

Healthwatch Worcestershire's response to the Quality Account of the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust for the financial year 2020/21

Healthwatch Worcestershire has a statutory role as the champion for those who use publicly funded health and care services in the county and therefore, we welcome the opportunity to comment on the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Quality Account for 2020/21.

As is our normal practice we have used Healthwatch England guidance to form our response as follows:

1. Do the priorities of the provider reflect the priorities of the local population?

Healthwatch Worcestershire believes that the overriding priority of patients, their carers and the public regarding Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust is that the Trust should provide safe, quality, and accessible services at its hospital sites across Worcestershire. We welcome the Boards continued oversight and focus on Accident and Emergency service to ensure continuous improvement now the Care Quality Commission has lifted the Trust out of Special Measures.

We appreciate it has been an unusual year with the COVID-19 pandemic causing significant disruption to services. We appreciate the commitment and efforts of all those at the Trust who have been involved in responding to Covid-19 which has understandably disrupted much of the work to improve on the quality priorities identified in the Trust's last Quality Account. We therefore welcome the Trust's continued commitment to the three quality priorities identified for last year and compliment the Trust on identifying measurable outcomes for these priorities.

However, we are concerned about the backlog of patients waiting for treatment. We believe the Trust needs to explain to the local population when and how services for patients which were delayed by Covid-19 such as some cancer treatments and elective surgery will be restored.

2. Are there any important issues missed?

Healthwatch Worcestershire are not aware of any important issues missed.

We have welcomed the Trust's open and transparent approach to engaging with Healthwatch Worcestershire in its drive to improve quality. After our comments last year we are pleased to note that the strategy and activity to deliver quality improvements over the past year is documented in the Quality Account and reflects the evident commitment of the Trust's Executive Team and the Trust's clinical and

non-clinical staff at all levels to make the improvements that are expected by patients and the public.

Following our comment about the Duty of Candour in our response to last year's Quality Account we welcome the inclusion of information in this year's Quality account about the Duty in influencing individuals' values and behaviour.

3. Has the provider demonstrated that they have involved patients and the public in the production of the Quality Account?

Whilst we acknowledge the express commitment in the Quality Account to working with patients to improve the quality of services and learning from their experiences it is not clear to us that patients were specifically engaged in developing the Quality Indicators for 2020/21 that are carried forward in this Quality Account.

Healthwatch Worcestershire encourages the Trust to increase and report upon its engagement with patients, their carers and the public who live with health inequalities, are members of Ethnic Minority communities, the LGBT+ community and live with disabilities.

4. Is the Quality Account clearly presented for patients and the public?

Healthwatch Worcestershire acknowledges the challenge in producing a Quality Account with the detailed information required by NHS England which is also clearly presented and meaningful for patients and the public. Given those restrictions the introduction does clearly set out the purpose and structure of the QA and the infographics pages are an easily accessible picture of the work of the hospital. We welcome that the Trust has acted on our suggestion last year and included a comprehensive glossary of terms.

We strongly recommend that the Trust should produce a summary of the Quality Account in an accessible format selecting important information for the public, complemented by an "easy read" version. These should also be produced in languages spoken by minority ethnic communities in Worcestershire.