

# Preston Healthport Diagnostic Centre

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

9:00am-12:30pm



**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, relatives and patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

# Contact Details

## Contact details

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## Registered Manager

Dorothy Walmsley

## Date and Time of our Visit

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

9:00am-12:30pm

## Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Emmy Walmsley (Senior Engagement officer)

John Moore (Healthwatch Volunteer)



# Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather people's views and experiences, especially those that are seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service. The aim of an Enter and View visit is to gather views and experiences of patients, relatives and staff of a service and observe the environment to assess the quality of the service.

This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced.

The team collate feedback gathered and observations made to compile a report. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement. Healthwatch Lancashire is an independent organisation, therefore we do not make judgements or express personal opinions but rely on feedback received and objective observations of the environment. The report is sent to the manager for their opportunity to respond before being published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at [www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk).

Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is available to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations.

## General Information

At the time of the visit there were fourteen patients, four relatives and two staff members.

Preston Healthport is going through a transition from LSCFT to Lancashire Teaching Hospitals. When Healthwatch Lancashire visited the site they only had ultrasound services available. There are plans for Preston Healthport to become a full Diagnostic Centre and work is planned over the next few months to allow for this to happen.

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank management, relatives, staff and patients for making us feel welcome and for taking the time to speak to us during the visit.

# Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 and received feedback from fourteen patients, four relatives and two staff members.

Healthwatch Lancashire obtain the views and experiences of patients and staff. Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help assess the quality of services. The team also recorded their own observations on the environment and staff-member interactions.

This visit was commissioned by Healthwatch England to obtain the views of patients to establish if Preston Healthport was easy to travel to, if the directions were accessible, if the signage was appropriate and how the care was once they arrive at the centre. This also required Healthwatch Lancashire obtaining the views of patients after their appointments to see if they were happy with the care they received at the time of the visit. This was done via follow up phone calls with patients two weeks after their initial appointments.

To retain confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, names, pronouns and any identifiable details have been removed from quotes.



**14 patients**  
**4 Relatives**  
**2 staff**

## What is a Clinical Diagnostic Centre?

“Community Diagnostic Centres (sometimes called CDCs) are being set up across Lancashire and South Cumbria to offer thousands more diagnostic tests and scans, helping to cut waiting lists and support earlier diagnosis. The centres offer a range of diagnostic tests in one, convenient location, helping to cut the time and expense to patients of attending lots of different appointments.” (1)

# Summary

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives spoke with fourteen patients, two relatives and two staff members on the day of the visit.

Overall patients were happy with the care they received when at the Diagnostic Centre and commented on how efficient the testing process was. The other main positive aspects highlighted were the ability to attend the appointment earlier, free parking, location and the flexibility in scheduling appointments. All patients spoken with had waited no longer than nine weeks for their scan, with eleven patients waiting less than four weeks for their appointment.

Preston Healthport had three different car parks for patients to use and signage from the car park to the entrance. The entrance was accessible via a ramp and hand rail with an automated external door. The Reception area was open plan with the waiting area opposite the Reception desk.

Signage around the Diagnostic Centre was clear and Dementia friendly signage used on bathroom doors. There was notice boards with information on around the waiting area and some leaflets to take away.

When speaking with staff it was discussed that the Diagnostic Centre is undergoing some changes with all aspects of the centre including signage, clinician rooms and Reception area being modified and refreshed. The staff on the day of the visit had been brought over from the hospital to work on Reception. Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives were informed by Reception staff that there were only two ultrasound scanners in operation, at the time of the visit, which meant two patients every thirty minutes could be seen for a scan.

Observations of staff and patient interactions were helpful and friendly and staff members were seen to be supporting patients who had a second language or who had come to the wrong place for their appointment. Patients were observed to be waiting a minimal time before being called for their appointment and were very complimentary of the care once they had been seen.

After the visit was completed, Healthwatch Lancashire representatives held follow up conversations, over the phone, with a selection of patients to discuss their experiences once they had been tested. During these conversations patients explained they were happy with their experience at the Diagnostic Centre and would come back for future tests. All patients mentioned they were happy that they received their results that day and didn't experience a long wait to speak with doctor or specialist about their results.

# Enter and View Observation

## Getting to the service

The Diagnostic Centre is accessible by public transport, which is near to Preston Healthport, a bus stop is located on Watling Street Road which is a five minute walk from the Centre. Patient transport was available for patients that needed this option and was arranged by service providers. There was a car park adjacent to the centre which was free to use with five spaces for Blue Badge users to access. There were two additional parking areas nearby. These car parks were signposted, but it was unclear whether patients could use these. The main car park sign was clear but had smaller writing underneath the signs which was not clear from the road to read. (See recommendation 1)

There were dropped curbs on all the car parks to allow for ease of access, it was noted at the time of the visit that access to the dropped kerb in the second car park was restricted due to a car parked in the space meaning that access from this car park was limited for wheelchair users. (Recommendation 2)

There was no designated drop off point for patients outside Preston Healthport but there was enough room for a patient to be dropped off in front of the main entrance.

Signage from the road was limited and was only visible once a patient enters the road junction. This could have been clearer from further up the road. (See recommendation 3) Once on site, signage to the main entrance was clear and directed patients and visitors to Reception. There was ramp and stair access to the main entrance, with a hand rail. The external door into the Diagnostic Centre was automatic to allow wheelchairs with limited mobility easy access to the building.



## The Diagnostic Centre

On entry into the Diagnostic Centre all patients check in at Reception and take a seat in the waiting area which was directly adjacent to the Reception desk. Hand sanitiser stations and hand gel on Reception was provided for patients and staff to use. The waiting area was clean and spacious, there were two different types of seating for patients to access when waiting for their appointment. This area was clutter free and allowed for free movement around the waiting area to the treatment rooms. There was a bin in the Reception area, which was not a pedal bin and appeared to be broken at the time of the visit with the lid stuck open. (see recommendation 4)



The second floor of the centre was accessible via a lift, this however had no signage to indicate what services were available on the first floor of the centre. Whilst the exterior door was powered, the interior door through to Reception only opened inwards and would not be accessible to patients using a wheelchair as they would need to open the door onto themselves. There was no intercom or system to call for support in the entrance. This door would have benefited from being an automatic door for ease of access for all

patients. (see recommendation 5) The waiting area and corridors were free from unnecessary clutter with ample space for wheelchair users to move around the area.

Dementia friendly signage was clear on the bathroom doors with pictures and words being used on all doors. These had contrasting blue background with white writing. Flooring was in contrast to the wall colour and there was an identifiable boarder between the floor and walls to distinguish when one ends and the other begins. On observation it was seen that double signage had been used on the toilet doors and changing rooms, this meant a sign on the door and the wall next to the doors. It was also observed that the toilet, toilet seat and hand rail were all the same colour and this could benefit from a different colour seat for support with dementia patients. (see recommendation 6)

Signage around the centre used large and small print on contrasting backgrounds to make them accessible for people with visual impairments. Signage was observed above the doors in the corridors and at eye-level on walls in the waiting areas of the Diagnostic Centre.

All doors in the corridor were open to allow ease of access for all patients going through to their appointments. There was a hearing loop sign displayed on the Reception Desk. Reception staff mentioned that they were not normally placed at that Diagnostic Centre and one of the team had come from the hospital.

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives asked staff about accessibility for people who are visually impaired or deaf. They commented, “We have co-sign that we book in at the time of appointment for those patients who use British Sign Language but I’m not sure what is in place for visually impaired.”

There were four notice boards up for patients with support services and one staff board which explained the staffing arrangements for the trust on, but this board was quite sparse. There seemed to be a lot of repetition of posters in the waiting areas on different walls. There was no information available about complaints and compliments for patients to easily access. (see recommendation 7) Leaflets were available for patients to take away with them but there were no leaflets readily available in easy read format. (see recommendation 8)



## Interactions

Observations were taken at the time of the visit which included interactions between staff and patients. One example was a patient entering the Reception area and was greeted by the staff team, but the patient had come to the wrong place and they were seen to be explaining to the patient that they were in the wrong place and where they needed to go. Observations showed a number of patients turning up on the wrong day for their appointment. Out of the fourteen patients spoken with on the day, four patients had turned up to their

appointments a day early, but the Reception team were able to get them in for their ultrasound that day.



It was observed that patients were ringing Preston Healthport asking about blood clinic and LSCFT services which were available at the centre prior to the transition of service provider. Staff were directing them to Fulwood Clinic where all these have now been transferred to.

Patients were observed being called to their appointment by a clinician. There was no electronic patient alert system to call patients for their appointments. (see recommendation 9) Staff on Reception were seen to be helpful and friendly to patients entering and exiting the building. Staff were observed providing assistance to a patient who used English as an additional language. The staff responded in a timely manner and contacted Language Line to arrange an interpreter to assist them. Another member of staff was observed making sure that

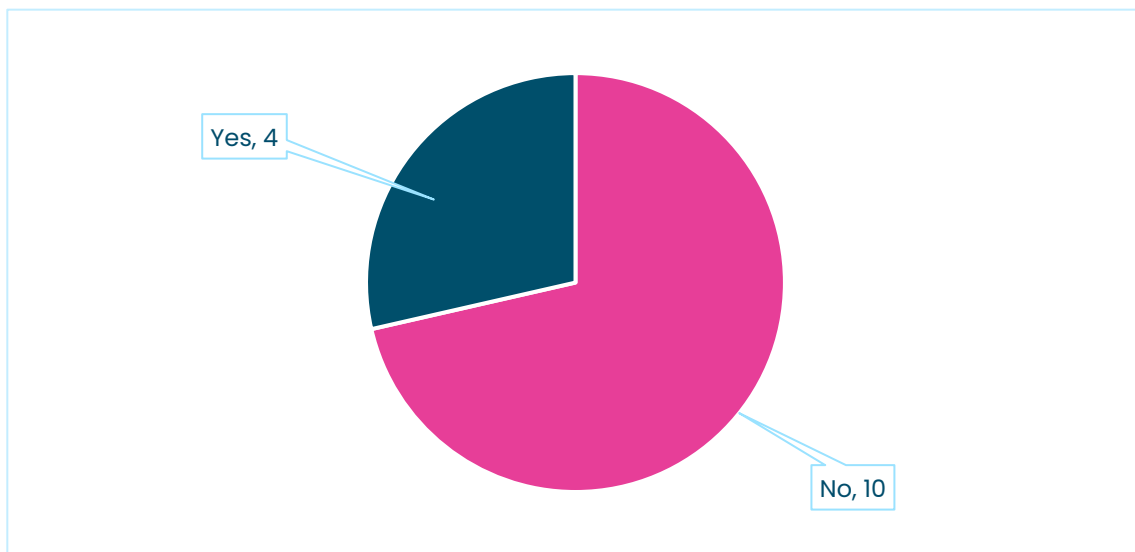


a patient's mobility needs were being catered for by checking if they needed additional support.

# Patient feedback

At the time of the visit, Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives spoke with fourteen patients about their experiences at the CDC.

## Before attending today, had you ever heard of Community Diagnostic Centres?



There was a mixed response to people's awareness of Community Diagnostic Centres with most patients unaware of the service that was on offer.

**“This is the first time I am hearing about this place.”**

Four patients mentioned they had heard of the Diagnostic Centre before, but this was because they had used it before for other services.

**“I have heard of the CDC as I came for my bloods around 2 weeks ago and it was manic and I was waiting outside for ages in a long queue, I'm glad it's been moved out of here.”**

Patients were asked what they expected from the centre, if it had met their expectations and if they had any concerns about coming to the Diagnostic Centre today. Thirteen patients commented that they didn't have expectations as they had only just heard of the place. One patient added their comments around space.

**“I expected to come, and it was a small room, I wasn't expecting a full building.”**

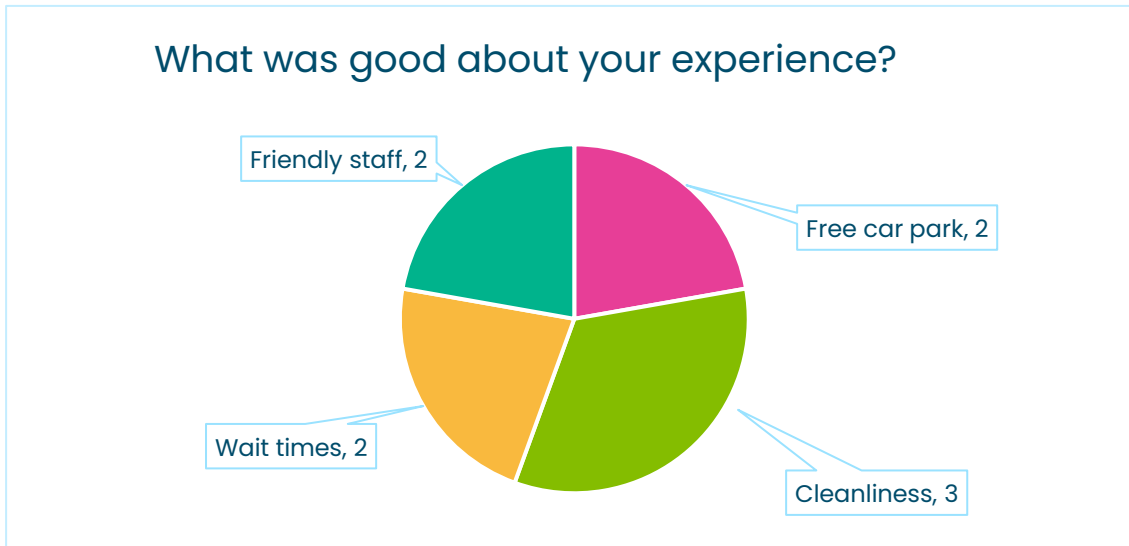
Four patients comments were around how quiet the waiting area was and how it was easier to get to.

**“This is far better than the hospital, it is so quiet and easier to access.”**

All fourteen patients commented that they had no concerns about the Diagnostic Centre before attending and only commented around the parking arrangements.

**“As I’ve never been here before I was unsure what the parking would be like but it great.”**

## Overall experience



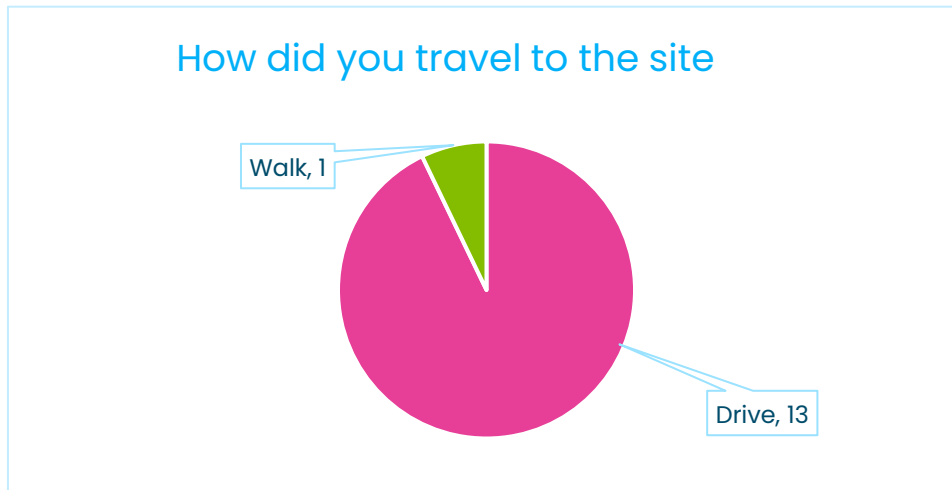
Patients were asked what they found was good about their experience. Two patients commented on how quiet the centre was.

**“Most NHS places are chaotic, but this seems very chilled and clean. I know they are going through transition that’s why it might be quiet, but I hope this continues.”**

Patients were also asked what could be improved around their overall experience on the day. The main comment was around signage to the car park and then from the car park to the entrance area.

**“Signage from the car park could be better and the sign from the main road is not clear until you get to the junction.”**

## Travelling to the site



Twelve patients commented that it took under thirty minutes for them to get to the Diagnostic Centre. Two patients shared that it took them between thirty minutes to an hour to get to the site.

Six patients mentioned that signage was a concern once they were on site as it was not clear where they needed to go, especially if they parked in the furthest car park from the centre.

**“Signage isn’t great, I couldn’t understand where to park and then go from there.”**

Twelve patients mentioned that they were happy with the location and found it convenient as it wasn’t too far from home.

**“It was very convenient; it isn’t too bad to get here, and the parking is good.”**

Two patients commented that they had to travel some distance to get to this appointment, but they understood this was to avoid wait times, so they were happy to travel.

**“It was a bit further away than normal, but I didn’t mind as the appointment was quick.”**

## Appointment

Nine patients had been referred for a scan by their doctors and five patients had been referred by a consultant at their local hospital.

Seven patients commented they hadn’t been offered a choice of specific date or time, but they were happy with the ones they were given.

**“I was just sent a letter, but I was happy with the date and time.”**

However, seven patients mentioned they were able to choose the date and time of their appointment. They received a phone call and were asked if the date and time was convenient and if it wasn’t they had the option to change this.

**“I chose the date and time on the phone, I could have got one earlier but I wasn’t available.”**

Patients were asked if they had been given a choice regarding venue and the time and date of their appointment. All fourteen patients explained how they had been allocated an appointment at the centre for the scan was and weren't given any alternative locations to receive their tests.



All patients told representatives that they felt well informed about their appointment whether this was via a letter or phone call. They mentioned they had received all the information they needed.

**“Yes, I had a letter that explained everything to me.”**

Patients explained that they felt that privacy and dignity was adequate with three patients mentioning there were separate changing rooms for patients to access if needed.

**“Yes, they have separate changing rooms, not that I’ve used them but I saw them.”**

Patients commented on the waiting area and its accessibility they highlighted the cleanliness, quiet, space available and that the availability of health information around the waiting area.

**“It is better than Royal Preston Hospital, it is very clean and quiet, I like it.”**

Conversations between two patients and Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives showed that they had concerns with the experience if the centre was running at higher capacity. They were aware that only two ultrasound machines were working that day.

**“It is good, very quiet compared to last time which was hectic. I hope this doesn’t return to how it was.”**

## After the appointment

On the day of the visit Representatives managed to speak to twelve patients after their appointment to discuss how they felt the appointment went. Two patients had other commitments and weren't able to complete the second part of the survey.

Representatives asked patients if their appointment was on time and ten patients said that it was. One patient mentioned that they were five minutes late and one patient explained that they were late due to traffic, so it wasn't the centre's fault. All twelve patients described that they were happy with their appointment and that everyone was friendly.



**“It was very good, very prompt and in and out. Everyone was friendly and helpful”.**

A patient remarked on the care they had received from the staff members on the day. All twelve commented that staff were lovely and caring.

**“Staff treated me well, impeccable service.”**

However, one patient was concerned about the care they had received and mentioned that there was one staff member that came across quite rude to them.

**“The staff member doing the scan was a bit rude, my relative asked if they could come in with me and the staff member just shook their head with no explanation, we thought this was a bit rude.”**

Eleven patients felt they were able to communicate effectively with the staff on the day, but one patient said they had a slight language barrier as their English wasn't great. All twelve patients commented that they weren't asked if they had any communication needs before or during their appointment. (recommendation 10)

All patients on the day mentioned they felt listened to by staff and felt they were able to ask questions if they felt they needed to. Representatives asked patients if they had been given any information to take away with them after their appointment. Eleven said they hadn't been given anything but they didn't need anything, and one patient said they had been given a leaflet to take home and read.

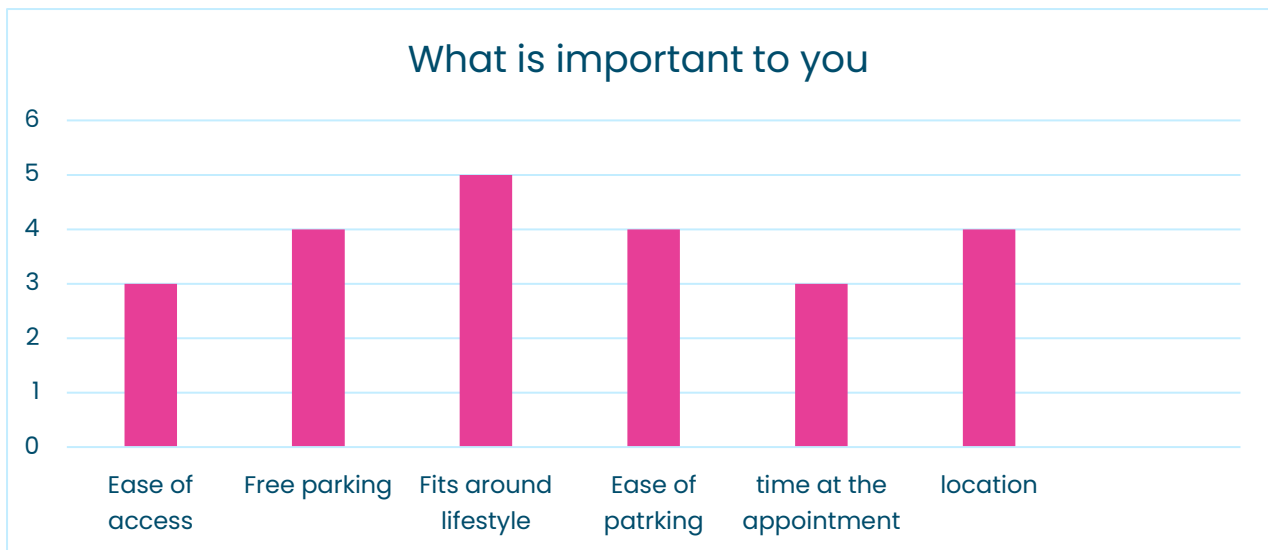
**“I wasn't given anything after my appointment, but I didn't need anything.”**

Patients were also asked if the next steps were explained to them after their appointment. All twelve patients explained that they were told that the person who referred them for their scan would be in touch with them soon and to wait for their phone call.

**“I was told that my doctor would ring me in about a week to tell me the results.”**

## Patient voice

Patients were asked if they had been offered choices around timing or location in the future what would be the most important consideration for them.



**“Free parking and ease of parking are important as at Royal Preston Hospital you are looking for ages for a space and then the cost is extortionate, I can’t afford that.”**

Some patients commented about it fitting around work and ease of access to get to the hospital and back in time.

**“I have come from work today and I’ve been in and out, you don’t get that at a hospital you need to add at least another hour if it’s the hospital, so this is a lot more convenient.”**

## Follow up conversations

Follow up phone calls took place two weeks later where Representatives asked patients on reflection how they felt about the overall experience, what changes they would like to see and if they had received their results yet. Seven patients agreed to a follow up phone call regarding their care and the consensus was that all patients were happy with the whole process from parking, staff attitude and receiving their results.

**“The whole experience was positive. I was thankful the carpark was free. The Receptionist was very welcoming and helpful. I didn’t have to wait for long before my appointment. I received some feedback straight away and then informed on how to go forward getting in touch with my specialist.”**

Six of the seven patients had received their results on the day and a few days later in a follow up with their doctor or specialist.

**“I received my results there and then which was great, I then received a phone call from my doctor a day later to discuss my results, I couldn’t believe how fast this was.”**

During the follow up phone calls some patients commented on what could be improved at Preston Healthport. The main recommendation surrounded signage

from the main road and in the car parks so patients are aware where they need to report to.

**“Clear signs from the viewpoint of the carpark to the buildings would be good and from the main road as I nearly drove passed it.” (See recommendation 1 and 3)**

Overall, seven patients spoken to after their appointment were happy with their appointment and Preston Healthport and said they would return in the future if they need any more scans.

# Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated based on observations of the environment and feedback gathered from patients and staff.

1. Improve signage in the car park to ensure the signs are clear for patients entering the car park and finding the entrance.
2. Ensure space is clearly marked in the second car park to allow for ease of access to the dropped down curb.
3. Review signage from the main road to ensure that patients can find the centre appropriately.
4. Ensure all bins are appropriate and match infection control protocol. E.g. a pedal push bin lid.
5. Look into changing the internal door to an automatic door for patients who use physical aids.
6. Ensure toilets are dementia friendly, especially disabled toilet.
7. Ensure complaints and compliments sheets are present in the reception area.
8. Provide easy read leaflets for patients to take away with them at the time of appointment.
9. Implement a patient alert system, including a visual and audio alert to call patients for their appointments.
10. Ensure that all patient's communication needs are checked by staff upon arrival

## **Appendix**

1. [LSC Integrated Care Board :: Community diagnostic centres \(icb.nhs.uk\)](https://www.icb.nhs.uk)



# Provider response

Healthwatch Lancashire undertook an Enter and view visit of the Preston Healthport CDC on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024. The visit provided the service with a useful perspective on what was only the second day of Ultrasound being the only service provided at the CDC location (other services which had previously shared the building having moved out the week before). It is reassuring that the patients commented positively on the efficiency of the process, free parking, location and flexibility of appointments.

Many of the Healthwatch recommendations related to signage and these issues should be resolved once further work is undertaken on the CDC site within the next couple of months. It was helpful to have the visit at an early stage to be able to identify issues and address them. We will continue to monitor our actions in response to the Healthwatch Lancashire recommendations within our governance structure.

We would welcome Healthwatch Lancashire back in the next year to see the changes made to Preston Healthport CDC.



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