

**Healthwatch Croydon Statement, April 2015 to April 2016**  
**CROYDON HEALTH SERVICES**  
**QUALITY ACCOUNT**  
**2015/16**

The Quality Account is the local NHS service providers' opportunity to reflect on quality improvements in 2015/16 and consider areas for further quality improvement in the year ahead. This Quality Account was considered by the local and national 'Patient Champion' Healthwatch Croydon (Health and Social Care 2012 legislation), and in their opinion it is a fair reflection of the range and the quality of healthcare services provided by Croydon Hospital Services (CHS).

Healthwatch Croydon (HWC) collates and analyses the views, experiences, needs and requirements of Croydon residents by asking people at healthcare venues, attending community groups, utilising online feedback tool NHS Choices and many more ways.

**Patient, carer and staff experience and involvement**

The local Healthwatch in Croydon would like to congratulate CHS on providing staff and patient engagement opportunities. '**Listening into Action**' is a valuable initiative. We recognise there is more work to be done by CHS particularly in service user and carer involvement, developing and implementing this initiative to bring about genuine user led service improvements. Reference to patients being involved in quality governance procedures should be succinctly documented and on the website.

Alongside the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG, funder of NHS services), better informed decision-making by involving 'patients by experience' would potentially save CHS resource. Co-designing by patients and clinical staff may have improved experience and reduced costs. CHS have action plans, and monitoring of CQC recommendations are in process.

HWC is surprised CHS nor its commissioner the CCG have a Patient Forum or is linked in with a local Patient Forum, the engagement strategy is not available in the public domain. There are a number of ways in which CHS obtains and acts upon patient and relatives/carers views, it would have been useful to have a summary. More radical patient engagement needs to be implemented, the Quality Account states CHS is 'to improve Friends Family Test (FFT) response and through providing excellent care be the provider of choice for our patients and their families' (page 19). FFT responses are very positive but, partly negated by low response rate. FFT is largely a satisfaction tick box exercise. The PALS service logs formal complaints, some complaints are dealt with informally, and logging these would provide shared learning.

**Friends and Family Test (FFT) is a satisfaction tool not a robust mechanism of using feedback for service design or ongoing improvement.** FFT is not helpful to plan ahead and use resources effectively and efficiently.

### **Older People Wards**

The real time quality dashboards available on the wards and electronically is excellent best practice. In some areas such as some of the Older People's Wards the patient and carer feedback is quite low overall and not improved from last year. It is not clear what the plan of action is to improve the poor performing areas.

HWC offers its support to CHS to maintain its focus on three key areas: improving patient healthcare; improving staff experience; patient and carer involvement. CHS have many opportunities to use external organisations such as HWC to support the quality improvements and financial viability. CHS is to continue to report on low level quality issues, rather than only the serious incidents. CHS to continue to engage in staff/patient/carers feedback as this enables CHS to deal with ongoing delivery issues and track improvement over time.

### **Orthotics and Physiotherapy departments**

HWC would like to thank CHS for accommodating two Enter and View visits this year, trained volunteers ask staff and patients their experience, and make observations on the healthcare venue environment. HWC hope the volunteers' recommendations are embedded in the administration, staff support and culture. The reports are available in the Enter and View section on the HWC website: <http://www.healthwatchcroydon.co.uk/enter-and-view-reports>

### **CHS priorities for 2016/17 (Page 12)**

In reference to **CHS priorities for 2016/17 (Page 12)**, HWC would have welcomed the opportunity to develop CHS's priorities in discussion with their Clinical Directorates, Patient Safety and Mortality Committee, the CCG as referenced in the Quality Account. HWC hope this window is still open. HWC were at the Care Quality Commission stakeholder event with commissioners and CHS to work through the 'requires improvement' recommendations; attendees agreed community ownership, mandatory training and shared decision-making.

If the aim is for the '**Perfect Patient Journey**' then priorities should be set more clearly around improving outcomes for patients, how the hospital admittance and discharge feels from the patient and carer perspective and assess CHS impact on a patient's terms. What support do nurses have to speak to their team and patients? How long did it take? What was the patient's experience of the environment and treatment and care from the Doctor/Consultant? Accountable Provider Alliance (APA) with continued consultation of co-working with patients and professionals is positive initiative. Edgecombe unit opened in November 2015, with consultant/nurse led acute provision, has reduced waiting times, increased 7 day working and improved joined up working with community services.

The CHS performance for 2015/16 highlights eight amber areas and all others are green but they are not specific enough to measure the impact. Reducing pressure ulcers and robust activity to ignite a positive staff culture is great but what shared decision-making, joint-working mechanisms, assurance that co-design of commissioning are in place? It would be good to have more data about the outcomes for identified issues such as **different ethnic groups and different life stages**. It is commendable of CHS to appointment a Diversity/Inclusion Manager to address this.

### **Safe, caring, effective, responsive and well-led.**

HWC are pleased CHS are driven to continue to make improvements in quality, safety and patient experience particularly the need for a better working environment, improved educational opportunities, pay and a change in team culture (page 45)

### **Transparent, Plain English, Accessible Website**

CHS would benefit greatly from clear, plain English policies and procedures on the CHS website, for professionals and patients. Documents such as the 'Carers and Visitors guide', the 'Complaints procedure' to be in the public domain in a clear and simple form is an opportunity for CHS to lighten their burden in the busy Croydon market and the UK's era of austerity. CHS would benefit greatly from plain English information on the CHS website for patient and carer healthcare advice and support. Many other organisations are available to support CHS to improve the lives of Croydon residents.

Healthwatch across England has long been championed by user groups and the NHS. CHS can benefit from patient, carer and staff input. HWC would however like to see CHS recognise the value and contribution of user led community groups and voluntary organisations in delivering well-commissioned services such as Rapid Assessment Medical Unit (RAMU, the side-line venue to A&E). We would like to support CHS initiatives to work closely with user groups for a safe, caring, effective, and responsive and well-led CHS.

### **Diversity**

Croydon is one of the most culturally diverse parts of the country but it is also has some of the most deprived areas. Yet there is no joint partnership between decision-makers/budget holders across Croydon for a concrete target set out to monitor whether different BAME communities access, experience or have different outcomes of services.

HWC recommend that in the next Quality Account CHS includes a section on diversity, pulling together in one section all the work it is doing to ensure that it is offering a quality service to all sections of the local population.

## **Integrated Care**

Another issue that regularly comes up in discussions with service users is how services join up. Service users report issues with hospital, community health services and social services not working together - and also with wider services - like housing, police, and voluntary sector services. It would be good to see how Accountable Provider Alliance sets up quality working arrangements with the local service providers it works alongside and how that is monitored.

There have been problems in accessing some quality results from departments. Recently CHS have only been reporting Serious Incidents. To ensure that safety of patients HWC would like CHS to carry out regular quality audits of departments.

Some of HWC's community feedback has identified a problem with pressure ulcers, and inconsistent communication between health professionals in the community. CHS to provide assurances that once a patient is admitted a discharge plan is formed involving relevant patient, staff and carer within 24 hours of the decision to transfer care.

We congratulate CHS for producing this comprehensive Quality Account 2015/16. It would help if it there could be a clear focused summary about quality and patient feedback: what is not working well and the plan rectify it.

**Thank you to CHS for their continued commitment to keeping Croydon well.** To find out more about your **local and national official 'Patient Champion'** or get involved in influencing change please visit the HWC website: [www.healthwatchcroydon.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchcroydon.co.uk) or attend HWC's **Patient Experience Panel** at 10.30 am on Fridays at The Carers Centre on 24 George Street e-mail: [info@healthwatchcroydon.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchcroydon.co.uk)