

## **Paper 6: Combined response from local Healthwatch in the East Midlands Region to the EMAS Quality Account 2019-20**

### **Healthwatch Northamptonshire:**

Healthwatch Northamptonshire (HWN) is really pleased with the improvement of EMAS as outlined in the CQC inspection report that rates EMAS 'good' overall and 'outstanding' for caring. Most of the public feedback that HWN has received throughout the year supports this.

The development of a person-centered culture, new ambulances and more staff is also welcomed, along with the new dementia friendly ambulance initiative.

Our concerns remain about waiting times for ambulances in rural areas and handover delays at hospitals and the number of lost hours this incurs for both patients and EMAS.

### **Healthwatch Lincolnshire:**

The recent Healthwatch Lincolnshire stroke report highlighted excellent support people receive from ambulance staff and how quickly they responded to 999 calls. However, it was disappointing to read there wasn't the improvement they had hoped for despite the increase in staff, but it was positive step in recruitment.

Work still needs to be done in collaboration with hospitals trusts to decrease handover delays with a significant increase of nearly 30,00 lost hours in 2019/20 from the previous year, reporting a total of 92,088 lost hours.

In Lincolnshire we have been concerned for some time around response targets not being met. We recognise that geography and demographics across our region is very complex and, in some places, can be very challenging.

### **Healthwatch Rutland:**

We commend EMAS for making great efforts in improving services, staff wellbeing, innovation (dementia ambulance etc) and research including external academic research and internal data gathering.

We remain concerned about the below average category 1 and 2 response times to more rural areas, such as Rutland. Overall the Trust reports 92,088 hours lost due to delayed handovers at A&E and we believe tackling this risk to patient safety should be an area of significant focus in the coming year. We understand the complexity of achieving this and that strong partnership working across the systems is required to improve flow through emergency departments.

## **Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:**

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (HWNN) are pleased to receive the quality accounts for 2019/20 within which there is a demonstrable improvement in quality and improvement throughout. Within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we welcome the Trusts vision as represented by the Big Three- Respond Develop Collaborate.

We understand the complexity of services delivered by the Trust and the interconnected nature of many of the Trusts quality indicators. We remain concerned at the number of hours lost due to delays in pre-hospital handover delays and the increase in this area during the year. This represents a fundamental risk to patients in the community and we acknowledge the impact this has on staff.

We support the efforts of the Trust to work with partners to reduce such delays and encourage the Trust to work with patients and carers to understand further the impact these have and share with partners in order to facilitate a patient centred approach to improvement.

### **Quality priorities for 2020/21**

Priority 1: HWNN Feedback - We welcome the commitment made to listening to and acting on patient experience and the work undertaken to develop the patient ambassador roles. We are keen to learn more about how patients are recruited to these roles and how the Trust intends to ensure that there is diversity in the type of experiences and from within our regions' diverse populations. This extends to education and awareness raising of the service and the work done to achieve the level of reductions in direct conveyancing that the Trust is committed too.

Priority 2: HWNN Feedback: We understand the importance in collaboration with system partners who have a direct impact on some of the Trust's ability to meet standards and targets especially in regard to conveyancing. We appreciate the constraints within the system which are not always within the Trust's control. We welcome the commitment to identifying and expanding the awareness and availability of alternative pathways to ED and the importance of clinical advice and leadership. We would expect to see greater patient involvement in the development of these pathways and understanding of the shift in expectation and understanding of patients of the benefits of alternative routes to care.

Priority 4. HWNN Feedback We acknowledge the Trusts commitment to continuous learning and improvement and welcome the approach of learning from not just what went wrong to what went well. The recent Covid19 response has seen the trust operate within a system under enormous pressure. We therefore welcome the ambition within Priority 4 which aims to ensure lessons are learned and shape future practice.