



Enter and View Report

*Foot Health Clinic
Victoria Health Centre
5 Suffrage Street
Smethwick
B66 3PZ*

*Announced Visit
8th August 2023*

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What is Enter and View

Part of Healthwatch Sandwell remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Sandwell Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act (2012) allows 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, optometrist 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 that we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Sandwell Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Sandwell Safeguarding Policy, the service manager will be informed and the visit will end. The local authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

Provider details



Foot Health Clinic - Victoria Health Centre

Name: Foot Health Clinic
Address of Service : Victoria Health Centre
5 Suffrage Street
Smethwick
B66 3PZ
Chief Executive: Richard Beeken

Name of Staff on duty: Shadyear Hussain

Service type: The Department of Foot Health

The Department of Foot Health cares for a wide range of foot and lower limb problems amongst the population of Sandwell and West Birmingham community, with the primary focus on preventative care to minimise the risk of complications which are associated with, but are not exclusive to, diabetes.

A number of specialist clinics tailored to each Patient's need are provided, including: nail surgery, neurological foot service, biomechanics, diabetic foot care and specialist wound care management, rheumatology, podopaediatric clinics and Peripheral Arterial Disease.

Clinics are run from a number of community locations across Sandwell and West Birmingham, including Victoria Health Centre.

Patients can be referred to the Department of Foot Health by any healthcare professional. A GP referral is required to access specialist services, Rheumatology, Neurology, Nails surgery and Biomechanics clinics. Patients can self-refer for core services (general podiatry and foot care) if they fall into one of the following categories:

- Aged 65 or over with a foot problem
- Children up to the age of 16 with a foot problem
- Diabetic with a foot problem
- Pregnant women, nursing mothers or mothers who have given birth within a year with a foot problem
- Registered disabled with a foot problem
- Individuals with a medical condition that puts their feet at risk without treatment
- Patients requiring nails surgery

Diabetic foot care

This service is aimed at preventing foot health problems in Patients with diabetes.

The diabetes foot care service offers:

- Patient information
- Screening for diabetic foot risk
- Treatment of the foot and investigation of the underlying causes of problems
- Referrals to other health professionals where necessary
- Education and training to carers and healthcare professionals

Website: <https://www.swbh.nhs.uk/>



0121 507 2664 - Central Number

Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Sandwell would like to thank Shadyear Hussain, the staff team and the visitors to the clinic for their co-operation during the visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visit made on 8th August 2023. The report does not claim to represent the views of all visitors, only of those who contributed within the restricted time available.

Authorised Representatives

Anita Andrews conducted the visit.

Purpose of the report

This report will provide an overview of the services at the Foot Health Clinic and will provide Patient experience feedback. Where appropriate, recommendations will be made based on the findings of this Enter and View visit and it is anticipated that these recommendations will contribute to improving service delivery within the clinic and in turn improve the service experience for Patients.

Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with Healthwatch Sandwell Advisory Board, Sandwell MBC, Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, the Integrated Care System and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Sandwell website: (www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk)

Healthwatch Sandwell details

Address: Walker Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton. DY4 9RZ
Website: <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/>
Phone: 0121 569 7211
Social media: <https://www.facebook.com/HWatchSandwell>
Instagram: www.instagram.com/healthwatchesandwell
Twitter: @HWSandwell

Healthwatch principles

Healthwatch Sandwell's Enter and View programme is linked to the eight principles of Healthwatch, and questions are asked around each one.

1. **A healthy environment:** Right to live in an environment that promotes positive health and wellbeing
2. **Essential Services:** Right to a set of preventative, treatment and care services provided to a high standard to prevent Patients reaching crisis
3. **Access:** Right to access services on an equal basis with others without fear of discrimination or harassment, when I need them in a way that works for me and my family
4. **A safe, dignified and quality services:** Right to high quality, safe, confidential services that treat me with dignity, compassion and respect
5. **Information and education:** Right to clear and accurate information that I can use to make decisions about health and care treatment. I want the right to education about how to take care of myself and about what I am entitled to in the health and social care system
6. **Choice:** Right to choose from a range of high quality services, products and providers within health and social care
7. **Being listened to:** Right to have my concerns and views listened to and acted upon. I want the right to be supported in taking action if I am not satisfied with the service I have received
8. **Being involved:** To be treated as an equal partner in determining my own health and wellbeing. I want the right to be involved in decisions that affect my life and those affecting services in my local community.

Purpose of the visit

The purpose of the visit was to observe the environment and explore first-hand with Patients their experiences of using the Foot Health Clinic. This was achieved by observation and talking to Patients and staff.

What we did

Our Authorised Representatives facilitated the visit and spoke to Patients, both male and female of mixed ethnicities and observed the environment on 8th August 2023.

A pre-set of questions were asked that covered:

- Patient experience of the service including booking appointments, care by staff, accessibility to the building and information and any suggestions to improve the service.
- How staff meet individual needs of Patients including the communication needs of Patients who have impairments, handling anti-social behaviour from

Patients / relatives, how to support Patients who want to raise a complaint / concern about the service and suggestions to improve the service.

Observations were made of the environment both externally and internally, that included:

- Signposting, accessibility, lighting, refreshments, cleanliness, parking and transport links.

Findings

A healthy Environment

External

The Foot Clinic is situated in Victoria Health Centre, which is located in Smethwick adjacent to a residential area.

There is step free access at the entrance. The venue does have its own car park with disabled parking and a drop off point. There is access to the practice by public transport from surrounding areas. There is no signage to the Foot Clinic externally.

The Health Centre accommodates a number of services including:

- Victoria Dental Clinic
- Norvic Family Practice (General Practice)
- Health visitors
- Foot Clinic
- Phlebotomy

Internal

The waiting area is to the rear of the Health Centre, with seating and notice boards. There is a signing in screen, but this was not working on the day of the visit.



The Foot Clinic is accessed via a corridor off the waiting area which is shared with Children Speech and Language Therapy, Children Occupational Therapy and Children's Physio Therapy.

Prior to our visit a poster was sent to the clinic to advertise the visit, this was displayed on the notice board in the waiting area during the visit.

The Foot Clinic does not have its own reception, Patients are unable to register their arrival but are called when it is their turn.

There is a reception at the main entrance of Victoria Health Clinic, but this is not staffed.

Signage for the clinic was on a stand by the dental clinic but not near the foot health clinic or at the main entrance. This sign was confusing for Patients.

There were WCs off the waiting area, on the day of the visit they were locked, however there was no sign indicating where the key was available to access to WC.

On the day of the visit, the clinic was clean and the décor well maintained.

We were informed that there was no loop system.

There were no obvious hazards or health and safety risks.

There were no facilities within the clinic to purchase refreshments.

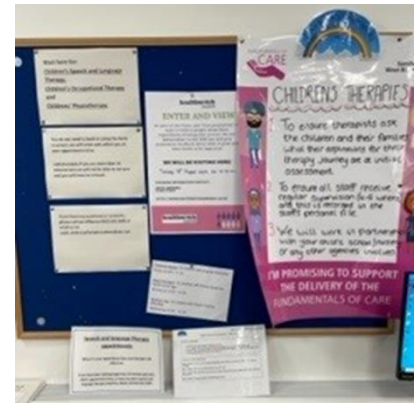
The opening times are not displayed.

Victoria Health Clinic accommodates various services as identified on page 5 however there isn't one organisation who co-ordinates the services within the venue, they appear to operate as separate services. This means that there isn't anyone responsible for the whole building.

Essential services

Patients were spoken to in the waiting area, all Patients had been waiting over **3** months for their appointment. Patients said they would contact their GP if they needed to talk to someone while waiting for their appointment. One Patient did have a phone number for the Foot Clinic but had mislaid it.

Patients described booking an appointment as **'difficult'** as they were unable to get through to their GPs.



A Patient described how the Practice Nurse (from GP) made a referral to this service in 2021, after the Patient was diagnosed as diabetic. However the Patient was told they were not eligible for this service. They were disappointed that they were not monitored for 2 years, this was exacerbated by Covid-19.

Then in 2023, after having a routine blood test, they received a phone call on the day of this visit to attend the Foot Clinic. They were waiting at Victoria Health Centre for about 45 minutes, the Authorised Rep. queried this with a member of staff and it transpired the Patient was at wrong venue. Unfortunately the Patient is hearing impaired and misheard the venue during the phone call.

This situation was extremely frustrating for this Patient, however the staff were attentive and supportive.

Access

Accessibility of the building.

The majority of the Patients had no problems finding the clinic and had received clear directions, we were informed that there is a good bus service. Only **1** Patient said it was a distance for them to come (Birmingham Patient) and that the car park was full on arrival.

Safe, dignified and quality services

Patients stated they were treated very well by staff and were very understanding and answered all their questions.

The Patients gave positive feedback about the service. **66%** were happy with the service and rated it as **'good'**, and were **'very likely'** to recommend this service to friends and family.

Information and education

The waiting area had a comfortable seating area with notice boards, with information although this was mainly about Children's Services at the Health Centre.

The majority of the Patients stated that all the information received about their appointment was clear and easy to understand, with the exception of the person described above.

Patients were mainly communicated with by telephone (call and/or text) and letter. These methods were preferred although the Patient who was hearing impaired was communicated with by telephone only. A Patient expressed disappointment that there isn't a loop system in the Health Centre.

Choice

Patients said they did not have a choice about which Foot Clinic they could attend. However, Patients did not require the same gender staff as themselves.

Being listened to

Patients stated that they had been listened to around their health during their appointment.

Comments and complaints.

All of the Patients spoken to did **not** know how to make a complaint, raise an issue or compliment.

Staff described how they support Patients who want to raise a complaint/concern about the service, by talking the issue through and then if it can't be resolved by signposting to a leaflet, survey (which can be text or emailed) or to a managers contact details.

Patients had not encountered any barriers at this service, but one person commented that it was complicated to know what to do on arrival as the booking in screen was not working and there isn't a dedicated receptionist.

Being involved

Staff promote Patient involvement via open communication with Patients during their appointment.

Staffing and feedback

The Foot Health team is made up of a wide variety of Podiatrists, Specialist Podiatrists (Diabetes), Foot care assistants, technical instructors and administrative staff.

The team are centralised and visit the various Foot Clinics around the Borough, there are 25 - 30 staff full and part time (approximately).

We were informed that all staff receive ongoing staff development, which includes supervision, where training needs are identified and relevant training provided to meet staff's needs including an opportunity to attend specialist modules provided by Salford University.

Staff also participate in Staff Focus Meetings where the whole team discuss current issues and discuss how to improve the service.

Staff described that one of the positives of working in the service is having receptive and supportive management.

Staff described how they meet the communication needs of Patients such as those who are: visually, hearing impaired, have learning disabilities and language needs.

This is achieved in various ways:

- a person's needs are flagged on the IT system, so they know in advance what a person needs - this includes people who are visually impaired
- the administration team would book a British Sign Language Interpreter
- a language interpreter can be booked, although Patients are encouraged to bring a family member
- Carers/support workers are also encouraged to accompany people with a learning disability
- the team can offer home visits if Patients require this

Staff face a number of challenges, including:

- handling anti-social behaviour when Patients are irate due to waiting, this usually occurs because the Patient is late for their appointment and staff have to explain why it's important to be on time. However, it was stated these situations are rare.
- time management, especially when they provide wound care as well as health promotion advice (to improve foot health) during the appointment. There is a set time duration for the appointment. As previously raised, if Patients arrive late then this has an impact as the staff do not turn them away.
- Patients get lost in the venue and this can cause stress for Patients which the staff attempt to alleviate during the appointment.
- Staff were also concerned about the lack of security staff in the building.

Recommendations

The Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust to consider:

1. providing a loop system for hearing impaired Patients and advertise this facility
2. being proactive in informing Patients of the comments and complaints process
3. providing a sign to explain why the WC is locked and how to access
4. liaise with Property Management of the building to discuss security, signage and staffing the reception area within the building
5. activating the booking in screen so staff know who have arrived
6. promoting the service with contact phone numbers
7. promoting foot health information on the notice board in the waiting area

Provider feedback

No comments were received by the Provider



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Website: <https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/>
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Social media:
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Instagram: www.instagram.com/healthwatchesandwell
Twitter: @HWSandwell