



Enter & View Visit Report

Details of Visit

Service Name and Address	Bridgnorth Minor Injuries Unit (MIU), Bridgnorth Community Hospital, Northgate, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 4EU
Service Provider	Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust
Date and Time	Monday 22 August 2016 9am - 11.30am
Enter & View Visit Team	Two Healthwatch Shropshire Authorised Representatives (ARs)

Purpose of the Visit

To explore why people have come to this Minor Injuries Unit (MIU), and their experience of the service available.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experience of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Context of Visit

Over the last two years there has been considerable local public debate about how health services can best meet the needs for urgent (i.e. not 'emergency') care in a rural county like Shropshire. People are being encouraged to think about whether A&E is always the right place to go to for urgent care and to think about other urgent care services available to them. Minor Injury Units are provided across the county in the Community Hospitals in Bridgnorth, Ludlow and Whitchurch and Oswestry Health Centre. These visits will explore what is working well for patients and what may need to change. The findings will be used to contribute to the discussions on transformation of urgent and emergency care services in the county.

The Enter and View visits to all four Minor Injuries Unit were semi-announced. Healthwatch Shropshire's Enter & View Officer gave the hospital trust and MIU team leaders a window of four weeks when the visits would take place.

What we were looking at

We wanted to gain some insight into public awareness of urgent care services available, when a visit to an A&E is not needed, and to understand why people choose to attend a local Minor Injuries Unit (MIU). We also wanted to get feedback on the quality of the service experience provided in the MIU. We developed a structured questionnaire (Appendix 1), but also made observations on the environment within the MIU and spoke to the staff.

The questionnaire asked:

- Where people had come from to visit the MIU
- Whether they had used it before, and how they first heard about it
- How easy it is to get to and use
- Reasons for attending on the day we visited
- People's awareness of other sources of urgent care
- People's experience of using the MIU

We chose the busiest day of the week (Monday) and time of day (9am - 12pm) for these visits, in order to talk to as many people using the service as possible.

What we did

We spoke to people in the waiting area before they went in to see the MIU staff. When possible we filled in the questionnaire with them before they were called and asked them to complete their feedback on the whole experience before they left.

There were three people who declined to participate but 12 questionnaires were completed.

We also spoke to staff before we left, during what was the first quiet period all morning.

What we found out

How the service works

The MIU is just inside the main entrance to the Community Hospital. There is a reception desk which serves both the outpatient department and the MIU. Staff at reception take basic personal details from people who wish to be seen in the MIU, and they are asked to wait in the waiting area. This waiting area is shared each morning with people sent by their GPs to have blood taken for tests, but these patients use a ticket system to await their turn. There is a small MIU office at the side of the waiting area, with an internal window and bell push on the sill. It has a notice telling patients to press the bell if they arrive when reception is not staffed.

The MIU duty nurse will call the patient's name and show the person to a consulting/treatment room off the corridor. If an x-ray is required and a radiographer is available, Emergency Nurse Practitioners can authorise these and the patient is directed to the x-ray room near the Out-patient Department.

Findings from the questionnaire

Who comes to the MIU and how did they hear about it?

Of the 12 people we spoke to, six lived in Bridgnorth; five lived in villages between three and seven miles from Bridgnorth and one was a visitor staying with relatives in the town.

Only three people had not attended the MIU before. One person had looked on a website to find the MIU and the other two people said they had been advised to come by family. One person said they had intended to go to A&E, but their partner advised them to go to Bridgnorth MIU instead. Eight people said they 'had always known' about the MIU¹.

Were there difficulties in getting to, or finding the MIU once on site?

Two people commented on the lack of public car parking on the hospital site. One mother with two very young children had come by bus from the other side of the town, but there is a convenient bus stop outside the hospital. One person said it was difficult to know the opening times of the MIU. The MIU is just inside the hospital main entrance and no one we spoke to had difficulty in finding it.

What were the main reasons for attending the MIU?

11 of the 12 people attended with a recent injury. Four were children, but they completed the questionnaire with the help of the adult with them. The other person came to have a dressing changed after attending the MIU for an injury the week before. Two people had been treated two days ago (Saturday) and came this morning to have an x-ray, because this service is not available at weekends.

¹ The Shropshire Community Trust website does not list the addresses of the four MIUs on its home page, although this information is on the Bridgnorth Community Hospital website, which is only useful if people know the MIU is within the hospital.

Awareness and previous use of other services for urgent health care or advice

One person was not able to complete this part of the questionnaire, but of 11 who did, there appeared to be generally good awareness of services for urgent care. The difference between 'urgent' and 'emergency' care seemed to be understood and did not need further explanation. However, only one person attending Bridgnorth MIU was familiar with what a Walk-In Centre offers or had ever used one (and that was in Essex).

- Three people said they would not go to a GP for urgent care, adding that it is 'impossible' to get a same day appointment. One person (who lived in an outlying village) said they 'would only consider going to my local GP for urgent care if this MIU wasn't so close'.
- Eight people were aware that Pharmacists can offer advice in some urgent care situations, and five people said they had sought this sort of advice from a Pharmacist in the past.
- All 11 respondents were aware of the NHS 111 phone line, although only one person had ever used it. Another person commented they had used the NHS Direct phone line in the past, which had been helpful.
- All 11 respondents were aware of ShropDoc and five people said they had used their services for urgent out-of-hours care.

Feedback on the whole experience of attending the MIU today

People were asked to rate their experience of attending the MIU from 1 - 4 with 4 being the most positive. All 12 respondents gave the MIU 4 for the quality of service received from the MIU today.

Comments from people using Bridgnorth MIU:

'The nurse was very gentle and kind'

'Very happy with the treatment and whole experience'

'Most excellent. Thank you'

'Clean, user friendly, great staff. The best hospital I have attended'

'Very friendly. I wanted to give 10/10'

Discussions with staff

Services available through the MIU

- We were told that the same staff team provides the Minor Injuries (MIU), Diagnostic, Assessment and Rehabilitation (DAART) and Outpatient services within Bridgnorth Hospital.
- X-ray services are available 9am - 4pm every weekday².

With this varied workload, it is difficult to plan for the different types of patient as well as the different times of day they attend. A GP attends the MIU every weekday between 9 -10.30am, mainly to do patient reviews. However, we were told the Bridgnorth GPs are very supportive of the MIU, and are always available for emergencies until 6pm.

Senior nursing staff in the MIU have completed a University course and are all accredited 'Emergency Nurse Practitioners'. Other staff working in the unit have been offered opportunities to undertake this specialised training.

A staff member said she felt privileged to work at MIU and knew the rest of the team felt the same.

Changes in patterns of attendance at the MIU by the public

We were told that many more people are attending Bridgnorth MIU from further afield than they used to (e.g. Wolverhampton, Telford as well as outlying villages). Bridgnorth is also a tourist destination, with several large holiday caravan sites nearby, and levels of attendances from holiday-makers increase significantly in the summer months.

Staff said they felt the MIU has been increasingly used as the first service of choice as the public are so aware of pressures on A&E. However we were told that many more people are coming to MIU 'because they can't get to see their GP' for something that's urgent. The MIU does not offer a minor illness service, and all patients we spoke to seemed to know this. However staff told us there are quite often occasions when someone who has walked in needs to see a GP or other

² At the time of writing the report the Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust website says the x-ray service at Bridgnorth MIU is available 9am-5pm on weekdays.

health professional, because their problem cannot be treated by the MIU, and the MIU staff will signpost them to these more appropriate services.

We were told that there is little publicity and promotion of the MIU undertaken, but (as we learned from the questionnaires) the service is well-known in and around Bridgnorth.

Additional Findings

Waiting area environment

The waiting area is shared between those attending for blood tests and those wanting the MIU. It was well-organised, with a child-friendly play area on one side, which was well-used while we were there, and various magazines available. The environment seemed very clean (one person also commented on this on their questionnaire), and staff showed calm and welcoming attitudes to everyone.

Signage and times of opening

One respondent had commented it was difficult to find out about MIU opening times. We did not see any signs to the MIU outside the building and the main sign above reception says MIU & DAART. We wondered how much these initials would mean to a person in distress from a recent injury seeking help. There is however an A4 notice on the glass entrance door, (which would be seen most easily at night when the doors are closed). This notice includes Minor Injuries Unit written in words, lists the hours of opening and says phone NHS 111 or 999 for minor injuries out-of-hours.

Waiting for treatment

The MIU appeared to us to be very busy, with 16 people attending for treatment in the MIU during the first 90 minutes on a Monday morning. One person, who was holding a blood-stained cloth to their head, was taken straight in for treatment. They did not have time to complete a questionnaire but, before leaving the hospital, said they were full of praise for the service they received. Of other patients waiting to be seen, most were treated within 10 minutes of arrival. Later

in the morning as numbers built up, a few waited 30 - 45 minutes after arrival. It was however, very clear to everyone that the process was fair and efficient and people said they found these waiting times very acceptable.

We later learned, from speaking to staff, that holidays and the recent loss of a member of staff who had resigned, had reduced the total number of staff usually available on this busy morning. Despite this, the small number of staff on duty treated everyone who attended in a prompt, courteous and efficient manner.

Summary of Findings

- The service at the Bridgnorth MIU is very highly regarded by the people who used it at the time of our visit.
- People attending MIU this morning lived within a seven mile radius of Bridgnorth. The majority had used the service before, but one person had done some research on websites before attending.
- The Shropshire Community Trust website does not list the addresses of the four MIUs on its home page, although this information is on the Bridgnorth Community Hospital website, which is only useful if people know the MIU is within the hospital.
- Because the people we spoke to on our visit knew the MIU was 'at the hospital' they said it was easy to find, but there were two comments about inadequate public parking on the hospital site.
- Everyone we spoke to had come because of an injury. There seemed good general awareness of the concept of urgent care, and the narrower range of conditions the MIU could treat.
- Most people indicated they would prefer to come to the MIU rather than go to their GP for urgent care, (but it was not always clear whether this referred only to injuries).
- Eight of the 11 respondents were aware that Pharmacists can offer advice in some urgent care situations and five people said they had used this service.

- All 11 respondents were aware of the NHS 111 phone line, although only one person had ever used it.
- The MIU seemed very busy at the time of our visit, but the process was very well-managed, and everyone who left after treatment expressed great satisfaction with their experience.
- The waiting area was clean and well-organised. There was a well-used children's play area to one side.

Recommendations

The positive feedback gathered from people using the MIU today and our observations of the running of the unit left us impressed by the service delivered.

- We recommend the signs and notices at Bridgnorth Community Hospital refer to the Minor Injuries Unit, rather than MIU, and include the list of health problems that can, and cannot, be treated there as listed on the Trust's website.
- We recommend that the Trust's website home page includes the addresses of the MIUs in addition to the telephone numbers already there.
- We also recommend the problem of insufficient parking is addressed at a higher level.

Service Provider Response

Healthwatch Shropshire received the following update and action plan in response to our recommendations from the Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust on 18th October 2016:

We recommend the signs and notices at Bridgnorth Community Hospital refer to the Minor Injuries Unit, rather than MIU, and include the list of health problems that can, and cannot, be treated there as listed on the Trust's website.

The point about listing health problems on signs 'needs further discussion at the Minor Injuries Forum [October] as it would need to be consistent across all sites.' This will be overseen by the Sister in charge of the MIU and Clinical Services Manager and be completed by January 2017.

Update: On receiving the draft Enter & View report a request to Estates to review signage was submitted on 23rd September 2016. There was a visit by Estates on 6th October when the findings of the report were shared.

We recommend that the Trust's website home page includes the addresses of the MIUs in addition to the telephone numbers already there.

Update: The Clinical Services Manager contacted the Communications Lead on 22nd September 2016 to request a review of the website. This will be overseen by the Clinical Services Manager and completed by November 2016.

We also recommend the problem of insufficient parking is addressed at a higher level.

A capital bid is to be submitted to November Capital and Estates meeting regarding parking; including costs for relocation of barrier and bollards to address and prevent inappropriate parking. This will be overseen by the Clinical Services Manager and completed by January 2017.

Update: The Clinical Services Manager had an on-site meeting with Estates on 6th October 2016 to discuss issues regarding the relocation of the barrier and bollards to prevent inappropriate parking.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Shropshire would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to this Enter & View.

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

Healthwatch Shropshire is inviting people using the Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) to tell us about their experience of accessing the service. We would like you to fill in this short questionnaire and/or talk to the Healthwatch Shropshire Volunteers who are here today.

Please return this questionnaire when you have finished. The information you provide will be anonymous and handled confidentially in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. You will not be identifiable in the final report.

Please tick appropriate answers

1. Where do you live? (Please tell us the village/town you are from or give us your postcode)			
2. Have you used this MIU before?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. How did you know about this MIU?			
Family/Friend <input type="checkbox"/>	GP referral <input type="checkbox"/>	Pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/>	Website <input type="checkbox"/>
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details		
4. Did you have any difficulty getting here?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Hard to find <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty parking <input type="checkbox"/>	Transport <input type="checkbox"/>	Needed someone to come with me <input type="checkbox"/>
Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details		
5. Tell us your reason for coming to the MIU today <i>*'Condition' includes a mental health condition</i>			
Accident/injury <input type="checkbox"/>	Sports injury <input type="checkbox"/>	Illness <input type="checkbox"/>	Victim of crime <input type="checkbox"/>
Thought might need x-ray <input type="checkbox"/>	Referred by GP/111/Pharmacist <input type="checkbox"/>	New or existing symptom/condition <input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>



Other reason/details:

6. Are you aware of / have you used any other services when you have needed urgent health advice or care?								
	Aware of	Used today	Used before		Aware of	Used today	Used before	
GP	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ShropDoc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NHS Choices Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
111	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Shropshire Choices Website	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A&E	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walk-in-Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Comments/feedback:

Please give us your feedback* on your experience of using Bridgnorth MIU today

**Please circle a number from 1-4*

	←—————→		
1	2	3	4
Comment/feedback:			

Thank you for your time

Who are Healthwatch Shropshire?

Healthwatch Shropshire is the voice for people in Shropshire about the health and social care services delivered in their area. We are an independent body providing a way for people to share their experiences to help people get the best out of their health and social care services. As one of a network of Local Healthwatch across England we are supported by the national body Healthwatch England, and our data is fed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

What is Enter & View?

Healthwatch Shropshire gather information on peoples experiences of health and social care services and there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch Shropshire to see and hear for ourselves how services are being delivered: these visits are called 'Enter & View', they are not inspections.

Teams of specially trained volunteers carry out visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to services users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

Get in Touch!

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Healthwatch Shropshire

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