

Kettering General Hospital Maternity Enter and View Revisit

August 2024

In August 2024, our team of two Healthwatch staff and one volunteer revisited the Maternity Department at KGH to see whether the previous report's recommendations were listened to by the department. We looked at each of the previous recommendations and briefly observed the environment of the department during our visit. We did not conduct a full Enter and View and therefore we did not speak to staff or patients.

We looked to see if parking had been improved for patients, as this was a key issue heard during our previous visit. We found that there had not been any significant changes to the park areas, with crowded bays and tight spaces. At the time of our visit, some spaces were available, however, they quickly were filled and patients and their families were seen circling and struggling to find spaces.

We looked to see whether the environment was still clean and safe, and we found that there had been quite a few changes to the structure of the department due to issues with the building's integrity and RAAC (Reinforced

Autoclaved Aerated Concrete). While the environment of the whole department appeared to be clean and well maintained, there was some concern around the areas where services were temporarily being held while the building's damage and structural issues were fixed, particularly in the Rockingham Wing. We noted upcoming plans for the outpatient department to be moved to peripheral sites while building maintenance took place.

We noted that in order to transfer some of the patients between department units, patients were being wheeled through the areas where construction was taking place, which raised concerns. However, the Maternity Department leads assured us that they are aware of this issue and are doing what they can to ensure patient safety and risk is of priority. We also noted that when the Sir Thomas Moore ward is temporarily used to house patients during construction, that some patients would have to be wheeled outside and transported over a busy road, which is a concern in the upcoming winter season.

We looked to see if the visual environment was still welcoming and well-decorated. Overall, the department was relatively well decorated, however, we did note that the Rowan Ward was not up to standard, with stained floors and old fixtures and the walls appeared to be chipped, with paint peeling. When visiting the Poplar Ward, we noted that is currently being used for mothers of newborn babies and mothers near to delivering their baby. The patient rooms appeared to be small and this was made more apparent as curtains were drawn around the beds. As we could not see inside the rooms, we were unable to see if they were tidy or if patients' names and information were displayed correctly. We noted that the toilet and shower cubicles were small except for one which was more adequate. The department leads stated that there are plans to move patients from the above facility to Rowan Ward, which provides 4

bedded bays with toilet facilities and an extra side room, allowing mothers and babies additional privacy.

We asked if the Kettering Maternity Midwives Base was still closed for staff to access. The bases are now available for midwives to access, with three hubs situated in Wellingborough, Corby and Kettering. We are pleased to hear this information, as these bases are key in supporting community midwives.

We looked around to see if the informational materials for patients were still being offered in multiple languages. We noted that there was information available in multiple languages across the department, in the form of leaflets and information that could be taken with patients. The department matron stated that interpreters are booked in advance and are offered to patients.

We asked if there was still a lack of staff available and if there was, we wanted to know if this was delaying labour inductions, we found that staffing levels had been improved since our previous visit, with the rate of vacancy having decreased from 18% to 11% according to the department matron.

We have concluded from this visit, that we would like to revisit the service in the Spring to conduct a full Enter and View, and to view the services once the building construction and maintenance have been completed.

To access the original Kettering General Hospital Maternity Visit Report please follow the link below:

<https://www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/report/2023-08-02/kettering-general-hospital-maternity-visit-report>

About North and West Northamptonshire Healthwatch

Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire is the local independent consumer champion for health and social care. We are part of a national network of local Healthwatch organisations. Our central role is to be a voice for local people to influence better health and well-being and improve the quality of services to meet people's needs. This involves us visiting local services and talking to people about their views and experiences. We share our reports with the NHS and social care, and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) (the inspector and regulator for health and social care), with recommendations for improvement, where required.

Our rights and responsibilities include:

We have the power to monitor (known as "Enter and View") health and social care services (with one or two exceptions). Our primary purpose is to find out what patients, service users, carers and the wider public think of health and social care.

We report our findings of local views and experiences to health and social care decision-makers and make the case for improved services where we find there is a need for improvement.

We strive to be a strong and powerful voice for local people, and to influence how services are planned, organised and delivered.

We aim to be an effective voice rooted in the community. To be that voice, we find out what local people think about health and social care. We research patient, user and carer opinions using many different ways to discover views and experiences. We do this to give local people a voice. We provide information and advice about health and social care services.

Where we feel that the views and voices of Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire and the people whom we strive to speak on behalf of are not being heard, we have the option to escalate our concerns and report our evidence to national organisations including Healthwatch England, NHS England and the Care Quality Commission.

Find out more at www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk

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About Connected Together

Connected Together Community Interest Company (CIC) is the legal entity and governing body for Healthwatch North and West Northamptonshire.

The remit of the Connected Together CIC includes:

- Contract compliance
- Legal requirements
- Financial and risk management
- Sustainability and growth
- Agreeing strategy and operations
- Agreeing policies and procedures



Connected Together CIC is a social enterprise and a partnership. It aims to be first for community engagement across the county of Northamptonshire and beyond.

By using our expertise and experience, we can help you in delivering community engagement programmes including workshops, research, surveys, training and more. Contact us to find out how we can help your community.

We welcome ideas and suggestions for projects that benefit Northamptonshire and its community.

Find out more at www.connectedtogether.co.uk

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