on safer sex and reducing risks
- a full range of contraception methods, including emergency contraception ('the morning after pill' and Emergency Coil)
- pregnancy testing
- non-judgemental support and advice around pregnancy options
- referrals for abortion
- signposting to maternity services
- testing and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and genital symptoms
- information and advice about HIV
- HIV testing
- testing and treatment for chlamydia
- free condoms (for 24 years and under only) attending Luton Sexual Health Clinic
- the C-Card scheme
- Emergency contraception
- Condoms
- Combined Oral Contraceptive Pill (COCP)
- Progestogen Only Pill (Mini Pill)
- Implant
- IUS/IUD (Coils)
- Contraceptive injection

- Contraceptive patch
- Contraceptive ring
- Natural contraception
- Referral for sterilisation

The clinic can also help with pregnancy tests, and advice about their choices. All the above services are also available to clients over 24 years

Additional Findings

In the event of a non-English service user attending the clinic, the service use 'Language Line' - calls are answered with an interpreter - a three-way call however, within the centre a number of multilingual staff are available who are usually able to help out.

This is a Bedfordshire wide service offered to those who live in Bedfordshire and those who also live outside the area. As Luton has good transport links, a large town centre which hosts a University and various Colleges, along with residents from a wide community, the clinic is able to see many service users, including those who do not have a Luton postcode. No one is ever turned away and they are seen and treated for the service they require.

Feedback / complaints

Feedback cards are available in reception. These cards are viewed weekly and encourage regular quality improvement. This system ensures the clinic offers the best services and caters to the people using them. If clients want to complain, a senior member of staff will try to deal with the issue at that point in time. Alternatively complaints can be emailed or raised with PALS at the main hospital (details available on LSH and L&D website).

Overall Evaluation

This is a much-needed service which really impressed all the Healthwatch representatives who attended. In the absence of service users at the time of the visit, the service appeared to be clean and organised. This allowed the space to feel safe and welcoming. The age range accessing the service emphasises the need for more clinics like this to support both teenagers and adults.

A young Healthwatch representative stated:

"As a volunteer for Young Healthwatch I was incredibly impressed with the services provided for the youth, specifically the one to one programme, which is a six-week program targeted at vulnerable young people. Additionally, their introduction of a holistic approach to transgender clinics. Furthermore, they have also introduced the scheme 'Special Educational Needs', the services are free and involve outreaching to schools and colleges about major issues such as Sexting and Pornography. The services of Luton sexual health clinic tailor to all types of people whether they are elderly or whether they are adolescents in a non-judgemental background"

Kirsty, Young Healthwatch Volunteer

Young Healthwatch will be organising a future visit to the clinic as they would like to engage with patients who would be comfortable talking to Young Healthwatch representatives. They are keen to see the service 'in action' on a normal working day.



Recommendations

Young Healthwatch representatives recommended that the clinic consider extending their opening hours on a Friday. This would allow more young people to access the services at a more convenient time. Extending hours is a small improvement that could help allow more people, particularly teenagers, to take advantage of the great facilities on offer. Young People may have been at school during the week, discussing with friends and building up the courage to visit the clinic at the end of the week, but then find they are not able to go due to the clinic being closed. Young Healthwatch representatives were keen to advise the clinic that many teenagers will visit the town centre after school on a Friday and they feel it would be an ideal opportunity for them to visit the clinic at that time.

Another recommendation from Young Healthwatch representatives was that the clinic consider developing an App to help young people book appointments at the clinic. The majority of young people will find this more accessible and user friendly. An example given was the App used by St John's Ambulance which provides guidance and advice on certain situations connected to first aid. Young Healthwatch felt that something very similar could be developed by the clinic with links to a personal log in area where service users can access their own profile.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire recommends that this report is shared with the staff of the Sexual Health Clinic and to advise that if they should wish to contribute any additional comments about the report, to contact Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire direct.

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Service Provider response

The Luton Sexual Health Team was delighted to welcome local Young Healthwatch Representatives to visit our town centre service. It was a wonderful opportunity for the Team to explain what we can offer to the local community and to promote a range of sexual health issues. By return, the Young Representatives have assessed Luton Sexual Health (LSH) and shared their valuable feedback about which aspects of the service are working well – together with some practical ideas of how Luton Sexual Health can improve.

We will look into how some of these ideas might be introduced, although the current popularity of late openings on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, combined with our all day service on Saturdays mean that a Friday afternoon session will not be likely for the foreseeable future. Developing a bespoke LSH App to make booking appointments or advising about the different clinic sessions is definitely something we shall be looking into - and should we need some user group testing, I do hope Young Healthwatch Representatives will volunteer to help us!

So many thanks once again for taking the time and trouble to visit us and to share your views. LSH needs your opinions and suggestions if we are to continue to provide a good quality, responsive service to everyone in the community. Therefore I hope this is just the first of many other productive visits in the future.

Bernie Rigoulay

Clinical Operations Lead LSH

