

Maxillofacial Services - Queens Hospital, Romford



What the Patients and Relatives Say...

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	Pages 3-4
Summary of Findings	Pages 5-7
Conclusions	Page 8
Recommendations	Page 9
Appendix 1 - Patient/Relative Feedback and Comments	Pages 10-12
Demography	Pages 13-14
Appendix 2 - Response and Action Plan from BHRUT	Pages 15-17

Introduction

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham is the voice of local service users. Our role is to ensure that the views of local residents are heard by decision makers and that their opinions influence the way that services are delivered.

We do not have a pre-set agenda or a pre-determined interest in influencing the outcome of the results of a consultation.

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham carried out a random, 1 day consultation with patients using the maxillofacial service after some concerns were raised by members of the public from Barking and Dagenham.

The Maxillofacial Department is based on the 1st floor of Queens Hospital in Romford. The service treats diseases, injuries and defects to the head, neck, face, jaws and the hard and soft tissues of the face region.

The clinics are held in a long, fairly spacious corridor area with consulting rooms and a waiting area at one end. At the other end, there is a clinic with a separate waiting area for people who require regular changes to wound dressings after they have had surgery. The service also carries out biopsies; dentistry and orthodontic procedures and minor operations.

There are usually 3 doctors; 1 of which is a senior house officer. On the day of the visit, there was no Doctor available in the morning as the clinic was not running. This was due to planned leave. The wound dressing clinics are held on a Tuesday all day and Thursday afternoons. On a typical day there are up to 20 people seen in the department however, this can vary from day to day depending on the planned appointments and availability of staff. At the time of the visit, the Orthodontic Department had recently recruited a Locum Consultant. The Trust has an initiative in place for Saturday services, with a view to improving patient waiting times for both clinics and for surgery.

When patients are referred out to other hospitals, this is due to the complexity of their condition. For example patients with head and neck conditions are referred to St Bartholomew's in London. Patients are also referred to Princess Alexander Hospital in Harlow for surgery involving the face and jaw.

There is a central appointments booking system based at King George Hospital. This service is provided for initial appointments only and changes to clinics for Maxillofacial patients. Orthodontic patients are given their appointments via the Outpatients Team 2 based at Queens Hospital. If a patient doesn't attend or cancels on 2 occasions, representatives were advised that the patient is sent back to the original referrer. It was advised that this is in line with the Trust's access policy. A manual form (BHR118) is completed as a way to relay the outcome of a clinician's actions onto the Trusts' administrations system - this is known as procedure coding. An appointment is then booked according to clinicians' instructions and an electronic version kept for patient records.

The waiting time target to be seen for a 1st appointment is 13 weeks, with treatment starting within 18 weeks. Healthwatch representatives were advised that priority is given for urgent cases such as those at risk of cancer.

The Maxillofacial Department run a 'hot clinic' from Monday to Friday; 8am to 9am. This is for patients that may have attended the emergency department and can safely wait to be followed up the next day. The Ear, Nose and Throat Department run a 'hot clinic' Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 5pm. This is for patients who attend the Emergency Department or Surgical Assessment Unit and can safely wait to be followed up. This service also takes referrals from General Practitioners (GPs).

Healthwatch representatives were further advised that the Orthodontic Team work with both adults and children. This service is run at different times within the separate patient areas.

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham would like to thank Senior Staff Nurse, Veronica Quist and her team, for their assistance and support during our consultation with patients.

The report is available by contacting Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham on 020 8596 8200 or by emailing info@healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk.

Copies are also downloadable from our website:
www.healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk.

Summary of Findings

Healthwatch received 25 comments about peoples' experiences of using the service. The following is a summary of the points raised:

- Of the patients we spoke with, 5 (25%) said that waiting for their 1st appointment was too long.
- 5 patients said (25%) - that the overall time it took to receive their treatment was too long. They said this was due to extended periods of time they were made to wait between appointments.
- Poor communication from clinicians about their treatment was a concern raised by 7 (28%) patients.
- A number of patients - 4 (16%) - said that their appointments had been cancelled and that the appointment system was poor.
- Experience of encountering poor staff attitude towards them was fed back by 2 (8%) patients.
- Having arrived on time for their appointments, 2 (8%) people commented that the appointment times were delayed with no explanation given as to why.
- Of the total number of comments patients made; 13 (54%) said that once they were receiving their service that it was good, with some patients saying that they received an excellent service.
- Out of the number of patients receiving treatment, 4 (20%) said that they had been referred out to a specialist in another hospital trust, as an extended part of their treatment.
- Where patients said they had their appointments cancelled and re-booked, 6 out of 12 of them (50%) waited more than 4 weeks to receive notification of it.

The following information gives a breakdown by the number of patients, of the feedback received from the survey questionnaires:

1. Why were you referred to the maxillofacial services?

Tooth Extraction	3	15%
Cancers and Ulcers	3	15%
Dental Treatment	4	20%
Oral Abnormalities	5	25%
Surgery	4	20%
Scan and Xray	1	5%

2. Who referred you to the maxillofacial services?

Dentist	15	75%
GP	3	15%
Other	2	10%

3. How long did you have to wait for your 1st appointment?

1 to 4 Weeks	7	35%
5 to 13 Weeks	6	30%
14 to 26 Weeks	4	20%
27 to 39 Weeks	0	0%
40 to 52 Weeks	3	15%

4. Was your appointment cancelled or re-booked at any time?

Yes	12	60%
No	8	40%

5. If yes, how long did you have to wait before it was re-booked?

1 to 4 Weeks	6	50%
5 to 26 Weeks	6	50%

6. Have you been referred to see a specialist at another hospital trust in relation to your treatment?

Yes	4	20%
No	16	80%

7. If yes, how long did you wait for the appointment?

1 to 4 Weeks	1	25%
5 to 26 Weeks	3	75%

8. Were you given the choice to book your appointment on-line?

Yes	0	0%
No	20	100%

Conclusions

A number of people that use the service are long term patients who started their treatment in childhood and continue with it into adulthood. These are patients that require on-going support at different stages of their life i.e. individuals that needed teeth braces to be fitted.

The majority of patients - 15 (75%) - are referred to the service by their dental practitioners. Some patients are referred by their dentist for complex work that they can receive for free and not otherwise be able to afford to have carried out.

The majority of patients - 15 (75%) - were seen for the first time within the Trust's target time of 18 weeks; 5 (25%) got their initial appointment over 18 weeks. Of those, 3 (15%) patients said they waited over a year.

Patients missed appointments for different reasons - some said it was their fault - however, the majority (60%) said their appointment was cancelled and/or re-booked for a later date by the Trust's appointment booking centre, with no explanation given as to why. This creates problems for them patients who work or need transport organized for them.

Of patients who are referred to see a specialist at another hospital trust, as part of their ongoing treatment; some waited 3 weeks and others waited 6 weeks for their appointments. There were some patients who said they were waiting for 26 weeks or more. One individual said they were waiting to find out whether they needed treatment for Oral Cancer.

Patients are not given a choice to book appointments on-line for any part of this service, via the 'choose and book' system.

Once receiving treatment, feedback from most patients indicated that the service they got varied between 'ok' and 'very good'.

It emerged that many people are referred to the service due to head and face injuries sustained as a consequence of alcohol related incidents. At the time of the visit, the number of these was not obtained.

Recommendations

- 1) The number of people having their appointments cancelled and re-booked is extremely high. The appointment process and systems in place for the maxillofacial service should be reviewed to reduce the number of cancelled and re-booked appointments.
- 2) A review should be carried out by the hospital trust, to reduce the time some patients have to wait for their 1st appointment to access the service pathway.
- 3) Alcohol related facial and head injuries account for a high number of referrals into the maxillofacial service - Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham would like to know how many people have been referred into the service for this reason over the past year and how many of those were residents of Barking and Dagenham.
- 4) The exchange of patient information between the maxillofacial department and the appointment booking centre is reliant on a manual postal service. The hospital trust should consider putting a process in place that exchanges patient information for this service, without the use of a paper based system.
- 5) Consideration should be given to providing the option for patients who might prefer to choose and book their appointment on-line.
- 6) It is a concern that some patients - suspected of having an oral cancer or pre-cancerous condition - are kept waiting too long between appointments, often to see consultants based at other hospital trusts. More should be done to support and give priority to patients experiencing these circumstances and that it is flagged up as part of the appointments process to prioritise these patients.

Appendix 1 - Patient /Relative Feedback and Comments

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham received 25 comments from people about their experiences of using the maxillofacial service. The comments are as follows:

'My dentist sent a referral letter at the end of October 2014, but I have heard nothing about an appointment' (Received 13/02/2015)

'My daughter has been attending the clinic since she was 10 years old - she was supposed to see them every 3 months but they had so many patients, it was more like every 6 months. She ended up with braces on her teeth until she was 20!'

'I was referred there by my dentist for a persistent mouth ulcer to be checked. I found the service to be excellent - I was seen exactly on time; had a thorough examination by a doctor then a consultant to check and explain everything to me. I found this all very reassuring'

'I had to go several times for treatment and aftercare, all of which went well because of the excellent treatment and care from the staff. Doctors were absolutely fantastic. The problems started for me with the long delays between each time I was seen. Never ever seen less than 1 hour after my allotted appointment time'

'Been a patient there for the last couple of years...trouble is it took so long for an appointment to come through from the date my dentist first referred me. The staffs are always polite and I find the lady consultant gentler in her manner and the way she examined me. The gentlemen consultant who did my mouth biopsy was a tad rough. This made me more nervous. My only gripe was with the staff on the recovery ward afterwards - insisting and trying to get me to drink when I wasn't able to because of the pain where they had taken the biopsy from in my mouth'

'I was referred to this clinic by my dentist because I couldn't afford to pay the cost of the treatment they were charging me. At this clinic, I get the same treatment for free'

'I found the service very good and it put my mind at rest'

'Service has been ok - consultant not very good with patient/doctor communication but other than that, has been good'

'The service has always been good for me - no complaints - been coming here since I was 11 years old'

'There needs to be an emphasis on prevention - the system and processes are backward'

'Been well looked after by the staff, but there was a distinct lack of communication when my diagnosis turned out to be cancer. No one let me know what the diagnosis was - I had to ring them after 4 weeks to get the test results'

'The time between appointments takes ages - the waiting times when I get there are too long and not punctual. Once I get seen it is a good service'

'I was left in a lot of pain by my dentist and in frustration, I attended A&E. All I wanted was for my tooth to be removed but none of it was dealt with quickly. They couldn't see or didn't seem to understand the physical pain I was in'

'Everything has been straight forward and good'

'I told them my jaw hurts, for which I had a x-ray recently. I have been waiting 3 months for this appointment and have been in constant pain - not sorted quickly enough!'

'No problems very happy with the service I have received'

'Every time I come back it's because my braces have broken - this is the 3rd time in a month! I have been coming here for 4 years and I knew it was going to break again because everything they did was too rushed and poor quality'

'This department is very clean; the doctors and staff all do their jobs well'

'Disgusting from start to finish - very unprofessional doctor and I am not happy at all with the process. I can only be thankful it is coming to a end now after 4 years; having been told it would take 18 months to 2 years from start to finish! The communication from the consultant and the appointment system, has been atrocious'

'This has been going on for 18 months on and off, cancelling appointments! My dentist has again referred me back to be seen. Since I was first seen, the service has actually been very good'

'The waiting time for my appointment was too long - they were very busy. I struggled to communicate with 1 of the nursing staff - I couldn't understand what she was saying due to her accent. The service today has been fantastic - everything has been on time - perhaps Healthwatch should come to the department more often'

'They are good at what they do, but I have waited far too long for an appointment. Today the department is fairly empty whilst I am here, but the last time I came it was packed and had to wait 4 hours for a scan'

'Due to a number of different health issues, my appointment has taken over 2 years to be sorted out, mainly due to my inaction. The service here has been a good experience for me'

'Very good service'

'I was contacted on my way to my 1st appointment - I was actually driving to it at the time - to be told that they were going to re-book the appointment and ring me back to confirm the new date. This was very inconvenient for me as I had to arrange time off from work. I did not get given a named contact at the booking centre and subsequently didn't get a call back either. Very poor communication and service from the appointment centre - they need to understand the upheaval they create if they don't tell people what options they have got and in good time to arrange their life around the appointment. Someone needs to look at the process and fix it properly'

Demography

Age

18-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-44 years old	45-65 years old	Over 60 years old
10		4	2	4

Gender

Male	Female	Transgendered	Prefer not to say
7	13		

Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual	Bisexual	Homosexual	Lesbian	Gay	Prefer not to say
19				1	

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

No	Yes	Prefer not to say
19	1	

If 'Yes' would you describe your impairment

Visual	Speech	Hearing	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Mobility

Other	Prefer not to say
	1

What is your religion, Faith or belief?

Buddhism	Christianity	Hinduism	Muslim	Jewish	Sikh
	6	3			

Other	No Religion	Prefer not to Say
2	8	1

How would you describe your ethnicity?

White British	White Irish	Gypsy/Irish Traveller	Any other white background
14	1		

Black or Black British - African	Black or Black British - Caribbean	Black or Black British - Other Black background	Traveller - Romany	Traveller - White Irish
1				

Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	Asian or Asian British - Indian	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	Asian or Asian British - Other Asian Background	Asian or Asian British - Chinese
	4			

Mixed - White and Asian	Mixed -White and Black African	Mixed -White and Black Caribbean	Mixed - Any Other Mixed Background	Other	Prefer not to say

The following information is taken from the 2011 census for Barking and Dagenham

Males	49 %
Female	51%
16-24yrs	12%
25-59yrs	47%
60+yrs	14%

Ethic Group	Census
White British	49.46%
White Irish	0.93%
White Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.10%
White - any other white background	7.81%
Mixed -White and Black Caribbean	1.44%
Mixed -White and Black African	1.14%
Mixed -White and Asian	0.67%
Other mixed	0.99%
Asian/Asian British : Indian	4.00%
Asian/Asian British : Pakistani	4.31%
Asian/Asian British : Bangladeshi	4.14%
Asian/Asian British :Chinese	0.71%
Other Asian	2.76%
Black or Black British :African	15.43%
Black or Black British : Caribbean	2.81%
Black or Black British : Other Black background	1.74%
Any other Ethic Group:	1.04%

Maxillofacial Services Consultation by Healthwatch, Barking & Dagenham

Appendix 2

Action Plan

Healthwatch Barking & Dagenham carried out Maxillofacial Services Consultation at Queen's Hospital. The action plan below includes the recommendations that were made following the consultation.

<u>KEY ISSUES</u>	<u>ACTIONS</u>	<u>LEAD</u>	<u>TIMESCALE</u>	<u>OUTCOME</u>	<u>UPDATE</u>
High volume of appointment cancellations from the Maxillofacial Department	All leave to be planned within the agreed timeframe to enable minimal disruption to clinics Urgent requests for cancellation of clinics is to be approved by the Divisional Manager	William Hodson/ Julia Bell	Completed	This process is currently being followed	A white board has also been requested so that Patients can clearly see clinic running times within the Orthodontic department
Long waits for Patients to get their first appointment to access the service pathway	Review the volumes using the capacity planning tool Review clinic and theatre profile	William Hodson/ Julia Bell	Completed	Changes to clinic profiles Increased capacity for clinics and theatres slots	Since February 2015, the Maxillofacial department has increased its outpatient clinic capacity

<u>KEY ISSUES</u>	<u>ACTIONS</u>	<u>LEAD</u>	<u>TIMESCALE</u>	<u>OUTCOME</u>	<u>UPDATE</u>
High volume of alcohol related referrals into the Maxillofacial Department	To confirm how many people have been referred into the service for alcohol related facial injuries and head injuries, and how many of those were residents of Barking & Dagenham	N/A	N/A	The Trust is unable to provide details of the boroughs of patients as requested, as we do not hold this information	N/A
Paper based manual system for the exchange of patient information between the Maxillofacial Department and the appointments centre	No action required	N/A	N/A	N/A	The current system is that the follow up appointments are booked by the reception staff All clinic outcome forms are dealt with in the department
Provision of choose and book appointments system should be available to Patients to book online	No action required	N/A	N/A	N/A	Orthodontic Patients are referred by their Dentist. NHS England have not provided access to the choose and book system to Dentists currently Maxillofacial Surgery Patients can access choose and book system and it is also available to GP's

<u>KEY ISSUES</u>	<u>ACTIONS</u>	<u>LEAD</u>	<u>TIMESCALE</u>	<u>OUTCOME</u>	<u>UPDATE</u>
Prioritisation of appointments for Patients with suspected oral cancer	No action required	N/A	N/A	N/A	<p>Patients that attend with suspected cancer are seen reviewed under the 2 week wait system</p> <p>These Patients also have a 2 week wait sticker alert placed on their test requests to prioritise them</p> <p>There is a dedicated booking team for suspected cancer Patients for their first appointments, and all subsequent treatments and appointments are monitored by a multi-disciplinary co-ordinator</p>

Conclusion

The report from the Enter & View visit has been shared with all members of staff.

Monitoring of the plan will be undertaken by William Hodsall, Service Manager and Julia Bell, General Manager on a quarterly basis.

Sandra Mahoney
Matron

William Hodsall
Service Manager

Julia Bell
General Manager

6 July 2015

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