

# Enter & View Visit Report

Royal Shrewsbury Hospital  
Emergency Department  
(A&E)

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# About Healthwatch Shropshire

**Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent health and social care champion for local people.**

We work to ensure your voice counts when it comes to shaping and improving services. We address inequalities in health and social care, to help make sure everyone gets the services they need. We are a charity.

## What is Enter & View

Healthwatch Shropshire gathers information on people's experiences of health and social care services and there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Shropshire to see and hear for ourselves how services are being provided.

These visits are called 'Enter and View', and can be 'announced', 'unannounced' or 'semi-announced'. For 'semi-announced' visits the service provider is told we will visit but not the date or time of the visit.

The responsibility to carry out Enter and View visits was given to Healthwatch in the **Health and Social Care Act 2012**.



Enter and View visits are carried out by a team of specially trained and DBS checked volunteers called Authorised Representatives. They make observations, collect people's views and opinions anonymously and produce a report.

Enter & View visits are not inspections and always have a 'purpose'.

## 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 experience of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

# Details of the visit

Following the Channel 4 Dispatches programme ([Watch Undercover A&E: NHS in Crisis: Dispatches | Stream free on Channel 4](#)), Healthwatch Shropshire (HWS) used social media to encourage people to share their experiences of the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital Emergency Department, also known as Accident & Emergency, (RSH A&E) with Healthwatch. This Enter and View (E&V) visit is intended to supplement these views by personal observation and face to face conversations.

The purpose of the visit was to observe the environment in RSH A&E, specifically in relation to facilities for those waiting including: privacy, cleanliness of the environment, access to refreshments as well as to speak with people attending about their experience. A survey form was made available for people waiting to share their views anonymously. (See appendix)

## What we did

Before our visit, HWS sent a letter to the Director of Nursing at the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH) and the Senior Manager of the Emergency Department to say HWS would be undertaking a 'semi-announced' Enter and View visit in the coming week but not giving the day or time of the visit. We wished to speak to patients and those accompanying them who may be waiting in the main waiting room in A&E; the seating area for those deemed 'Fit to Sit' while waiting for treatment; and in the Same Day Emergency Care centre (SDEC - for people needing tests or treatment, but who are expected to be able to return home the same day.)

On the day, (a weekday morning) three Authorised Representatives undertook the visit. We had already prepared a survey questionnaire for people to complete by themselves or to talk through with volunteers. See appendix.

We visited three different areas within the Emergency Department, speaking with patients, or people waiting with them, in each. We received 13 completed survey forms (and one other partially completed before the patient was called away for treatment). We also made our own observations of the three areas.

# What people told us

Six of the 13 people told us they were from Shrewsbury, but the others came from many different parts of Shropshire and one person had travelled from Wrexham. They reported on a wide range of conditions that had prompted their visit:

- Two people needed treatment following an accident or Injury.
- Four people said they had a recent or sudden illness.
- Two were concerned about changes in their long-term condition.
- Four people had been referred by their GP or another health service.
- One person had arrived for a (booked) scan, which had not been available at the time of their original visit.

Today is a follow up visit to one 4 days ago, when they took blood tests and an ECG. It was a 3 hour wait for results. Needed a scan but no slots available, so told to come back today.

Most people had arrived that morning, but one person had been in the department over 24 hours (since 9.30am the previous day), and another since 11.30pm the previous night. This person said:

My partner was allowed to stay with me all night. I have been treated with kindness and dignity; offered food and drink regularly. I brought my own medicines, but they were checked and recorded. Antibiotics given immediately as per chemo card.

Refreshments are served constantly and the staff are very friendly and work hard.

Several people offered ideas to improve the facilities:

6 Staff are helpful and supportive. Chairs not as comfortable as they could be. Charging points for devices (e.g. to contact family by mobile phone) would be helpful.

and

6 I would like to see something that explains why there is so much disruption and even worse parking problems than usual ..... I would love to see pictures of what the new A&E will look like

### People were asked:

While In A&E have you felt:				
	Not at all	Not very	Quite	Very
Comfortable	0	1	4	8
Listened to and understood	0	0	3	10
That staff communicated with you well?"	0	0	2	11

## What we saw

In the main waiting room area there were rows of 3 or 4 plastic-padded chairs. We did not see any other chair design. There were 10-12 people waiting at the time of our visit, far fewer than usual we were told. There was a water dispenser in clear view and a bank of vending machines around a corner, selling snacks, bottles of water and fizzy drinks, and a coffee machine. One person waiting commented that these are all coin-operated. If someone has arrived in an emergency, they may well not have the appropriate coins. One (of the two) sets of toilets could only be accessed if staff released the security lock into the corridor.

Once patients have had their initial assessment (triage), some who are deemed to be able to sit in a clinical space (e.g. while waiting for tests) are directed to a different area called Fit to Sit. The chairs in this area were of a greater variety than in the main waiting room, many with high backs and scope for changing the height of some. There was a water dispenser, with bottles of squash also. There was a TV on the wall, but staff did not seem able to get it to work. There were no information leaflets evident, or other ways of passing the time. A red sign indicated the nurse call bell, and a smaller sign for toilets said people should ask for assistance if needed. There was a clear directional sign for patients to return to the main A&E entrance when they are ready to leave. Although several staff passed by this area into an adjacent corridor, we saw only one member of staff actually call into the waiting area while we were there (she was trying to get the TV to work)

The Acute Medicine Area is on the floor above. There are several sub-areas here but we visited only the Same Day Emergency Care unit. (SDEC - for people needing tests or treatment, but who are expected to be able to return home the same day.) This comprised a seating area of 14 comfortable chairs and a bay with eight trolley cubicles. While we were there a trolley was taken round offering hot drinks and later we saw several people being offered bottled water. We spoke to some patients in the trolley bay. They were very satisfied with the protection of their privacy and the care they experienced.

We saw all staff observing routine hand hygiene throughout the department. Toilets appeared to be clean and regularly checked.

## Key findings

- Almost all respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the care they were receiving in the A&E department, although it did not appear to be particularly busy at the time of our visit.
- People said that they felt listened to and understood, and that staff communicated with them well.
- For those who were waiting a long time, the main waiting room chairs were not very comfortable.
- There were water dispensers readily available and people really appreciated being offered hot drinks. There was the comment that coin-operated vending

machines may not be accessible for people who have rushed to the hospital in an emergency without any cash available.

- There was no stimulation (e.g. TVs) in the waiting areas, and no charging points if people brought in their own devices.

# Recommendations

All staff should be commended on the high standard of care patients told us they were receiving.

If possible, people in the waiting areas would appreciate information about the Hospital Transformation Programme, particularly about what the new A&E will look like.

If it is not possible to introduce charging points at present, it is recommended they be included in the designs for all waiting areas (especially for children) in the new building. Consideration of other patient suggestions, such as both card and coin-operated vending machines, may also be appropriate.

# Provider Response

The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust thanks Healthwatch Shropshire for undertaking an Enter and View visit to the Emergency Department at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital on the 22nd July 2024. This has provided the Trust with objective feedback on the views of people using the service, identifying good practice and presenting an opportunity to improve the services we offer.

Our proposed action plan in response to the report recommendations is set out below:



Identified area for improvement	Provider response, including steps to be taken	Who will oversee this?	When will it be completed by?	Progress
All staff should be commended on the high standard of care patients told us they were receiving.	Feedback to be given to the staff teams within the Emergency Department and Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC).	Matron for Emergency and Critical Care	31-08-2024	
	Feedback will be given through the usual dissemination routes to ensure staff are informed of Healthwatch Shropshire's feedback.	Matron of Acute Medicine (RSH)	31-08-2024	
If possible, people in the waiting areas would appreciate Information about the Hospital Transformation Programme, particularly about what the new A&E will look like.	Information about the improvement work to be added to tv screens in waiting areas across the hospital.	Chief Communication Officer	13-08-2024	Completed
	Posters to be developed and printed to display across the hospital to inform people accessing services about the building improvement work taking place.		31-08-2024	Poster are being printed with an anticipated delivery of 17-08-2024
	More detailed posters are to be developed for use within the Emergency Department when specific artist impressions are available.		31-08-2024	
If it is not possible to introduce charging points at present, it is recommended they be included in the designs for all waiting areas (especially for children) in the new building.	Mobile telephone charging station units have been fitted in both Emergency Department waiting rooms as a resource available to people who need to charge their mobile phone whilst in the department.	Lead for Patient Experience	06-08-2024	Action completed
	The Hospital Transformation Programme (HTP) Team will work with the architects and contractors to ensure that once the construction programme is in the phase to discuss sockets	HTP Implementation Lead	Autumn/Winter 2025	

	<p>and charging points this feedback is raised. We are committed to improving the experience for our patients, particularly those in our waiting areas and recognise this improvement has been proposed.</p> <p>This feedback has also been logged as part of our HTP Engagement, through our quarterly held focus groups and our Children and Young People's focus group.</p>			
<p>Consideration of other patient suggestions, such as both card and coin-operated vending machines, may also be appropriate.</p>	<p>The Trust has various contracts with suppliers for vending. The Catering Team commenced a procurement process in July 2024 and are presently finalising an agreement with a new single provider.</p> <p>Patient feedback has previously been shared with the Catering Team and this has been taken into account when considering a new supplier. The new machines will be able to trigger refills and fault solving in a timely manner, are user friendly with large display screens, be able to take card payments and offer a range of snack and drink products.</p> <p>The supplier will be awarded in August with an anticipated rollout of approximately 6 to 8 weeks.</p>	<p>Deputy Head of Facilities</p>	<p>31-10-2024</p>	<p>The Trust are on target to award the contract and are working with the NHS logistics contracts team, further clarification is being sought to explore facilities to take both cash and card payments.</p>

## **RSH - Accident & Emergency Department Survey**

1. Where do you live? (Please tell us the village/town you are from or give us your postcode)

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2. What time did you arrive at A&E today?

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3. Please tell us your reason(s) for coming to the A&E today

*\*'Condition' includes a mental health condition*

Accident / injury     Victim of crime     Change in a long term condition\*     Recent/sudden illness

Referred by GP/111/Pharmacist     Wanted a second opinion     Medication problem     Thought might need an x-ray

Prefer not to say     Other \_\_\_\_\_

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4. How long did you wait before seeing a health professional for triage/assessment?

Less than 10 minutes     up to 20 minutes   
if longer, please estimate the wait \_\_\_\_\_

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5. How long did you wait after triage to see a doctor or nurse who ordered tests or started treatment?



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6. Have you any comments about the facilities and environment in the waiting areas?  
e.g. signs to toilets etc and posters with information, seating, refreshments and water,  
information you have received

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7. Please tell us anything about your experience that you wish to share e.g. treated with dignity and respect; privacy for toileting and intimate procedures; pain relief; access to refreshments and water.

8. While in A&E, have you felt?	Not at all	Not very	Quite	Very	Don't know
Comfortable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listened to and understood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
That staff communicated with you well (e.g. introduced themselves, gave clear explanations)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment/feedback:					

9. How happy are you with your experience in A&E today?					
	1	2	3	4	
Comment/feedback:					

*Please hand in to the visit team before you leave*

**Thank you for your time**



# healthwatch

Healthwatch Shropshire  
4 The Creative Quarter  
Shrewsbury Business Park  
Shrewsbury  
Shropshire  
SY2 6LG

[www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk)

t: 01743 237884

e: [enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk)

 [@HWshropshire](https://twitter.com/@HWshropshire)

 [Facebook.com/HealthwatchShropshire](https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchShropshire)