



healthwatch
Sandwell

**Evaluation of Knowledge and Experience of Purple
Points Initiative Provided by Sandwell and West
Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust.**



PURPLE point

Report by Healthwatch Sandwell

DATE

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DISCLAIMER

This report is based on the views and experiences of respondents. Due to the nature of this approach, we recognise that there may be differences between people’s views and providers’ intentions. Efforts have been made to ensure information is accurate or where necessary, reflect more than one view, whilst keeping to the brief.

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Summary

Healthwatch Sandwell (HWS) visited Sandwell General Hospital (SGH), Rowley Regis Hospital (RRH) and City Hospital (CH) to evaluate how effective the Purple Points Initiative (PPI) is and to ascertain whether patients and carers are aware of the initiative.

During 2015 and 2016 HWS investigated care at SGH due to concerns being raised by the public. This investigation found there were limitations in the complaints system as well as failures to provide appropriate nursing care. In response to our reports and recommendations, Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust (SWBHT) implemented the PPI which aims to resolve in-patients concerns in a more timely manner.

PPI was implemented in February 2018, it is a hotline to respond to concerns/complaints of in-patients about their care before discharge.

This investigation found that 92% of the respondents did not know what the PPI was and gave a range of answers, including:

“it’s where you assemble when there is a fire alarm”

Two people had used the PPI and gave positive feedback of the initiative.

This report recommends:

- An effective publicity campaign is undertaken again to inform the public of the initiative.
- An information leaflet about PPI is given to each patient on admission to raise awareness.

130 people completed a survey that was conducted across the three hospital sites of SWBHT.

Recommendations

The public that were made aware of PPI were impressed with the initiative and although they hadn’t used the service thought that it would be useful. However, the findings indicate that knowledge and awareness of the initiative is extremely low across the three hospitals, therefore HWS recommend that:

- An effective publicity campaign is undertaken again to inform the public of the initiative.
- An information leaflet about PPI is given to each patient on admission to raise awareness.

Findings

130 people took part in a survey across the SWBHT 3 sites, SGH, RRH and CH between 15th August – 28th September 2018.

For a full breakdown of numbers for which hospital and pilot see appendix one.

Knowledge of the PPI was limited. 8% stated they knew what one was, answers included: a complaints phone and a way of improving the service.

However, 92% did not know, their answers included:

“It’s when you sell your house...Purple bricks”

“Don’t have to pay extra ...Payment Protection Insurance”

“It’s where you assemble when there is a fire alarm”

Two people stated that that they had seen the purple telephones but didn’t know what they were for.

One person queried if it was for defibrillation?

From the sample surveyed two people had used a purple point, both of these were at SGH. One



person had accessed the language line using Urdu and the other used English.

Both participants were unhappy with the care they were receiving while in hospital but after using the PPI both respondents were happy with the outcome. They described how their difficulties were raised with ward staff via helpline staff and were resolved in a matter of days. This resulted in their stay being satisfactory and there was no need to follow the formal complaints procedure. Both respondents spoke highly of the initiative.

HWS also utilised social media to ask the public for feedback about the initiative (Facebook 20/9/2018).

One respondent was concerned and commented *“Let's make sure all public money is spent on healthcare and not PR nonsense”*.

Another respondent replied saying *“This is definitely a part of healthcare and not just PR. This is helping raise the profile that people can whistle blow poor care there and then”*.

After the survey was completed with each person, the PPI was explained and the response was extremely positive with patients and relatives commenting that it was a good idea.

Participants were from a variety of geographical areas across the black country see appendix two.

The participants were diverse in nature, 92/130 (71%) were patients. The largest group were aged 50 – 74 (42%) For a full demographic breakdown see appendix three.

Rationale and Aim

The aim of this investigation was to evaluate how effective the PPI is and to ascertain whether patients and carers are aware of the initiative which has been operational since February 2018.

SWBHT have attributed the initiative to the work undertaken by HWS in 2015/16 that recommended that SWBHT needed to address their complaints procedure. Therefore, HWS wanted to assess the projects effectiveness in assisting the public to raise concerns.

Background

HWS carried out an investigation into patients' experience of care at SGH, in particular potentially unacceptable incidents, during the latter half of 2015. A report entitled 'Why Do Good People Allow Bad Things to Happen?' Report into Care at Sandwell General Hospital was published in February 2016 and contains findings from this investigation and recommendations for improvement. To read the full report:

https://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk/sites/default/files/why_do_good_people_allow_bad_things_to_happen_final.pdf

Our investigation found failures to provide appropriate nursing care, communications issues regarding patients and family, including end of life circumstances, and limitations in the complaints system.

The investigation recommended that SWBHT needed to consider patients' reluctance to complain, which patients sometimes attribute to fears of discrimination (which may be founded or not).

HWS believe complaints are essential to service organisations in order to know if they are getting it right. Complaints need to be welcomed and shown to be acted upon. Any reluctance from service users to complain due to lack of faith in the complaints system, not only deprives the organisation of valuable insight and feedback on how it is doing, it can also give the organisation a false view of the quality of service that it is delivering.



HWS also recommended that the complaints process needed to be more explicit, clearly stating the steps involved, what can/will happen, and possible outcomes.

HWS revisited SGH in 2016/17 and published another report: Why Do Good People Allow Bad Things to Happen Re-visited in February 2017. To read the full report:

https://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk/sites/default/files/why_do_good_people_allow_bad_things_to_happen_-_re-visited.pdf

The aim of this investigation was to see if patient care and experience had improved, and where possible, to see if the previous report's recommendations had been implemented.

Overall, HWS were very encouraged by the improvements it saw in care at Sandwell General Hospital.

This re-visit found that care, communication with patients, and perceptions of staff behaviour had improved. However, concerns still remained about the complaint's procedure.

This follow up report recommended that the entire complaints experience from a patient perspective be reviewed.

Consequently, SWBHT implemented the PPI as a direct result of work undertaken by HWS on patient experiences at SGH which found patients wanted concerns resolved in a more timely approach.

The PPI was implemented in February 2018, it is a hotline that has been introduced to respond to concerns of in-patients or their loved ones about their care before the patient is discharged. The PPI does not address patients concerns after discharge, they are advised to contact Patient Advice and Liaison Service.

The phones can also be used to compliment staff for the care they've received.

The Purple Points are telephones that have been installed outside ward areas at SGH, RRH and CH, these phones link directly to a team of advisors. Calls are answered by a dedicated team of staff working within the Governance Support Unit.

The phone line is operated between 9am and 9pm every day. There are six telephone extensions available for those wanting to raise a concern, one for those who wish to use English and then five additional numbers, one for each of the top five languages: Bengali, Urdu, Polish, Romanian and Punjabi.

Methodology

Between 15th August – 28th September 2018 a team of staff and volunteers visited SGH, RRH (including Heart of Sandwell Day Hospice) and CH and used a simple 5 question survey that would provide data relating to patients and relative's awareness, knowledge and experience of using PPI at SWBHT.

The survey was piloted at RRH and SGH reception areas with 15 people. The survey was amended accordingly. HWS team then visited each hospital and spoke to people on wards, this was with permission of the Senior Officer (Governance) and Ward Staff. The HWS adhered to all health and safety restrictions especially in relation to infection control.

During a visit to RRH a team member tested the purple point and was able to speak to advisor, who was most helpful.

The survey collected demographic data. See appendix three for a breakdown of this data.

This approach was chosen, as surveys are a practical way of receiving information from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost-effective way, when relatively objective data is required.



The HWS communication team also posted on social media asking for feedback from people who had used the PPI (15/8/2018 and 20/9/2018).

The SWBHT also produced a short video clip of staff and volunteers from HWS conducting their survey on 21st August 2018, this video also asked for feedback about the initiative.

Ethical considerations

Throughout this visit HWS gave due consideration to ethical issues. Codes of confidentiality were adhered to and the information gathered was recorded and stored as defined by the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulations (2018).

About Healthwatch Sandwell

HWS is an independent consumer champion that gathers and represents the public's views on health and social care services in Sandwell. It ensures that the views of the public and people who use the services are considered by those who commission and provide services.

Healthwatch Sandwell's activities include: Experience Gathering. HWS staff meet with the public at various locations including community events, supermarkets, bingo halls, high street etc. They provide information about Healthwatch and ask if people would, 'describe their last experience of health or social care services'.

Enter and View. These are-visits to health and social care premises, involving staff and volunteers to look at the quality of services from the patients' perspective.

Information and Communication. HWS provides information and means for people to contact through various means including: telephone, website, email, public meetings, networking with community groups, Twitter, Facebook.

As part of HWS's statutory functions, it is our responsibility to make:

'...reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved.'

(1 Section 221 (2) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act - 2007)

Acknowledgement

HWS would like to thank its volunteers who participated in the visits and also the patients and relatives who agreed to share their experiences at SWBHT.

HWS would also like to thank staff at SWBHT for their co-operation throughout the visits.

References

Healthwatch Sandwell (2016) Why Do Good People Allow Bad Things to Happen? Report into Care at Sandwell General Hospital

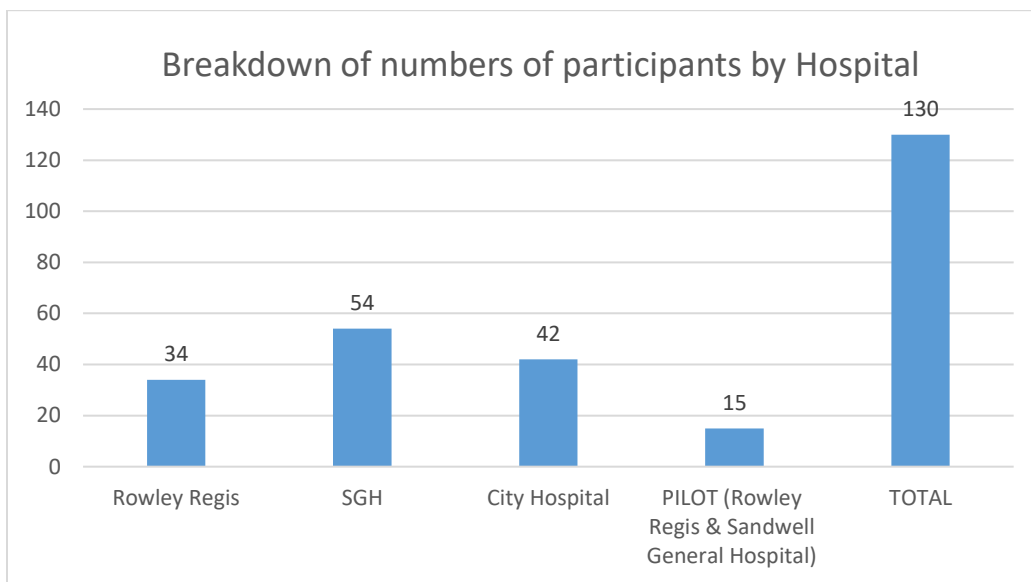
Healthwatch Sandwell (2017) Why Do Good People Allow Bad Things to Happen? – Re-visited



Appendices

Appendix One

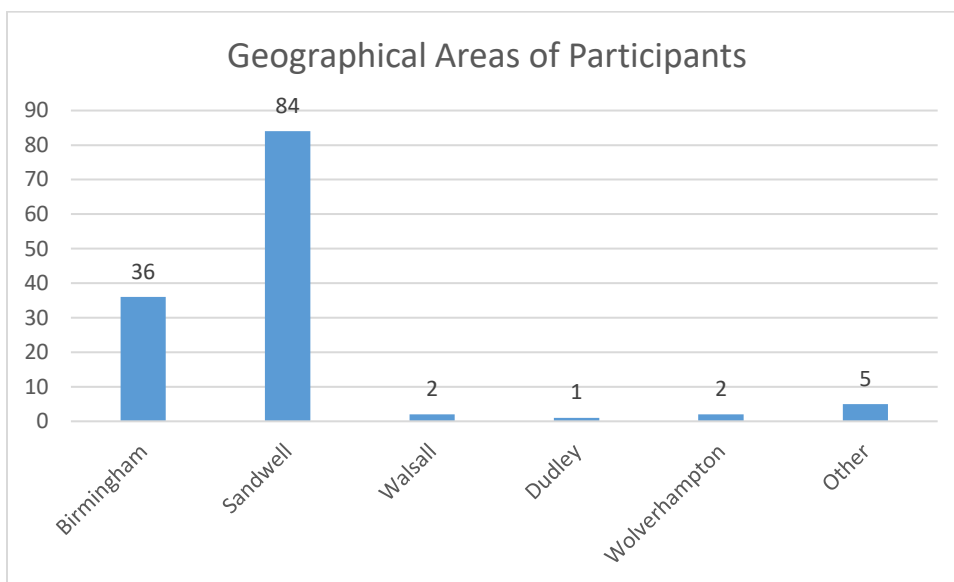
Breakdown of Numbers of Participants by Hospital





Appendix Two

Geographical Areas of Participants





Appendix Three Demographics of Participants

