

St John's Hospice
Lancaster

Enter and View Report
Wednesday 17th August
1:00pm–3:30pm



DISCLAIMER

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

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Staff met during our visit:

Sue McGraw (Chief executive)

Maddy Bass (director of nursing and quality)

Date and time of our visit:

Date: Wednesday 17th August 2022

1:00pm-3:30pm

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised

Representatives:

Emmy Walmsley (Senior engagement officer)

Amanda Higgins (Engagement officer)



Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather people's views and experiences, especially seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service. This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Lancashire (HWL) who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced. The aim is to obtain the views and experiences of patients, relatives and staff and observe and assess the quality of services.

The team compile a report reflecting observations and feedback. Healthwatch Lancashire is an independent organisation, therefore we do not make judgements or express personal opinions. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement. This is sent to the manager for their opportunity to respond. Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is then published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk and sent to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank Sue McGraw, Maddy Bass, staff, patients and relatives, for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

General Information

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to three patients, eight relatives and seven staff members at the time of our visit.

St John's in-patient unit provides a high standard of specialist palliative care and support around the clock, 365 days of the year, for anyone aged 18 years and over.

Patients go there for symptom management and end of life care.

Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Wednesday 17th August 2022 and spoke to three patients, seven staff members and eight relatives.

Healthwatch Lancashire obtain the views and experiences of patients, relatives and staff. Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help assess the quality of services. Conversations with residents were structured around three themes (Environment, Care and support). Conversations with staff included their experiences of staffing levels, support and training. Relatives are asked to speak about their general experiences including how they feel about the service, if they feel involved in and informed. The team also recorded their own observations on the environment, facilities and staff-patient interactions.



Summary:

St John's hospice provides different units for patient needs. The inpatient ward capacity is 13 patients and at the time of the visit there were seven patients in the ward.

Interactions between staff and patients were observed to be caring and professional at all times during the visit. Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to three of the seven patients at the time of the visit. They were very complimentary of the service. *"The care never stops. There is a sense of community, family, and friendships."*

All seven staff members spoken to spoke highly of the hospice and how much they like working here. Comments such as *"I absolutely love working here, I have never felt happy to wake up and come to work like I do now."* *"I love working here, it is a specialist unit, and the staff are great, we have more than enough staff to deliver the care we need."* All staff members spoke highly of their team and that they felt comfortable speaking to anyone within the team.

"Person-centred care underpins our work here and our values. We champion what a patient wants, and we have a listening and responsive culture. We undertake advanced care planning from the start including emotional and psychological care. There are big things and little things that we do that all matter."

Feedback from relatives was exceptionally positive with comments such as, *"I felt so supported and at ease, I felt like we could relax when we came here."* *"There is a high level of service from everyone involved and there is a sense of community here."* The general comments from relatives were how highly they see the staff at St John's Hospice and how they would like to make it up to them. *"They work as a team and there is no hierarchy. Everything is discussed together. If they don't find the right person for a job advert, they would not recruit and put the advert out again."*

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives were warmly greeted by the chief executive Sue McGraw, she was warm and welcoming and very eager to speak to us about what the hospice is all about and what care they provide. She explained that they do regular staff surveys to ensure all the staff voice their concerns and any improvements can be made. Sue McGraw was positive about the visit and wanted Healthwatch Lancashire to attend the hospice to get an external view to see if any improvements could be made. Sue explained what the inpatient ward is and what is provided on there and then did an introduction for Healthwatch Lancashire representatives. She then provided us with a patient, community, and family feedback booklet that they had produced within the hospice with the views of everyone using the service.

During the visit a reoccurring theme appeared with staff, patients and relatives all saying there is no hierarchy in the hospice and they like that everything is communicated effectively, and they think highly of Sue McGraw.

All staff members had a very positive outlook and attitude and were very enthusiastic to the views and opinions of the individual patients.

No negative feedback was given about St John's Hospice and no one commented on anything they would like to change about the service

Enter and View observations

Pre visit and location

Before beginning the enter and view Healthwatch Lancashire representatives viewed the St John's Hospice website and found it very informative regarding the Hospice and what is offered. The Hospice is located near public transport routes and has easy access for all abilities. Nearby are local shops and is situated in a central location.

There is a lot of parking available outside the entrance to the hospice and also a lot of disabled parking bays available. The hospice is clearly signposted as you enter the hospice with arrows and signs to show you where each area of the hospice is.

The hospice employs a pharmacist to attend once a week and the medications are ordered externally.



The external environment

St John's hospice is set back from the main road and has its own grounds. It is well maintained and easily accessible for all. There is parking accessible to the front of the hospice with disabled parking bays available. The main entrance leads into the reception area and café where Healthwatch Lancashire representatives were warmly welcomed and signed in and asked for our covid test results before entering the premises. Healthwatch representatives observed visitors being greeted by reception staff and pointed in the right direction.

There are plants surrounding the front of the hospice and were well maintained. There was a sloped pathway to enable easy access to all visitors. There is also seating outside near the entrance for patients, relatives and staff to use at their leisure. It is very clear where to report to when entering the premises and visitors were greeted with a warm welcome by the reception staff.

The internal environment/reception - first impressions

On arrival, Healthwatch representatives were promptly greeted by a member of staff at reception and signed us in and ensured we had a negative lateral flow test before entering. We were then greeted by the chief executive Sue McGraw, she was warm and welcoming and eager to speak to us about what the hospice is all about and what care they provide. Sue McGraw was enthusiastic about her job role and what she wants for the hospice. Healthwatch Lancashire representatives were then joined by Maddy Bass who is the director of nursing and quality who showed us to the impatient ward.

The environment was observed to be warm, welcoming and relaxed. Healthwatch Lancashire representatives were shown around the ward and saw all areas of the service that are provided.

There were five side rooms available with patio area and private bathrooms for patients when they first enter the ward so they can be assessed before moving on to the joint ward. These rooms had ample space to move around and had a warm and relaxed feeling to them. There was space for patients to venture outside onto their



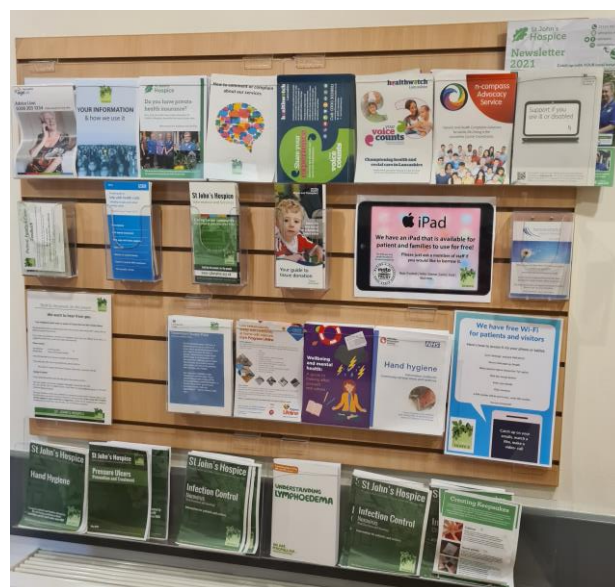
own patio area and had seating, planters, and bird feeders that they can all access.



The observation of corridors, toilets, and bathrooms

Communal areas are clean and tidy and accessible to all. A wide corridor made it easy for access and door were clearly labelled with pictures and words to what was in that room. All the areas observed were clean, tidy and fresh smelling. Each room had a private bathroom with toilet, sink and accessible shower. There are also two shower rooms and three bathrooms for the patients to use. All bathrooms were observed to be clean, tidy, clutter free and accessible. Each room was bright and had enough space for patients, staff, and relatives to move around freely. The added patio areas in the rooms and the shared wards made it possible for patients and relatives to sit outside and have some privacy.

There was a leaflet board that was kept up to date for patients and relatives to access and use when they needed. There was also Healthwatch Lancashire leaflets displayed. There was a display board showing pictures of patients doing various activities including a wedding ceremony and a hen party.



There was also a staff board which showed what staff members were working that day and who patients and relatives could go to if they needed help or support.



The lounges and other public areas

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives observed different areas where patients and relatives could use. There is a family room and a garden room where relatives can sit and talk to professionals or sit with their relatives in a quiet space or a different environment. The hospice provides an overnight room where visitors can stay. There is also a small kitchen for families to prepare food and drinks for themselves.

There is a garden room for both patients and relatives to use, there are sofas and a table and chairs in there for movie nights, games and tv time. This leads out to a big garden space and space to walk around and enjoy activities.

There was storage available to hold games and activities for the patients and relatives to enjoy.





The forget me not centre is separate to the hospice and is situated near the entrance to the car park. This can be used by families at any time and can also be used by patients using the hospice. The forget me not centre is used by relatives, patients and volunteers who can come and talk about experiences they have had or use the space as a non-clinical environment to see their loved ones. It was observed that every ward had its own hand sanitisation station, and it was observed that staff were adhering to the regulations and were seen to be washing their hands regularly throughout the visit.



Observations of patient and staff interactions

There appeared to be a lot of staff on duty, and it was observed that a patient had two members of staff at times to help them get ready. Staff were observed to be caring towards patients and were seen to be helping them when they asked for it. It was apparent that all staff knew the names of the patients on the wards as it was observed several times a member of staff walking towards a patient and talking to them by name. Staff were observed to be respectful of patients and relatives and were seen to be having conversations with relatives.

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives were seen to be supporting the patients in anything they needed during the visit, and this included using two staff to one patient ratio to ensure the patient had enough support to go about their daily activities. Staff could be seen smiling and interacting with the patients and relatives and were supporting them in their daily routine.



Additional information

Staff members were welcoming towards Healthwatch Lancashire representatives and thoroughly enjoyed talking to us about the service they provide and also what they can do to support each individual in the ward.

There is a hospice at home team which is a package offered to patients to help support them in their own homes. There are rooms in the hospice that are sound proof to ensure that patients and relatives get the privacy they need to talk to each other and to the professionals involved.

The hospice provides 'cuddle beds' to allow patients and relatives time to spend together in comfort. One relative said, *'This has brought me a lot of comfort before.'* They also provide a hug bag to relatives which consists of things to support the relative.

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to a group that has been formed within the Hospice called 'the VOICE group' (Valued Opinions to Improve Care Excellence) This group of people have all had experience with the service in the past five years and are now volunteers for St John's Hospice and they take part in patient led assessments of the care environment and also review information for families.

On the ward they have a celebration tree which they decorate different with different themes during the year. One member of staff was telling Healthwatch Lancashire representatives that when it was the Queens Jubilee, they decorated it with flags and *"the patients really enjoyed it."*



Feedback from patients

Level of care

The patients spoken to said they were very happy with the service they were receiving. *"it is absolutely fantastic, nothing is too much trouble."* *"I can't describe how good it is, its absolutely amazing, the experience from reception to checking in. Nothing is too much trouble."* Another resident commented *"I can't fault them, the atmosphere is relaxed and they have time for you, there is a high staff to patient ratio nothing is too much trouble for them."*

Environment

The patients commented that the ward was comfortable and quiet for them. *"Its quiet and comfortable, they bring me anything I want or need."* *"It's great we are so lucky, there's not many people in here so we can have full staff support."* One patient commented on the outdoor area, *"its lovely here, I love the garden areas, you'd think it was a private hospital its that's nice."*

Support

The patients explained they felt listened to and supported whilst in the hospice. *"People are always asking me if im ok or if there is anything I need." "They always take the time to tell me everything they are doing, its reassuring knowing I have support."*

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives asked patients if they were aware of any extra support available to them. One patient commented *"yeah there are counselling groups I can attend." "There are groups we can attend, and I know when they are on and what is offered to me." Another patient commented "honestly, I can't, every members of staff have introduced themselves to me. There is a family room, support for relatives and the visiting hours are really good."*

Improvements

Three patients commented that they couldn't think of any improvements that could be made to St Johns Hospice. *"I honestly can't think of anything, we couldn't book a taxi and they provided an ambulance to pick us up, everyone is brilliant, there is respect, compassion and nothing is too much trouble."*

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives also asked patients if they knew who to speak to if they weren't happy or wanted to make a complaint. *"yes I can speak to anyone here." "I'd speak to the staff here or go on the website. I raise money for the charity I care so much about it, so it's unlikely I'll be needing to make a complaint."*

Additional comments

"From the receptionist to people in the canteen and all of the staff here are brilliant."

Relatives and friends' views

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to eight relatives on the day of the visit.

How do you feel generally about the service

Overall feedback from relatives was exceptionally positive with one relative stating *"I can't do enough to help St John's hospice they have gone over and above for me."* One relative commented *"the hospice has made a massive difference to my whole family."* *"The staff are fantastic, absolutely first class."*

The relatives spoken with commented about how much the staff went over and above for them when their loved one was on the ward. *"I felt so supported and at ease, I felt like we could relax when we came here."* *"There is a high level of service from everyone involved and there is a sense of community here."*

One relative told Healthwatch Lancashire representatives that they felt *"the care was exceptional"* and they now volunteer for St John's hospice, and they get to help take food out to the patients. *"Staff remember relatives even after they have left the hospice it is so humbling."*

Are kept informed about your relative

All the relatives spoken with praise the staff for how much information they had received and are now receiving. *"We were very well informed the whole way through."* *"Staff spoke to you as well as the patient, it was nice they spoke to us as well."* *"we can go and talk to anyone about our relatives care and they take the time out to speak to us."*

One relative commented *"nothing is too much trouble; staff will speak to us about our relative and keep us informed."*

Do you know how to make a complaint if you need to

When Healthwatch Lancashire representatives asked this question to relatives the main comment was, *"we never need to complain its so lovely here."* Most of the relatives agreed that they knew who to speak to if they have a complaint and one relative commented *"it is carefully explained to us when we first come here."* *"they*

have very robust procedures and we can speak to anyone if we have a problem and it will be dealt with there and then."

Are you aware of any additional support available

Most of the relatives spoken to told Healthwatch Lancashire representatives that staff members had spoken to them and their relatives about what is available to them. *"I can see a councillor if I want, its great we have that service."*

All the relatives spoken to were aware of the 'VOICE group' (Valued Opinions to Improve Care Excellence) that is available to them. *"I know I can go over to the forget me not centre and speak to other relatives."*

Would you recommend this service to others

The eight relatives would recommend St John's hospice to others. *"a whole team effort, no hierarchy, all teams work together and unite to support the patients."*
"Absolutely I would definitely recommend this hospice to someone else I know."

One relative commented *"the secret to a good place is the right team and St John's hospice have the right team."*

"On the corridor of the ward there is a memories and keepsakes board that families can add to, I love looking at it and seeing what other patients have been doing."

"It's a pity its charity run; it would be great if other services could be this good. I wouldn't want my relative to be anywhere else."



Any other comments

One relative commented *"I lost someone but I have gained so many friends since I started volunteering for St John's Hospice VOICE group."*

"it is very family centred here, the whole experience was wonderful I have done fundraising for this hospice to say thank you."

"Nothing was ever too much, you only had to ask, they go over and above here there is never any shortage of staff to talk to."

"As family we can do things with our relatives, they had a hen do here the other week it was brilliant."

"If a patient wants to do something St John's hospice will go over and above to make it happen."

"The nursing staff here are very multi skilled and transferred to hospice at home during the pandemic, my hat goes off to them."

"Its lovely to see staff move around to different wards and places, it is nice to see staff members eager to learn and develop in other areas."

"There are family rooms which enable us to come in and see our relatives but also stay over with them and enjoy that quality time that we wouldn't normally get."



The single occupancy rooms consisted of a bed, drawers, a private accessible bathroom, a television and a big outdoor area with private seating, planters and a bird feeder. *"The rooms are big, clean and easy to get around."* *"I like that you can sit out with your relative in a private garden."* *"It feels homely."*

Staff views

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to seven staff members on the day of the visit.

Do you have enough staff when on duty?

All staff spoken to confirmed that they felt happy with the staffing arrangements and that staffing levels were constantly being monitored to ensure enough staff are present or when extra staff may be needed. *"We have an amazing multi-disciplinary team, and we work really well together."* *"Some days are harder than others and no two days are the same."* *"We are all able to communicate well when it comes to staffing and if we need more staff then we will add more staff onto the bank list."* *"The patients are our priority, and we need the right staff to fulfil the right care."*

Do you feel supported to carry out person centred care?

All staff spoken to were very clear about the importance of carrying out person centred care and all answered very positively when asked this question. *"we do things when the patient is ready and not a routine basis, we want them to feel happy and comfortable in our care."* One member of staff talked about how important it is that the patients feel they make their own choices and do things when they want to do them. *"we can shower and bath anytime we and the patient wants, there is no time schedule or order to the day."* One member of staff stated, *"it underpins our work and values here."* *"Person centred care is so important and allowing the patients to make their own choices and decisions makes it more comforting."*

Do you feel you have enough training to carry out your duties well?

Staff felt they had enough training to carry out their duties well. One member of staff stated, *"I can't believe how many hours of training I have done; we do a lot."* *"I feel supported to carry out my training or any extra training I would like to do."* Majority of the staff explained that a lot of the training is online, but they were happy with that and hoping that more face to face training will become available

in the future. *"we encourage learning and development but also learning from one another, we are a very good team."*

Do you enjoy working here?

One staff member commented *"yes I do, we are a very supportive team and there is no hierarchy which I love."* *"I love working here, it is very hard sometimes but it's a great team and a great place to work"* One member of staff commented *"I absolutely love working here, I have never felt happy to wake up and come to work like I do now."* *"I love working here, it is a specialist unit, and the staff are great, we have more than enough staff to deliver the care we need."*

Would you be happy to recommend this care home to a close relative?

Staff members Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke to said yes, they would recommend this hospice to a relative or friend. *"I would definitely recommend this hospice to my relatives and if there is no availability, I know the packages available at home are just as brilliant."* A few members of staff mentioned that they had already recommended relatives or friends to the ward and have had them on the ward previously. *"I would come myself if I needed to, the patients are so well looked after and cared for."*

Additional comments

"We do as much as we can for our patients, we had a hen do last week, we've got a wedding today and the other week we had a pony in the back garden."

"We are a well-supported team with a good support network."

"Everyone here goes over and above for the patients and their families, they all do an amazing job."

"The staff team are entirely committed to best care and responsive care. We have a grief café, and are developing day services. There is a carers group. The commitment across the staff team is to provide outstanding care."

Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement have been highlighted from resident and staff feedback. These are not Healthwatch Lancashire recommendations but rather, areas to explore further for possible improvement.

- No areas requiring improvement were identified during the visit and the quality of service was deemed to be to a prominent level. It is therefore recommended to continue to obtain regular feedback from members, relatives, and staff to monitor the quality of services which will help work towards continual improvement and be able to maintain the current high standards

Response from provider

St John's Hospice is delighted to receive such a positive report with no areas of improvement identified. Nonetheless we will persist with our journey of continuous improvement: this is what our patients, their families and carers deserve.

The report advises that we maintain our feedback work, shortly we will actually be extending our patient, relative and staff feedback forums, in addition to continuing to act on recent staff engagement.

St John's Hospice enjoyed hosting the Healthwatch team and would like to thank all of the patients, relatives, staff and the VOICE Group for their time, commitment and enthusiasm to this Healthwatch visit.

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