



Enter and View Report – August 2025 Royal Sussex County Hospital

Service name:	Sussex Kidney Unit at the Royal Sussex County Hospital
Service Provider:	University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust
Date and Time:	Tuesday 19th August at 11am
Representatives:	Jo Dorey and Katy Francis
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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove would like to thank our volunteers, service providers, service users and staff for contributing to the Enter and View programme.

Disclaimer

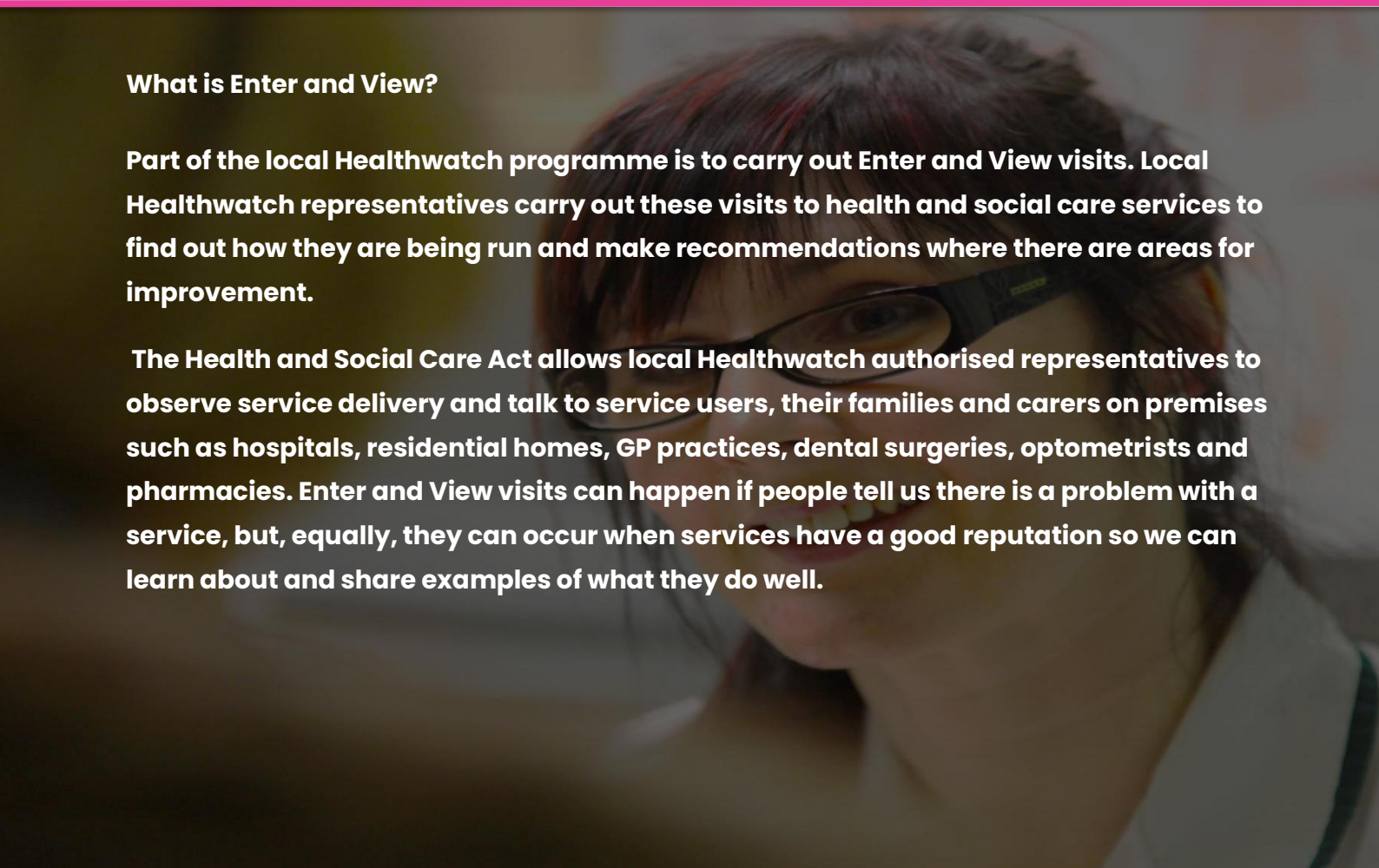
Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well.





Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove has worked in partnership with our local hospital trust (University Hospitals Sussex NHS Trust) for several years to conduct regular Enter and View visits. These visits to wards and other units are carried out by trained volunteer lay assessors and staff members and are called Healthwatch Hospital Enter and View visits. The visits are an extension of a national programme of audits called PLACE – Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment. The trust asked Healthwatch to carry out this environmental audit of the Sussex Kidney Unit

These Healthwatch visits:

- Provide valuable insight into the work of our local trust and its hospitals.
- Allow us to see first-hand the many positive aspects of our hospitals.
- Provide an opportunity to raise any concerns directly with senior trust staff.

Healthwatch Hospital, Enter and View visits are intended:

- To provide a regular, independent supply of information about the environment of our hospitals to the trust, which empowers them to act on emerging issues.
- To ensure that patients and staff benefit from an ever-improving hospital environment which in turn supports the delivery of high standards of care, dignity, and safety.
- To provide Healthwatch with an audit trail of intelligence and evidence which it can use to assess how our recommendations are helping to improve hospital environments.
- To enable Healthwatch to share our findings with interested partners such as the Care Quality Commission and the public.

Methodology

Two members of staff visited the Sussex Kidney Unit at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in August. The Lead Nurse kindly showed our representatives around the department before allowing them to conduct the visit. Our representatives observed the environment in the outpatients' waiting room, the dialysis waiting room, the four main haemodialysis rooms,



and the Stirling day case unit. The representatives recorded their views of the physical environment, and they also completed a checklist to capture positive findings, challenges, and concerns, as well as anything staff told us and our recommendations.

The checklist which Healthwatch uses is based on the NHS publication "[*The Fifteen Steps Challenge: Quality from a patient's perspective*](#)", which explores what good care looks like through a patient's eyes. When completing the checklist, volunteers are asked to say whether specific criteria have been met in full, partially or not at all and to award a suitable score out of ten. Volunteers are provided with the opportunity to record any positive findings and make recommendations under four headings:

- (i) Is the environment welcoming?
- (ii) Is the environment safe?
- (iii) Is the environment caring and involving?
- (iv) Is the environment well-organised?

Results of visit

Healthwatch asks representatives to give a score out of 10 for each area as a simple way to assess things. The scores represent the subjective views of our trained representatives and are not part of a national scoring system. Healthwatch considers that:

- 9 or 10 indicates that the ward or unit is performing strongly with little or no room for improvement and areas of excellence have been observed.
- 7 or 8 suggests there are a number of areas which require attention in order to improve the environment, but overall, things are good.
- a score of 6 or less indicates that significant changes may be needed to improve the environment.

Overall

We scored all areas aside from the dialysis waiting room highly for the environments being welcoming, safe, caring, well-organised and calm. Scores were six for the dialysis waiting room but ranged between eight and ten for the other areas.

When you enter level 8 of the unit, you are greeted by the outpatients waiting room, which feels very welcoming and open with lots of useful information on display and friendly staff. The Stirling day case unit, which carries out day case procedures such as infusions and biopsies, was also a particularly strong area with little room for improvement necessary.

The main haemodialysis rooms were mixed, most were satisfactory (room 4 was particularly welcoming) but room 1, the smallest room, felt cramped and cluttered. The dialysis waiting room and the corridors surrounding were cluttered with beds and needed some maintenance as well as better patient information displayed.

The trust already has plans to rejuvenate the space which involves using other areas in the department for storage and treatment.

Our key suggested areas for improvement:

- Improve storage particularly in the dialysis waiting area and dialysis room 1.
- Improve seating in dialysis waiting area.
- The trust informed us that they plan to place a manned desk in the dialysis waiting area for patient safety and information. This would improve the environment significantly. This point was also raised by a patient who was concerned for their safety post-dialysis with no staff supervising in the area except in passing.
- Improve information (including about staff, staff uniforms, and in accessible formats) particularly in the dialysis waiting room. Ideally, with a screen with a slideshow of useful information.
- Consider adding signs about the planned changes to the environment.
- Consider posters next to the water cooler and on the WC door to make information more visible.
- Consider having the TV in the dialysis waiting room on silent with subtitles for patients waiting for transport (as suggested by patient). This is done in the Digestive Diseases department.
- Replacement of any grungy ceiling tiles.
- WC in the dialysis waiting area needs to be repaired.

- Fixing the second lift which is out-of-order.

Main Haemodialysis Rooms (x4)

Overall score: 8.3/10

(a) Welcoming environment Score awarded: 8 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The larger rooms felt welcoming, however room 1 feels particularly cramped and unwelcoming. • Room 4 felt particularly welcoming, the larger space made a significant difference to the feel of the room. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No visible information on the nurse staff team in dialysis rooms or reception area. • No staff uniform information. • Not really any patient information although there isn't much space for this in the dialysis rooms. • 'We contact you by email' poster on room 1 door needs updating. It was peeling at the corners and not visible. • Room 1 was not very welcoming due to space constraints.
(b) Safe environment Score awarded: 8 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean. • Hand gel available. • Infection control information. • Fire security information in corridors. • Seems well maintained • Frame around the door in a separate distinct colour considers dementia patients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceiling tile in room 4 centre is grungy. • Things seem well maintained but could do with paint in the corridors. • A lot of clutter in room 1. It feels very cramped. • Haphazard sign in room 1 next to broken basin. • Green clinical waste bins open. • Staff badges mostly on but hard to see as they're low, not on chest.
(c) Caring environment Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curtains present if needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff interacting well with patients. 	
(d) Well organised & calm environment Score awarded: 7 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although cramped in room 1, it did look organised. Felt particularly calm in room 4. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Felt very cramped in room 1 with lots of clutter. There doesn't seem like there's enough storage space in the room. We are aware that the trust is working on improving storage and creating more dialysis rooms.
Dialysis Waiting Room	

Overall score: 6/10

(a) Welcoming environment - Score awarded: 6 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some helpful signage and information near reception desk around the corner and some posters on the walls. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waiting area felt dark and cramped. TV screen in corner not in use. Remove out-of-date posters (e.g. poster about old EHIC cards). Suggest to add signs about the planned changes to the environment. Suggest usage of a screen with slideshow of information. Suggest posters next to the water cooler and on toilet door to make information more visible. Information to be available in different languages and easy read.
(b) Safe environment - Score awarded: 6 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand gels were available. Fire extinguisher present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of order WC. Cleaning trolley unattended. Cluttered with beds stored. Staff roles not evident by information or uniform.

(c) Caring environment – Score awarded: 6 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff in reception area around the corner interacting well with patients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not much seating available. No reception desk in eyeline of waiting area which could be difficult for patients in distress or needing information. The trust is planning to create a small, manned desk in the area.
(d) Well organised & calm environment – Score awarded: 6 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area appeared clean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area felt cramped and cluttered because storage is currently an issue that is being worked on, with more plans to utilise further space.

Outpatient Waiting Room

This is the first area you enter as you arrive in the level 8 renal department.

Overall score: 9.5/10

(a) Welcoming environment – Score awarded: 9 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots of patient information. Music playing. Good open space. It felt welcoming. There was information about staff. There were resources available to read. Patient Association information. Kidney Disease journey poster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information on staff uniforms. The trust is already in works to standardise this as part of a national effort. They plan to have scrub machines with card access for specific uniform colours for different professions. No information/welcome in different languages or easy read obviously available. Signage in this area could have offered information in the 4 main spoken languages in the city.

(b) Safe environment – Score awarded: 9 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean aside from broken water dispenser with a towel on the floor next to and safety sign placed next to it. • Lots of hand gel and infection control signs. • Security and fire signage is clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broken water dispenser (although there was a towel and safety sign).
(c) Caring environment – Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information seen that empowers patients/involved in their care: “You said, We did” poster from previous survey. • Chaperone information visible. • A notice that informs patients to check with the receptionist if you’ve not been seen in 30 minutes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.
(d) Well organised & calm environment – Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncluttered. • Felt calm and organised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None.

Stirling Day Case Unit

Overall score: 9.8/10

(a) Welcoming environment – Score awarded: 9 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very welcoming atmosphere. Clean, bright and open. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No information in unit or waiting room regarding staff uniforms (work by trust already in progress).



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No visible information/welcome signs in other languages.
(b) Safe environment – Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The unit appeared well maintained with no hazards.• Fire extinguisher present.• Hand gels available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None.
(c) Caring environment – Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff appeared to be interacting with patients in a caring way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None.
(d) Well organised & calm environment – Score awarded: 10 out of 10	
Positives	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All areas appeared tidy and well-managed.• Calm atmosphere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• None.

Next steps

Healthwatch will discuss our visit findings with the trust at their Patient Experience and Engagement Group where we will ask for an action plan to be created to follow up on our findings.



Healthwatch Brighton and Hove

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