

## Statement from Healthwatch Birmingham on The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2021/22

Healthwatch Birmingham welcomes the opportunity to provide our statement on the Quality Account for The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust 2021/22. We are pleased to see that there is an open evaluation of the Trusts performance between 2021 and 2022. There is a clear identification of areas where the Trust has done well and areas where further improvements are needed. We acknowledge that Covid-19 continues to have a significant impact on the Trusts activities. In particular, we note the challenges the Trust is experiencing in meeting the 18 week and 52 week waiting times for referral to treatment. We agree that addressing these backlogs should be a priority as delayed care has an impact on patients' wellbeing and outcomes. Indeed, the experiences we have heard from the Trusts patients point to long waiting times:

*The caller has been waiting 34 weeks for his hospital appointment.*

*Waited 12 months for this appointment when I walked in to see Dr, he apologised straight away he had no information on me so was there 5 minutes non the wiser was sent for another MRI that was 4 months ago and still no results.*

*I filled in a referral form from the GP and posted it months ago. Never had a reply.*

We agree that resolving waiting lists will take time and note the actions the Trust is taking to resolve this. We, however, seek more clarity on the actions the Trust will be taking to ensure that there is support for people as they wait. How is the Trust making sure that people have the right information as they wait or are signposted to other organisations?

However, we also note the excellent work the Trust has conducted during this period and the positive impact on patients. The work the Trust has been doing to ensure that there are varied ways people can share their experiences of care (e.g., JointCare coffee catch up sessions, smiley faces, surveys); the development of a youth forum, learning disability and autism forum; improvements to bereavement support and provision of spiritual services for patients; and supporting the ICS to ensure that new digital pathways do not increase or reinforce health inequalities. We know these are long term activities and look forward to reading in the 2022/23 Quality Account the impact these have had on patient experience and how they have informed Trusts activities.

Healthwatch Birmingham agree with the priority goals for the Trust for 2022/23. We recognise many of the issues from our own engagement with the public. In particular accessing healthcare services has been particularly challenging for people with a learning disability including those with autism, and that some demographic characteristics have served as a barrier to access and led to poor outcomes. We therefore welcome plans to implement the learning disability improvement standards at the Trust and to conduct a baseline assessment of Trust performance against national standards. We would like to read in the 2022/23 Quality Account how the Trust has involved patients with a learning disability, their carers/families in the

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assessment and in determining the actions being taken before incorporating these into the Trusts LD strategy.

We also welcome the Trusts planned review of outpatient DNA rates and inpatient waits. We are pleased that this review will ensure that demographic characteristics including measures of deprivation are included. Success in this area will also depend on how well this type of data is collected across the Trust. We also note plans to implement shared decision making – develop 10+ major pathways shared decision-making group and construct patient information package. We look forward to reading in the 2022-2023 Quality Accounts how various actions taken by the Trust have been informed by findings from reviews (that take account of demographics/deprivation measures) or through shared decision making. In particular, we would like to read in the 2022/23 Quality Account how the content of the patient information package has been development and what role patient and public involvement has played.

In our responses to previous Quality Accounts, we have always highlighted the importance of ensuring that patient feedback and experience is embedded in the various activities of the Trust. We have in the past asked the Trust to demonstrate the following:

- how feedback, insight and experiences have informed changes within the Trust.
- how the Trust shares good practice from positive feedback and the impact of this on services and practice.
- how the Trust communicates with patients about how you are using their feedback to make changes.

Over the past year, the Trust has co-opted Healthwatch Birmingham into its structures and we have been a part of the Patient Experience Group which has enabled us to feed into the engagement activities of the Trust. Through this we have been able to see the many actions the Trust has taken to ensure that there are varied ways of listening to your service users and members of the public. We look forward to contributing to the Trusts PPI activities through the patient participation group, the youth forum and the learning disability forum. It is crucial however, for the Trust to ensure that participation in the Trusts engagement activities is equitable and representative of the Trusts patients, service users and carers. We would like to read in the 2022/23 Quality Account some examples of this work and how its informing practice across the Trust.

It is positive to see that feedback through the Friends and Family Test is positive across both inpatient and outpatient areas (98%). Also, that there has been an 18% reduction in formal complaints and that 89.6% of the Trusts staff would recommend the hospital to friends and family. We are pleased to see good practice in the handling of complaints, and PALS contact. We note that there is a clear response time standard in place and that complainants are given an opportunity to provide feedback on the outcome of the complaints process. We would like to read in the 2022/23 Quality Account some examples of how these have been used to improve the complaints process and PALS contact.

Concerning the CQC adult inpatient survey, we note the areas where patients have indicated the Trust can make improvements. We look forward to reading in the 2022/23 Quality Account the improvements made, in particular, to pre-admission information and communication, and information regarding health and social care provision. Poor information from the Trust to patient has been an area on which we have received feedback about.

In conclusion, we would like to again commend the Trust for prioritising patient experience and engagement, and understanding health inequalities in the provision of its services. As we indicated in our previous Quality Accounts Statement, we ask the Trust to continue to ensure that:

- The key objective of engagement is 'to use patient and public insight, experience, and involvement to identify, understand and address the potential consequences of service improvement, design and development on health inequalities and barriers to improvements in health outcomes (including increasing independence and preventing worsening ill-health).'
- Public health data (including other sources of data) inform engagement plans to ensure that the Trust is hearing from all sections of the community particularly those impacted negatively by changes or improvements to services. Also use this to understand wider impact on health inequalities that have an impact on how the Trust delivers its services.
- The Trust is using varied ways of engaging with services users and members of the public that go beyond the use of online methods to ensure that the communication needs of diverse groups are met.



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