

**Visit Date:** 17th December 2018

**Service name:** Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic, Northwick Park Hospital

**Summary**

Healthwatch Brent made a visit to Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic at Northwick Park Hospital to engage with patients and carers to hear their views on the service they are receiving. The Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic treats patients with injuries and conditions relating to bones, joints, ligaments, tendons, muscles and nerves. On the day of our visit there were 48 patients booked for an appointment, but due to referrals from A&E, patients will be double booked. The Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic had four doctors and two plaster technicians on duty. We were able to receive feedback from nine patients, six of whom were having their first appointments. In one instance, a carer was acting as a translator for the patient.

**Discussions:** Patients who had already attended previous appointments felt involved with discussions around their care. Patients attending their first appointments were waiting for assessment.

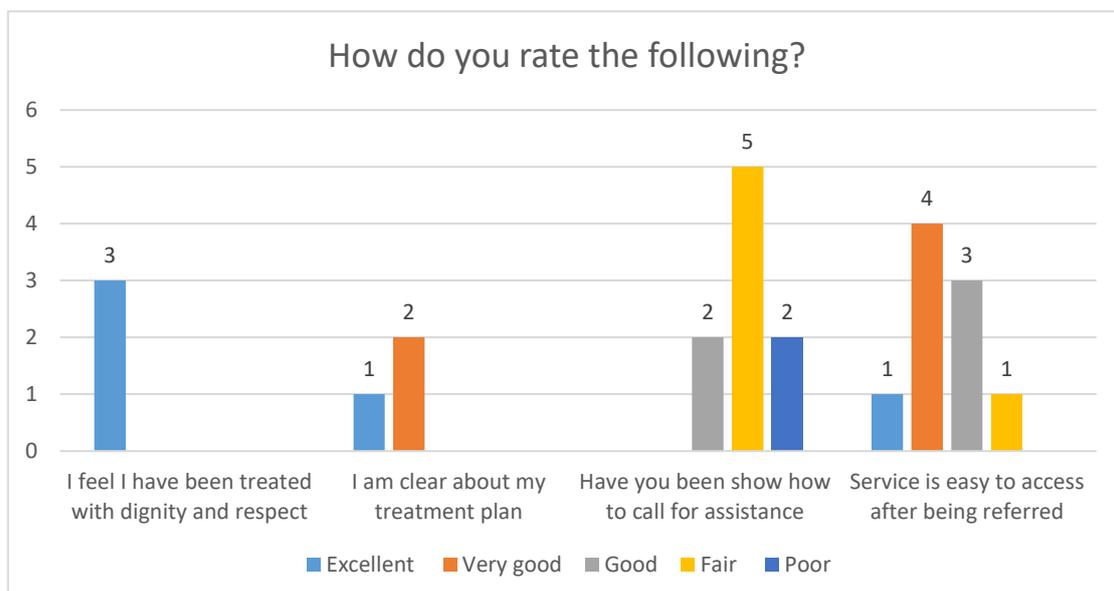
**Staff relationship:** The three patients who had previous appointments reported a good relationship with staff saying they have been treated with dignity and respect.

**Treatment plan:** Most patients had not yet been made aware of a treatment plan as they were having their first appointment. For patients who had a previous appointment, they said that they have an understanding of their treatment plan.

**Referral:** Patients had been referred to the Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic by different hospitals (mainly by A&E). All patients had their first appointment within two weeks after being referred to Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic, four patients received their appointment within one week. One patient was not happy they had to wait two weeks for their first appointment whilst they had a broken wrist.

**Call for assistance:** None of the patients we spoke to were made aware how to call for assistance, however there was a reception desk that was visible for patients to see if they needed to talk to a staff member.

We asked the patients and carers to rate the service from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). The results are in a graph below:



### What patients said:

"I was happy to get my appointment one week after being referred by Urgent Care Centre"

"The hospital booked for me to have an ultra sound appointment before I had my first appointment with Trauma and Orthopaedics Clinic"

"Treatment has been quick and professional"

"I had my second appointment booked after my first, I received a text as a reminder"

"Staff have been helpful and answered my questions"

"Waited two weeks for my first appointment, during that time I had no assessment and had a broken wrist"

"Letter said I will have to wait up to two hours but for my first appointment but I waited longer"

"For my last appointment I waited for three hours"

"Main outpatients reception was rude when I asked where the clinic was, she said I should have looked on the system and wasn't polite to help"

### Overall experience:

Patients reported long delays for their previous appointments. All but one patient were happy to get their appointment within two weeks, although some did mention of being in some discomfort while waiting. On the day of our visit the clinic had had enough chairs for everyone to have a seat but we were made aware that this is not always the case; when the clinic gets busy there is not enough seats and some people are made to stand. The clinic had a TV on with subtitles and water available with plastic cups on top of the dispenser. There was a written note on a white board by the reception letting patients know there is currently a 30 minute delay for their appointment time.

### Recommendations:

- Pass on positive feedback to staff
- post a summary of this report with trust response on the relative department public notice board in the form of 'you said, we did' documents
- Make patients aware how to call for assistants if needed
- Fix broken clock on the back wall
- Remind staff at outpatients reception about good practice customer service

### Service Response:

Thank you for this helpful feedback. We were glad to hear that patients felt involved in discussions around their care and that they felt they had good relationships with the staff.

We appreciate that waiting times can sometimes escalate. We try to give an indication on the clinic letters stating that a wait of up to two hours may occur. At times the clinic can be exceptional busy which means that waiting times can increase. Our staff do try to update the boards so that patients are aware.

We were sorry to hear that one patient found the reception staff rude and unhelpful. We do not find this acceptable and has been highlighted and discussed with the team.

- **Pass on positive feedback to staff**  
This has been discussed at the Team Meeting and all staff are aware
- **Post a summary of this report with trust response on the relative department public notice board in the form of 'you said, we did' documents**  
Notice boards have been ordered, once these arrive we will post a summary of this report in the format of "you said, we did"
- **Make patients aware how to call for assistants if needed**

There is always a nursing representative present in the clinic areas should any concerns arise

- **Fix broken clock on the back wall**

This has been fixed

- **Remind staff at outpatients reception about good practice customer service**

This has been discussed at the Team Meetings and all staff have been reminded about the importance of customer care