



Burnley Community Diagnostic Centre, Burnley General Hospital, BB10 2PQ

Enter and View Report

Wednesday 28th February 2024

9:00am

healthwatch

Blackburn with Darwen

DISCLAIMER

This report relates to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and residents who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

Contact Details:

Burnley Community Diagnostic Centre, Burnley
General Hospital, Burnley BB10 2PQ

Staff met during our visit:

Nicola Rickwood, Endoscopy B Unit Manager

Date and time of our visit:

Wednesday 28th February 2024, 9:00am.

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen Representatives

Sarah Johns (Lead)

Liam Kershaw-Calvert (Healthwatch BwD staff)

Katie Merry (Healthwatch BwD Staff)

Jenny Hayes (Healthwatch BwD staff)



Introduction

This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the view of those people using the services. The representatives observe and speak to respondents in communal areas only.

The team of trained Enter and View authorised representatives record their observations along with feedback from patients and staff.

A report is sent to the manager of the facility for validation of the facts. Any response from the manager is included with the final version of the report which is published on the Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen website at www.healthwatchblackburnwithdarwen.co.uk

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen would like to thank Ammarah Suba, together with patients and staff for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

Background to Our Enter and View visit

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen have been commissioned by Healthwatch England, amongst other local Healthwatch branches across the country, to capture on the ground insight into people's experiences at Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs).

Healthwatch England are interested in how CDCs are working across the country, making comparisons between different types of areas and types of CDCs. Our findings will contribute to a final report by Healthwatch England.

Setting up Community Diagnostic Centres (CDCs) is a flagship policy, and a crucial part of the elective care recovery plan. CDCs aim to transform diagnostics in England by reducing the pressure on acute services, ringfencing resources for elective diagnostics, and increasing diagnostic capacity. Little is known about the patient experience of CDCs. CDCs are new, having only been established in February 2022. NHS England only started publishing statistics on the performance of CDCs in March 2023, and no one has yet investigated people's experiences of using CDCs.

Healthwatch is uniquely placed to provide insight into performance against two of the aims of CDCs:

“To contribute to reducing health inequalities driven by unwarranted variation in referral, access, uptake, experience and outcomes of diagnostic provision.”

“To deliver a better and more personalised diagnostic experience for patients by providing a single point of access to a range of diagnostic services in the community.”

Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on 28th February 2024.

We spoke to 10 patients and the team also recorded their own observations of the environment and facilities. We also engaged with staff members whilst on the visit, however these were not formal interviews.

Our role at Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen is to gather the views of service users, especially those that are hard to reach and seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service regardless of their perceived ability to be able to do so.

We use templates to assess the environment of a facility and gather information from respondents, to ensure that reports are compiled in a fair and comparative manner.

About Burnley Community Diagnostic Centre

Burnley Community Diagnostic Centre became operational in October 2022 following national funding to reduce scan waiting times and bring services closer to patients' homes.

The community diagnostic centre departments are located within Burnley General Hospital. At the time of writing this report, the following departments were open to patients within the CDC:-

Non Obstetric Ultrasound

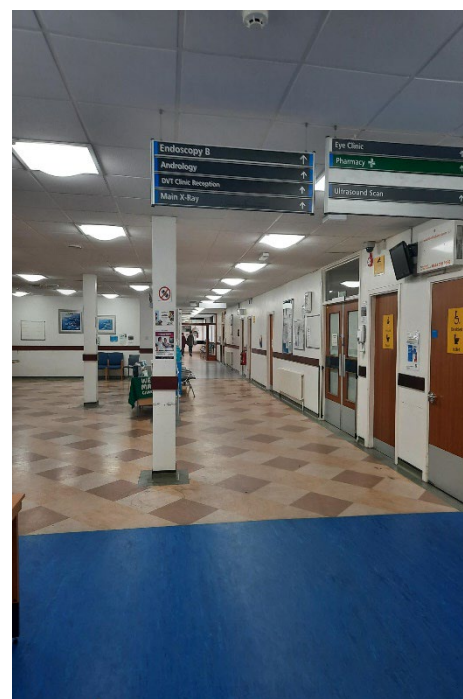
Endoscopy

Teledermatology

Xray (out of hours)

Ultrasound is located within the Lancashire Women and Newborns Centre, Endoscopy B Unit is located within the main hospital building.

Unfortunately the teledermatology department was not open to patients on the day of our visit, however we have offered to come back and interview patients in that unit.



Summary

Burnley Community Diagnostic Centre is located within Burnley General Hospital and is a 'spoke' site.

It is easily accessible by public transport for people who live locally but for patients travelling from Blackburn with Darwen, travel proved an issue with one patient taking over 2 hours to get there on public transport. Parking was a significant issue for some of the patients we spoke with, with some struggling to find a space available.

People's experiences of accessing diagnostic tests and scans at the centre were very positive with people finding the centre comfortable, tests took place on time and all found the staff lovely and attentive. All patients who had any questions about their tests had these answered adequately by staff and all felt that their privacy and dignity were maintained at all times.

The location and ease of access of the centre was the most important factor for patients. None of the patients we spoke with had been offered a choice of location and time for their appointment, and whilst for the majority this was not an issue, some would have preferred a choice of somewhere closer to home or an appointment time to find around caring responsibilities. Offering choices where possible to patients would be beneficial.

All of the patients we spoke to felt they were well informed about what to expect from the appointment and had information to take away from the appointment.

There was a lack of awareness of what a community diagnostic centre is amongst patients we spoke with and as such a lack of expectation of what this would be like. Increased promotion of the centre both with patients and primary care providers would be beneficial.

The departments were accessible, bright, warm and clean. All of the staff we met were very welcoming and there was a wide range of information on health topics available. However, there are some areas which management may wish to consider in terms of accessibility of the building for more vulnerable patients, some of which are also being looked into. The flooring in several areas of the building where endoscopy is located are not dementia friendly and could be quite disorienting. One patient struggled with the signage throughout the hospital building and took 30 minutes to find the relevant department. There was no dedicated quiet space available for patients to access in either department.

Patients' experiences were generally very positive, with appointments being on time, quick and with supportive lovely staff.

Enter and View Observations

Accessibility

Getting to the Community Diagnostic Centre

Burnley General Hospital can be accessed by 3 bus routes which operate regularly 7 days a week and there are bus stops located just outside both entrances to the hospital site on Casterton Avenue and Brierfield Road. There is a free shuttle bus service from Royal Blackburn Hospital to Burnley General which runs regularly 7 days a week between the hours of 6am and 9pm. However, travel to Burnley General for patients coming from Blackburn with Darwen can be problematic, requiring at least 2-3 buses or an expensive taxi journey. Trains cover East Lancashire and across to Preston, however the station is located in the centre of town therefore patients would need to then catch a bus or taxi to attend the community diagnostic centre. Patient transport services are available for patients.

There is carparking on site with 3 designated blue badge bays which are free for badge holders. Parking is payable at £2.60 for 0-3 hours, £4.20 for 3-8 hours and £6.30 for 8-24 hours. Patients who we spoke with arriving for early appointments did not have any issues with parking, however patients we spoke to who had late morning appointments found parking problematic and struggle to find a space on site.

There are drop off points directly outside building entrances for the community diagnostic centre departments and there is good signage to direct people to departments once they know which building they need to access. There are appropriate ramps on site to avoid steps for any patients with mobility issues.



Getting around the building

The community diagnostic departments are located within different buildings on the Burnley General site, with ultrasound located in the Lancashire Women's and Newborns Centre and endoscopy located within area 1.

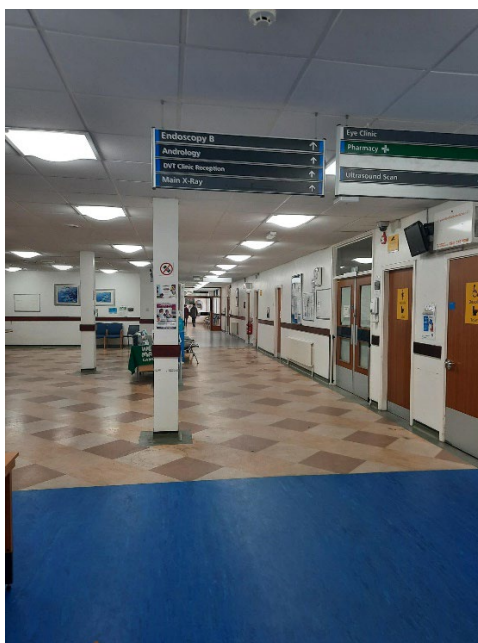
Ultrasound department

There is clear signage to the ultrasound department from the entrance to the building with a map also at the entrance. There are some slopes in the flooring in the building but handrails are provided at these points. The building is dementia friendly and seating throughout has a range of seats with and without arm rests.



Endoscopy Department

There is clear signage to endoscopy from the entrance to area 1, in large print at eye level which is clear for wheelchair users or patients with some visual impairment. However, some of the areas en route to the endoscopy department are not dementia friendly, with highly patterned flooring.



Waiting Areas

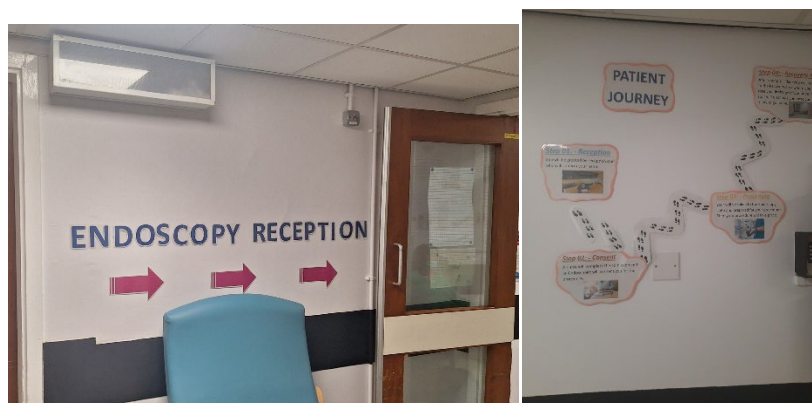
Ultrasound department

The main entrance to the Lancashire Women and Newborns Centre has a welcoming seating area with a wide range of seats and drink and snack machines available. The waiting room for Ultrasound was fairly small but there was sufficient room for wheelchairs. There was a good mix of seating available in the waiting area. There was a hearing loop in the waiting room area, however the reception desk located in the antenatal clinic does not have a privacy screen and is open to a large waiting area.



Endoscopy

The waiting area at the entrance department could only seat 3 patients with no area for wheelchairs, however there were further waiting areas within the department which were comfortable, with one for men and a separate one for women, thus providing privacy and dignity for patients. There was no hearing loop at the reception but staff stated that they would provide BSL translation and make appropriate adaptations for patients with hearing impairment. Within the department we noted helpful imagery for patients to explain their endoscopy journey.



We noted that in both departments, there was not a designated place of safety which could be used by people with dementia, autism or learning disabilities.

Accessible Information

We noted that there was no posters in either department about the Accessible Information Standard.

There was a lack of information available in either Easy Read or large print. It would be beneficial if information was available with QR codes which could take people to relevant easy read materials on a website or which can then be made accessible in different formats for people with visual impairment.

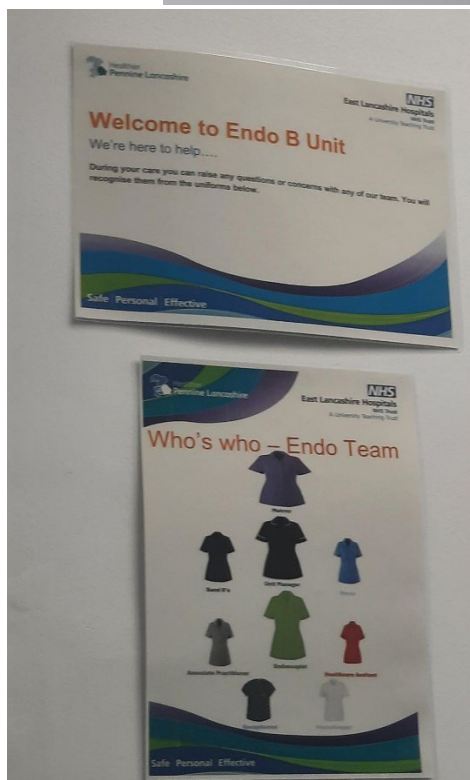
Posters on noticeboards were generally small print and not suitable for patients with visual impairment or who need Easy Read. The noticeboards in the waiting areas were generally up to date and informative and well laid out.

Environment

Endoscopy Department

The department is clean, bright and warm throughout. The reception desk is manned at all times, however there is very little seating space and no hearing loop. The waiting rooms inside the department allowed for privacy and dignity for patients with separate rooms for men and women. There was helpful information throughout the department for patients, including the patient journey, images of the team and explanations for the different roles within the team. The toilets were accessible and clean and tidy.

There was a dedicated small kitchen area for patients to sit and have a drink and something to eat before going home, with a range of sandwiches being offered to patients whilst we were there.



Ultrasound department

The waiting room is located away from the reception desk in the antenatal clinic area. Patients are called to their appointments by staff. The waiting room was clean, bright and warm with a range of chairs available. However, no lighting was switched on, which might make the room dark on cloudy days. Noticeboards were up to date although information was in small print and no easy read information available. Posters were also stuck on walls next to half-filled noticeboards which would look better on the noticeboard itself. There was sufficient seating in the waiting room and enough space for wheelchair users to get through easily and be seated next to the fixed seating. The disabled toilet was out of use on the morning of our visit but there were other accessible toilets located within the main lobby area. The toilets were clean and tidy.



Patients' Feedback about the Community Diagnostic Centre

We spoke with 10 patients about their experiences of accessing the Community Diagnostic Centre and their appointments. Please find a summary of their feedback below.

Experience of their Journey to the CDC

Although generally feedback about travel to the CDC was positive, two patients who had travelled from Blackburn stated that it had taken a long time to get to Burnley General. One person took two hours because she was on public transport and had to change buses whilst the other person who drove to the site took an hour due to traffic conditions. People who lived close to the site found it an easy journey.

Ease of Navigation once on Site

All of the patients except one we spoke with found their relevant department easily once on site, with some having previously visited and others finding the signage easy to follow. The one person who struggled with the signage stated that they had been looking for half an hour for the department and could not find any staff to direct them.

Convenience of location

The majority of patients we spoke with found the location easy to get to because it was close to home. However, the two patients who had travelled from Blackburn did not find the location convenient, particularly if travelling on public transport which took over two hours.

3 patients experienced difficulty parking on site, particularly not being able to find spaces close to the department they needed to attend. Patients who arrived early morning for their appointments did not seem to face this issue whilst those with appointments from mid-morning onwards experienced difficulties.

Experience of Getting the Appointment

Referral Process

The patients we spoke with had been referred to the CDC mainly by their GP, with one endoscopy patient being referred by a specialist.

All of the patients had been seen at the CDC soon after their referral, with all appointments taking place under 4 weeks from referral.



Choice of location and time of diagnostic test or scan

None of the patients we spoke with had been given a choice of location for their appointment. Six patients were happy with not having a choice of time and location, with one stating “I’m just happy to come when they say.”

However, 4 patients would have preferred a choice of location and time. Two would have preferred a location closer to home and one patient would have preferred being able to pick an afternoon appointment because she is a carer for her mother and making morning appointments is difficult for her and the other wanted to be able to fit any appointments around school hours.

Timing of other scans and tests

One patient we spoke with was waiting on other scans. She had an endoscopy later that day so the community diagnostic centre had ensured that her appointments were booked in together.

Offer of choices around timing or location of future tests or scans

The most important consideration for 8 out of 10 respondents for future tests or scans was location, with all wanting to attend a location close to home, whilst for two patients, as mentioned above, being able to fit appointments around caring responsibilities was most important.



Preparation for the appointment

Feeling informed about what to expect

All 10 patients we spoke with felt that they were well informed about their appointment before attending.

“Yes I did. It was written which is best for me. I got a letter with all the information.”

“Yes I got information about the appointment together with the invite letter.”

How comfortable do you find the waiting area?

All of the people we spoke with found the waiting areas comfortable.

“It’s nice - clean and quiet.”

“It’s clean and tidy and the seats are comfy.”

Do you feel the site provides adequate privacy and dignity?

All of the people we spoke with felt that the site provided adequate privacy and dignity.

Knowledge of Community Diagnostic Centres

None of the respondents we spoke with had heard of CDCs before speaking with our team.

Experience of the appointment

All of the patients we spoke with had their appointment on time.

How was your experience of the test, scan, procedure or appointment itself?

All of the patients had a good experience of their appointment.

Treatment by and communication with Staff

Feedback about staff in both of the departments was positive.

“They were lovely.”

“They are always polite and I’m glad they’re there.”

“They’re very supportive.”

“Really well. Lovely staff treating you nicely.”

None of the patients we spoke with had any issues with communicating with the staff. One patient had their daughter with them to translate because English was not her first language but this worked well. They all felt that they were listened to and one person commented,

“They were chatty and answered all my questions”

Next Steps After the Appointment

Were you given information to take away with you? If no, would you have liked some?

All of the patients we spoke with were given information about their results at the end of their appointment.

“I got a short summary of my results straight away and some information on keeping healthy.”

They all confirmed that staff in both of the department had explained to them what the next steps would be.



Overall Feedback

What, if anything would you say was particularly good about your overall experience today?

“It was easy and the staff were nice”

“Easy and helpful”

“The timing of the appointment was good and the staff listened well. I always feel you can be open with staff as long as you’re polite.”

What if anything could have been improved about your overall experience?

One person felt that having a choice of time for her appointment and better parking availability would have improved her overall experience and a second person would have wanted better parking availability. One person wished that the nurse had read her notes before her appointment.

Follow up calls with patients

We made 3 follow up calls with patients about their experience of the CDC and their results. Their feedback is recorded below:-

Now that you've had a bit of time to reflect, does anything stand out as being particularly good about your experience getting a diagnostic test or scan?

"It's close to home"

"Just everything went smoothly and quickly."

"Everything about it was easy"

Is there anything you think would make the experience better for people attending in future?

"Not really no."

"Nothing from my experience."

"Parking is an issue for people."

If you required an additional test or scan, and you were offered a choice of location, would you want to return to the same place?

"Yes definitely it's close to home and everything was bob on."

"Yes it's local for me and the staff were lovely."

"Yes because it's close but I would want to be able to fit appointments around school hours."

Final reflection from one patient,

"It was nice, clean, quiet and quick but parking needs addressing."

Feedback about Scan Results

Two out of three patients had not received their full results but had not chased them because it was still within the expected timeframe and the summary results they had received were positive.

The third patient had received her results quickly after her appointment.

Response from Provider:

Positive and encouraging feedback regarding the CDC & staff which has been shared with all teams. Regarding the Radiology choice of location - the absence of an online booking system presents a challenge as the scans need to be vetted prior to appointment. We are also mindful of the numbers needing to be imaged at the CDC. Patients do have the opportunity however to change their appointment by contacting the service and at that point site options can be discussed.

The suggestions regarding posters and lights have been shared with Modality Ultrasound Lead who is addressing this.

Privacy screen in the waiting area - this can be explored but this area doesn't come under Radiology so will be shared with the Family Care department.

The issues with parking and the building signage are recognised although they fall outside the CDCs remit as it is not CDC owned building, and we are unable to address these concerns directly, but this will be shared with the building managers.

Patient feedback remains a priority, as of this year we will participate in the NHS England EBD (Experienced Based Design) Survey and will continually monitor patient responses. We are working with the primary care communications team to update websites on CDC information and opening times, and we will explore alternative communication avenues to promote and share information on the CDC as suggested.

The trust is currently undertaking some work on the Accessible Information Standard. IT Systems & Performance Lead and our Admin Manager are engaged with this work.