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<b>Report Title:</b>	RBH Ophthalmology
<b>Organisation:</b>	Royal Bolton Hospital - Ophthalmology Department
<b>Date(s) of Visit:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> August 2018
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### **Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Bolton would like to thank service users and staff at the Ophthalmology Department Royal Bolton Hospital for sharing their views and experiences.

### **Disclaimer**

This report relates verbatim comments gathered during the time of our visit.

### **Background**

Healthwatch representatives wanted to find out how patients were managing with access to appointments, waiting times, and the service quality.

## **Who we spoke to**

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We spoke to **thirteen** people at the ophthalmology department in Royal Bolton Hospital.

## **Method**

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Our engagement officers and volunteers asked the following questions to those waiting to be seen in the Ophthalmology Department on the day of the visit:

1. What brought you here today?
2. How long did it take you to get this appointment?
3. How long have you been waiting here?
4. What do you think about the service?
5. How can services or your experiences be improved?

## Topics/Themes

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•Access •Waiting times •Appointments •Ophthalmology •Out-patients

## The Comments

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### What brought you here today?

Most people we met were regular attendees at the clinic, they were either having routine appointments or undergoing treatment which required them to attend several times.

“Pre-op exam for cataract. I’ve been coming a while. I’ve been about 8 times since November.”

“I’ve come with my grandad, he has injections in his eyes. He comes about every 2-3 months.”

### How long did it take you to get this appointment?

The wait for an appointment varied, but was also related to the type of treatment or test that patients needed to have. While it could take months to get an appointment, this did not always mean a person was unhappy with the waiting period. More regular patients could get an appointment in a shorter time.

“2 weeks. All my appointments usually take that long. With having come 8 times since November I don’t have to wait long between appointments.”

“I usually wait 2-3mths for appointments. I have been coming for years so they are quite good really especially as I am diabetic. They know that things can change quickly so appointments are often needed quickly. If you get discharged it’s different though as you have to go through the whole process again so your wait will be longer.”

### How long have you been waiting here?

Waiting times varied but could be hard to determine. Around thirty minutes was most common. Waiting times were mentioned as a point for improvement by almost a third of those that we interviewed (four comments of thirteen).

“30 minutes so far. It’s usually about an hour.”

“Today 1hr 15mins so far. Sometimes you can be in and out though.”

### What do you think about the service?

People were generally happy with the service. With many of the patients being regular attendees, they had visited the service several times and had many previous experiences.

“It’s got a better reputation than Manchester that’s for sure. Never been to Manchester but it’s just what people say.”

“They are really helpful as my son has Downs Syndrome.”

“I think it’s really good. I’ve been coming here since I was 10yrs old. The staff are polite and genuinely appear to care. They usually recognise me. There’s no rushing, they are really kind and they explain everything. The consistency is nice.”

### How can services or your experiences be improved?

Most did not have any suggestions for improvement, being happy with the service. There were comments about waiting times (four of thirteen). One person said the signage for the clinic was not clear, another person suggested air conditioning.

“Nothing, in and out and they are very good.”

“Waiting times.”

“Air conditioning.”

“The sign to say ‘eye clinic’ is too small. To say you are coming to an eye clinic I can’t believe the sign is so small. You can’t read it. Why not have a picture of an eye too? That way it would be bilingual. Go to Manchester, they have better signs and lots of them and they are bigger.”

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

- Many of the people using the service are routine visitors who were generally happy with the service and the appointment arrangements.
- Waiting times for appointment were an issue for some particularly people new to the service.
- Waiting times when in the clinic were a problem for some people and action to address this would be welcome.
- A review of signage would be useful. Particularly bearing in mind the clientele.

## **Response from Bolton Hospitals Foundation Trust**

This report was discussed at the Patient Experience and Inclusion Partnership meeting in October 2018. It was noted that the experience was largely positive. There was one negative comment regarding signage being too small, particularly as patients are attending the eye clinic. BFT agreed to escalate this comment.