

Enter and View Report

*Phlebotomy Clinic at
Neptune Health Park
Sedgley Road West
Tipton
DY4 8PX*

*Announced Visit
1st 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



Phlebotomy Service

<u>Name:</u>	Phlebotomy Clinic
<u>Address of Service :</u>	Neptune Health Park, Sedgley Road West, Tipton DY4 8PX
<u>Chief Executive:</u>	Richard Beeken
<u>Name of Staff on duty:</u>	Wendy Pakenham
<u>Chief Executive:</u>	Richard Beeken
<u>Service type:</u>	Phlebotomy

Phlebotomy is the process of taking blood samples from patients, to aid doctors in their investigations and diagnosis. At Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, all blood tests are by appointment only and can be carried out at a number of locations including Neptune Health Park.

There is an online booking system for blood tests using the Airmid UK app.

To book using the app, patients must meet the following criteria:

- Had a blood test previously.
- Aged 16 and over.
- Have been referred for a blood test by their GP.

Patients are able to book, cancel and reschedule their blood test appointment via Airmid UK.

Patients who are new still need to telephone the blood test team on 0121 507 6104 (between 8 am - 4.30 pm Monday to Friday) or email at swbh.phlebotomy@nhs.net

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

 0121 507 6104

Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Sandwell would like to thank Wendy Pakenham, her 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 1st 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

Melissa Elders and Anita Andrews conducted the visit.

Purpose of the report:

This report will provide an overview of the services at the Phlebotomy 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.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk)

Healthwatch Sandwell details

Address: Walker Grange, Central Avenue, Tipton. DY4 9RZ
Website: <https://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk/>
Phone: 0121 569 7211
Social media: <https://www.facebook.com/HWatchSandwell>
Instagram: www.instagram.com/healthwatchsandwell
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 Phlebotomy Clinic. This was achieved by observation and talking to patients and staff.

What we did

Our Authorised Representatives facilitated the visit and spoke to 7 patients, both male and female of mixed ethnicities and observed the environment on 1st 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 Phlebotomy Clinic is situated in Neptune Health Park.

Neptune Health Park is situated in Tipton 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. The nearest bus stop is on Sedgley Road West, 150 m away by the public footpath. The nearest mainline station is Owen Street, Tipton.

There is no signage to the Phlebotomy Clinic externally other than a sign explaining that appointments need to be booked.



Internal

Neptune Health Park accommodates the Black Country Family Practice (GP), a pharmacy as well as other outlets.

There is a general reception point which is located to the left on entering the building and a security desk.

The Phlebotomy Clinic is situated in the Neptune Health Park on the first floor, which can be accessed by a lift or stairs. The clinic is signed posted on the walls and there is a display sign on the floor.

There is a reception on the same floor as the Phlebotomy Clinic, however this is not used by the Phlebotomy team, it is used by the District Nurses and the Out of Hours Teams.

The Phlebotomists call patients into the consulting room when their appointment is due.

The waiting area had comfortable seating arranged along the walls with various posters. There were gender neutral WCs in the waiting area.

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

On the day of the visit, the clinic area was welcoming, clean and the décor well maintained. Covid 19 precautions were in place: signs on the floor for social distancing and sanitising hand gel dispensers etc.

We were informed that there was no loop system for hearing impaired patients.

There were no obvious hazards or health and safety risks.

The opening times are not displayed externally but are: Monday - Friday, 8 am - 5 pm (closed on bank holidays).

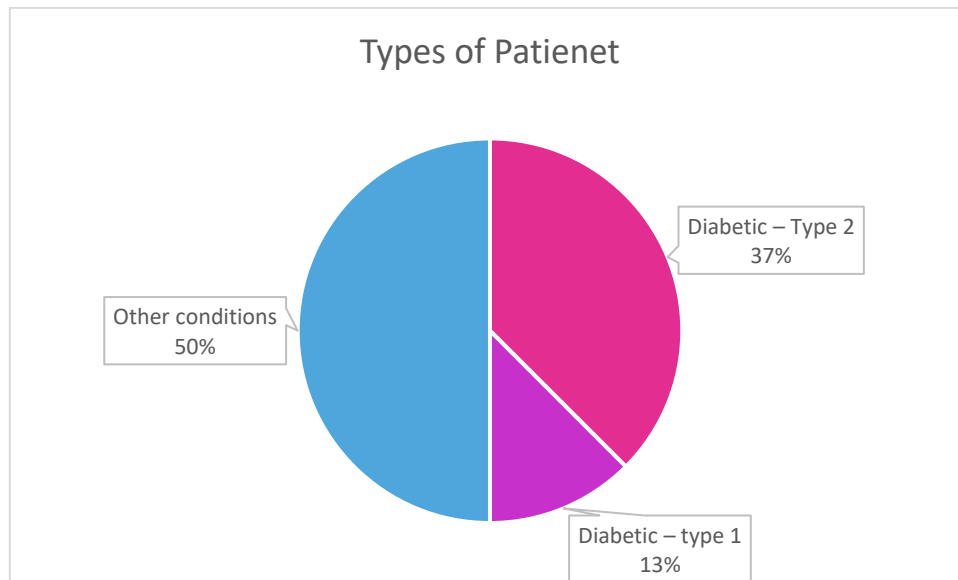
There were no facilities within the clinic to purchase refreshments.

There was a leaflet rack that housed information about a chaperone service and how to make a complaint, in various languages.



Essential Services

7 Patients were spoken to in the waiting area. 37% of the patients had type 2 diabetes and 100% had waited less than 4 weeks for their appointment



While waiting for their appointment 85% knew who to contact if they had a query.

72% of patients found the booking system 'easy' and 28% 'very easy'.

Patients appreciated having a phlebotomy clinic which is local, clean and welcoming.

Access

Accessibility of the building.

The majority of the patients had no problems finding the clinic and had received clear directions, many of the patients noted that they had visited the clinic on several occasions so were familiar with finding the venue.

There was a request for more parking, Neptune Health Park has a relatively large car park, but there are occasions when it is quite busy as the venue offers a variety of services which means a busy footfall.

Accessibility of the service.

Patients were communicated with by a variety of methods including letter, text and email or through Airmid UK app. There was a request to receive letters in larger print due to a visual impairment.

One patient's GP had not made a referral to the clinic but the patient believed they had - so came for a blood test. Another patient arrived a day early for their

appointment, both patients were accommodated and this was appreciated by the patients.

Safe, dignified and quality services

Patients described staff as very understanding and professional.

100% were happy with this service and rated it as **excellent**. They were happy that staff had answered all their questions.

“ Always a good service plus it didn’t hurt!”

Information and education

The waiting area had various health related posters.

100% found all the information they received about their appointment clear and easy to understand and appreciated having a reminder text about the appointment.

Choice

85% had been given a choice to attend this clinic, one patient was particularly pleased to come here as it was on a local bus route.

There was also a request for a Phlebotomy clinic in Wednesbury. The Authorised Representatives believe that there are plans for this to be actioned (Mesty Croft Clinic is moving to a new Health Centre in Autumn 2023).

Being listened to

100% of patients stated that they were listened to around their health needs

Comments and complaints.

There was a leaflet rack in the waiting area that housed information about how to make a complaint, in various languages.

57% patients did not know how to raise a concern, complaint or compliment, although one patient said if they needed to they would find out how to.

Being involved

Staff promote patient involvement, this is achieved by open communication with the patient during the appointment.

Staffing and feedback

There is a peripatetic team of phlebotomists who work at the various clinics around the Borough.

There are two busy clinics, the two phlebotomists will see up to **84** patients each in all daily clinics which is usually a total of **168** per day if all patients attend which they usually do.

Staff enjoy their role especially meeting new people and working in a good team. However, they face many challenges which include:

- Working in a small room, this poses challenges when there are wheelchair users
- Manually having to managing the appointments system when the IT system goes down
- The system to book appointments is relatively new and there is confusion for patients but this is also challenging when the local GP practice do not follow the procedure e.g. completing request forms this can mean that the patient has to go back to the GP, although as identified earlier in this report staff do their best to accommodate patients
- Patients not realising that they need to fast
- The new Airmid UK app confuses patients as it sends a text message about introducing the Airmid app but patients think they need to book an appointment
- Pharmacies now have new powers to request bloods tests but they do not make the request
- The blood test call centre request information but as they are a third party with limited privileges they can't have access to the patients records to if a referral has been actioned by their GP for a blood test
- The unstaffed reception causes confusion for patients

Staff occasionally experience anti-social behaviour from patients, although this is rare. This has been due to alcohol abuse or a patient being late for their appointment. Staff are skilled in defusing these types of situations by communicating effectively and calmly. Staff are also skilled at building rapport and this in turn builds trust and this improves the relationship.

Staff informed the Authorised Representative that there is a large hearing impaired community in Tipton of whom they are aware of. There is a system of checking personal details which records their communication needs. Patients will either write their details down or show ID where there are communication difficulties. Staff described having effective relationships with this community.

If a patient is struggling with booking their appointment, staff will often assist them by booking the appointment for them if they turn up in person.

Staff identified that communicating with patients who have dementia is a challenge.

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.

Staff suggested that to improve the service, the opening hours should be extended to include weekends.

Recommendations

The Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust to consider:

1. providing a loop system for hearing impaired patients and advertise this facility
2. providing letters in larger print for patients who have a visual impairment letter
3. recording on patients records their individual communication needs
4. extending opening times
5. liaising with the Primary Care Team (GP's and Pharmacies) to address the challenges that staff are facing with regards to appropriate documentation

Provider feedback

The Phlebotomy Service Manager gave additional information regarding accuracy of the report, these were duly adjusted. Healthwatch Sandwell welcome receiving feedback from Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust.

The following response was also given:

Thank you for sending the Neptune report.

This is a glowing report and is a testament to the phlebotomy department, with the positive feedback you have received from patients.

We are in the process of having a phlebotomy appointment checking in screen put up, this will be an added benefit for patients and the phlebotomists where on arrival will capture their arrival times. By having this system this will also manage the phlebotomists time more efficiently by them knowing who has arrived for their appointment, as currently the phlebotomists have to physically get up and go into the waiting area and ask who is waiting for their appointment.

Recommendations:

The Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust to consider:

1. providing a loop system for hearing impaired patients and advertise this facility
- **We are going to purchase a portable hearing loop.**

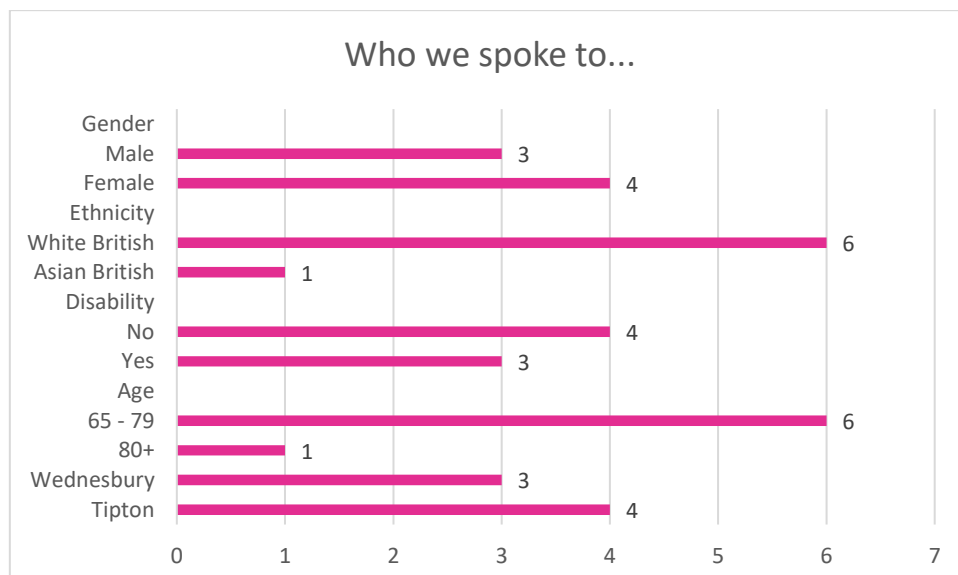
2. providing letters in larger print for patients who have a visual impairment letter. - Letters are not routinely provided, text messages are sent and information is given verbally given over the phone at the point of booking. We will look at sending out information in the GP's news letters, where this will capture all GP's where SWBH operate.
3. recording on patients records their individual communication needs
Phlebotomists do not record in patients notes. At the point of requesting an appointment patients will usually state what their requirements and needs are.
4. extending opening times - Demand and capacity exercise to be undertaken, to understand the requirements of the service at Neptune.
5. liaising with the Primary Care Team (GP's and Pharmacies) to address the challenges that staff are facing with regards to appropriate documentation. Liaise with local partners to streamline system.


Sandra Evans

Phlebotomy Service Manager

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

Who we spoke to





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