

# Warrington Frailty Hub Report



**healthwatch**  
Warrington

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## Introduction

Healthwatch Warrington are the consumer voice in Health and Social Care Services in Warrington. Healthwatch Warrington aim to gather feedback from residents of Warrington who use Health and Social Care services about their needs and experiences. The feedback is shared with service providers and commissioners and Healthwatch Warrington work with them to look for ways to deliver service improvements.

The Frailty Assessment Unit (FAU) is a 'Warrington Together' led partnership, aiming to redesign services for older people. The unit provides care closer to home where appropriate, reducing Accident and Emergency (A and E) attendances, reducing admissions to acute services, and providing care in a more person-centred and efficient way. The service has been fully operational since June 2018 and it is reported to have significantly reduced the number of admissions of patients living with frailty. Data suggests that in the first seven months, the FAU avoided 235 admissions. Healthwatch Warrington decided to visit the FAU to observe how the unit operated, look at the new facilities and seek the views of patients, family/carers and staff. The team was asked to seek additional feedback in the form of a short survey, which is intended to collect patient experience, and will be carried out alongside the Friends and Family test

## Methodology

The project used short interviews for the project that consisted of four questions that allowed participants to give their thoughts on their experiences of the Frailty Hub.

There were 13 participants in the interviews and therefore, the findings of the project cannot be seen as being representative of all the patients who have accessed the Frailty Hub. There were some commonalities across the feedback of the participants and therefore, the findings have been presented to illustrate those commonalities.

## Findings

### Referral route

Three of the participants said that they had been referred to the Frailty Hub by their GP after appointments at their practice. For each of these participants they were transported to the Hub by family members and then they able to directly access the Hub without going through A&E.

The remaining participants had presented to A&E prior to being referred to the Frailty Hub. One of the participants commented that a 'lady came and spoke to me and they decided that I would be better' in the Hub and this was also reported by other respondents as being the way that they came to be in the Hub.

One participant did comment that they had been 'in A&E for a long time' which they 'found very distressing.' For this particular individual, their family had needed to 'insist' that they were referred to the Frailty Hub rather than being discharged.

## Experience of the Frailty Hub

The feedback on the Hub was largely positive from all participants.

It was commented that the Hub was ‘much better than sitting in A&E’ and that it provided a ‘quiet’ environment. It was also commented on that the Hub was ‘clean’ by a number of the participants.

The staff came in for particularly positive feedback with one participant commenting that they ‘went out of their way to make both me and my daughter feel comfortable and at ease.’ Another said that ‘the staff are very friendly and take very good care of you.’ One more said the Hub offered an ‘excellent service.’ A further participant said that the service was ‘brilliant’ and that the ‘staff are amazing.’

## Areas for improvement

There were limited suggestions for improvement from the participants.

The first was to widen the catering offer as the Hub ‘don’t cater for vegans’ but that was the ‘only negative.’

The second was that ‘it would be good to be brought directly’ to the Hub, removing the need to go through a GP referral or to present at A&E before being moved to the Frailty Hub.

A third commented that their discharge had been delayed because they had ‘been waiting for a long time for my medication.’ They suggested that it ‘may have been easier to get a prescription sent to my GP so that I could go and get it myself.’

One participant suggested that ‘every hospital’ should have a Frailty Hub because their experience of using the Hub had been so positive.

## Conclusions

As there were a small number of people who took part in the interviews their responses cannot be seen as representative of all those who have accessed the Frailty Hub. However, there were commonalities in the feedback from the participants.

Feedback was generally positive with the environment and staff coming in for particularly good feedback. The environment was seen as better than waiting in A&E and the staff were friendly and put patients at their ease.

Improvements suggested were relatively minor, with the lack of catering options for vegans being lacking, and delays to discharge relating to medication delays.

Being able to be taken directly to the Hub rather than going through A&E for those that were admitted as an emergency and not through a GP referral.

However, overall the feedback was positive and patients that provided feedback were happy with the service that they received.

## Recommendations

Snacks: It is recommended that the FAU has access to snacks that meet the dietary requirements of all patients.