

# Healthwatch Sandwell Insight Report

## July 2023



We have reached 2555 people digitally



We have carried out 3 Enter and View Visits



We heard...  
7 GP surgery issues  
9 Hospital issues



We have Signposted 16 people

### Enter and View Visits

#### About Enter and View

Healthwatch Sandwell (HWS) have the power to visit health and social care services, where health and social care is publicly funded and delivered. This power to Enter and View services offers a way for HWS to meet some of their statutory functions and to collect evidence of what works well.

#### July Visits

Outpatients' clinics at Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre

Urology Outpatients Department City Hospital

Young Adult Diabetes Clinic

All our Enter and View reports are live on the reports section of our website once completed.

### Patient Experiences



#### Upset stomach story

A person told us that they had asked for a GP appointment as they had been unwell with diarrhoea for 4 days. The person was offered a telephone consultation but asked if there were face to face appointments available. The person was given an appointment later that day at a surgery 6 miles away. The person was able to drive but was worried that they may become unwell in the time it would take to travel.

Nevertheless, the person accepted the appointment. The person said that the GP did not know what the issue was and said they were to provide some samples and to ask at the reception for some specimen bottles. The person was advised that there were no specimen bottles available as they were on order and even if they had some in stock, they would not be able to have any as they were a patient of another surgery. The person was told that they would get a phone call when the specimen bottles were available at the surgery and then they could go and pick them up. Their surgery called them 4 days later.

### Carers health check story

We were told by a carer that the nurse from their surgery had telephoned them to say that they were eligible for a carer's health check due to their carers status. This would entail blood pressure monitoring, blood tests, BMI etc. The person was really pleased to be offered this but said that in the recent month they had already had the same screening so it would not be necessary. The nurse said that this would not be classed as a carers assessment and that the person should still book in. The person said that it was a waste of time and resources as their recent results could be used for the carers health assessment. The nurse said that this would not be possible. The person said that they would discuss with GP at their next appointment.



### Communication issue between hospital, GP and patient and a 3 month wait for biopsy results.

Mark suffers with acid reflux and has self-managed the condition. Over the last year Mark has found swallowing bigger pieces of food more difficult, eased by drinking fluids whilst eating. In April 2023 Mark swallowed a piece of meat which got stuck in his oesophagus which would not clear and with drinking water had blood coming up which was very distressing. Mark kept trying drinking, but it wouldn't clear and was causing more blood to come up.

An ambulance was called, and he went to hospital. He stayed in the ambulance for a few hours until it cleared.

Mark was told that his GP would be noted. The next day his GP called, and Mark was referred to have an endoscopy a month later at another hospital.

Mark had an endoscopy with 10 biopsies taken to see if there were any signs of cancer.

Mark was told that he had severe ulceration of the oesophagus and that the results would be with the GP a few days later and that Mark needed to be on medication for 6 weeks and then a further endoscopy.

Mark went to his GP a few days later to get a prescription for the medication but was told there was no indication of the procedure. Mark went back to the GP 1 week later and then 2 weeks later still to be told there was no indication of the procedure thus a prescription could not be issued. Mark called the endoscopy department several times to be told rudely that they had sent the results to his GP.

In the meantime, Mark received a letter for a follow up endoscopy, but he called up to say there was no point in having the procedure as he had not been on the medication and that if he didn't attend, he would be referred back to his GP. Mark did not attend as it seemed pointless.

After contacting the Endoscopy department several times Mark received the endoscopy results at the end of July some 3 months later to be told sorry for the delay no cancer detected.

## Pharmacy Blood Pressure Monitoring Story



A person told us about a blood pressure screening experience at a pharmacy. The person was approached by the pharmacist, whilst picking up a regular prescription and asked if they would like their blood pressure taken. The person agreed to participate as they were already aware that their blood pressure had been high some weeks before. The person was taken into a private cubicle for the testing, paperwork was completed but the blood pressure monitor was not working properly and had to be replaced by another machine, this was also not working, meaning the person taking the reading had to hold the blood pressure cuff onto the person's arm. Readings were taken five times on each arm with very different readings. The person was advised to return to the pharmacy in a weeks' time for more tests.

The person returned to the pharmacy and had another set of blood pressure tests. The results were still high. The person was asked to go and wait in a side room as the Pharmacist wanted to discuss the readings. The person said the room was set up as an office but had lots of medication supplies stacked up on desks and the floor. The Pharmacist told the patient that it would be in their best interests to wear a blood pressure monitor for 24 hours to get a full picture. The person agreed but while they were being fitted with the monitor pharmacy staff kept walking in and out of the room and at one stage another person was also having a consultation about a personal medical issue. The person was advised how to manage the monitor and to return it the next day at a said time.

The person returned to the pharmacy as agreed and was told that the Pharmacist would be in touch the next day to discuss the results. After a couple of days there had been no contact from the Pharmacy so the person telephoned in, they were told that the blood pressure readings had been sent to the GP and they would have to phone the GP to discuss. The person tried more than 10 times to speak to someone at the GP surgery and were unable to get through. Eventually they went in person to the surgery and were told that no reading had been sent. The person went back to the pharmacy where they were informed that they would have to take the results themselves to the GP'S – this is not what they were told would happen initially. The person was told that the results would be given to the nurse and would have a call back to chat about the results and possible next steps. After 10 days the person is still waiting for a call back. During that time the person has been monitoring their blood pressure – it still remains high.

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