



Enter & View: Visits to Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) & Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

April 2024

healthwatch
Lincolnshire

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About Healthwatch Lincolnshire

Healthwatch is an independent champion for people who use health and social care services. There is a local Healthwatch in every area of England. They speak to communities to discover what could be improved and provide information and advice about local services. Healthwatch England supports local Healthwatch to find out what people like about services and what could be improved and shares these views with those with the power to make change happen.

We are the independent consumer champion for health and social care in Lincolnshire:

- We listen to people, especially the most vulnerable, to understand their experiences and what matters most to them;
- We gather service users' experiences through surveys, focus groups and face-to-face discussions;
- We act by carrying out Enter and View visits to talk to patients, services users, carers and staff;
- We empower and inform people to get the most from their health and social care services and encourage other organisations to do the same;
- We influence those who have the power to change services so that they better meet people's needs, now and into the future.





Executive Summary

Healthwatch, empowered by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, conducts Enter and View visits to health and social care services to gather on-the-ground perspectives from service users. These visits are not inspections but aim to understand users' experiences and whether services effectively meet their needs. Authorised representatives, trained and vetted by Healthwatch, conduct these visits. For the specific study on diagnostic services in Lincolnshire, prearranged visits were made to Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) and Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC). The visits involved observations of facilities, cleanliness, and accessibility, along with interviews with patients to understand their experiences. The purpose of these visits was to inform Healthwatch's broader project on diagnostic services and provide insights for improving service delivery.

The findings from the visits to Skegness UTC and Grantham CDC highlighted several key points. At Skegness UTC, patients appreciated the convenience of its location and the professionalism of staff but raised concerns about waiting times and signage clarity. Recommendations include reducing wait times, improving signage, and enhancing patient comfort.

Similarly, at Grantham CDC, patients valued the accessibility and cleanliness of the facility but noted issues with signage and communication about appointments. Recommendations for Grantham CDC include enhancing signage, improving communication channels. These recommendations aim to address the identified issues and improve the overall quality of diagnostic services in Lincolnshire.

Recommendations

Grantham CDC

Based on the findings from the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre, here are recommendations for improvement.

Enhance Signage for Improved Accessibility:

- Install clearer road signage directing patients to the centre, particularly from main roads, to prevent confusion and facilitate easier navigation.
- Consider additional signage within the facility to guide patients to the reception area and diagnostic services. Signage outside the building needs to be put in place from the car park.

Optimise Waiting Area Experience:

- Consider playing soothing background music in the waiting area to create a more relaxing ambience for patients.

Continuously Seek Patient Feedback:

- Establish mechanisms for regularly collecting and analysing patient feedback to identify areas for improvement and address patient concerns promptly.
- Encourage patients to provide feedback on their experiences at the centre through surveys, suggestion boxes, or other feedback channels.

Maintain Comfort and Accessibility Standards:

- Ensure ongoing maintenance and upkeep of the facility to uphold comfort, cleanliness, and accessibility standards.
- Regularly review and update accessibility features to accommodate the diverse needs of patients, including those with mobility or sensory impairments.

By implementing these recommendations, the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre can further enhance its services, improve patient satisfaction, and continue to provide high-quality diagnostic care to the local community.

Recommendations

Skegness UTC

Reducing Waiting Times:

- Improve scheduling and resource allocation to reduce patient waiting times, which were noted to be around 3-4 hours on average.
- Consider additional medical staff to accommodate patient demand more efficiently.

Immediate Referrals to X-ray Services:

- Explore the possibility of speeding up the process to X-ray services to expedite the diagnostic process for patients requiring imaging tests.
- Improve communication and coordination between UTC and GP practices to ensure seamless referrals and access to timely care.

Improve Patient Comfort:

- Install a water machine in the reception area to provide refreshments for patients and improve their comfort during waiting periods.
- Address temperature control issues in the waiting area to enhance patient comfort, as overheating was noted as a concern.
- Evaluate seating arrangements in the waiting areas to ensure comfort, including providing more comfortable chairs or seating options.

Ensuring Adequate Staffing Levels:

- Ensure that the facility maintains adequate staffing levels to minimise delays and improve patient flow, especially during busy periods.

Recommendations

Skegness UTC

Increasing Staff Numbers:

- Consider increasing staff numbers to address perceived inadequacies in service provision and ensure that patient needs are met promptly.

Address Facility Maintenance:

- Allocate resources for necessary maintenance and repairs to ensure the facility remains safe, functional, and aesthetically pleasing.
- Consider investing in renovations or upgrades to improve the overall environment and ambience of the facility.

Accessibility Improvements:

- Install hearing loop signs to improve accessibility for patients with hearing impairments.
- Consider implementing electronic check-in screens to enhance efficiency and accessibility for all patients.
- Ensure that information on the complaints/compliments procedure is prominently displayed and available in different formats to facilitate accessibility for all patients.
- Provide clear signage and information on how to access additional support services, such as translation services and the Accessible Information Standard.

By implementing these recommendations, the Skegness UTC can enhance patient satisfaction, improve efficiency, and ensure that all patients receive high-quality care in a comfortable and accessible environment.



Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lincolnshire would like to thank the service provider, residents, and staff at both Skegness UTC and Grantham CDC for their contribution to these Enter and View visits.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visits to Skegness UTC and Grantham CDC. The report does not claim to represent the views of all service users, only those who contributed during the visit.

Introduction

Enter and View visits

Healthwatch has the legal power to visit health and social care services and see them in action. Enter and View is not an inspection; we do not look at care plans, medicines management, or clinical issues – this is the role of the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Our role is to offer a lay perspective. We speak to patients, families, and carers, to find out their views and experience of the service. Our focus is on whether a service works for the people using it.

Authorised Representatives

Our authorised representatives, responsible for carrying out these visits, are DBS checked and have received training on how to conduct an Enter and View visit. Those who took part on these visits:

- Oonagh Quinn Healthwatch Engagement Officer with Authorised Representatives:
 - Skegness UTC Ann Morgan, Steven Gardner and Maria Bright
 - Grantham CDC Julie Emmott and Maria Bright

Enter and the view is a statutory duty of Healthwatch, mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch England is undertaking a project about understanding people's experiences of diagnostic services. As part of this we wanted to hear people's on-the-ground experiences of Community Diagnostic Centres and acute diagnostic services in Lincolnshire. We will bring this all together into a final report, which we will use to advise important people in the health and care sector about how to make diagnostic services work best for everyone.

Method

- These visits were prearranged visits to Grantham CDC and Skegness UTC.
- Observations were carried out during the allotted period in terms of facilities, cleanliness and accessibility. Used a Healthwatch England approved format based on PLACE (Patient-Led Assessments of the Care Environment).
- Patients were asked about their experience and why they were using the UTC/CDC service.
- Throughout the visits, the teams observed the environment and interactions between staff and patients. The purpose of the visit was to find out about the care they provide.



Grantham, Community Diagnostic Centre

The Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre is a healthcare facility focused on providing diagnostic services to the local community. It offers a range of diagnostic tests and procedures, including imaging services such as walk in X-ray service, ultrasounds, MRI scans, Diabetic eye screening, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) screening and DEXA scanning as well as laboratory tests for blood work and other samples.

The centre aims to provide timely and accurate diagnostic assessments to support medical diagnosis and treatment planning for patients in Lincolnshire, enhancing access to essential healthcare services within the community.

- Opened Monday 25 April 2022. First in Lincolnshire - in Grantham.
- Run by United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT), in collaboration with the Integrated Care Board (ICB).
- The CDC is open 7-days a week with some services (i.e. echocardiography and CT/MRI available 7-days a week and others i.e. x-ray services available 5 days a week). For full details, patient information, the Trust's website offers full details of opening times/service provision throughout the week. This is available at [Community Diagnostic Centres - United Lincolnshire Hospitals \(ulh.nhs.uk\)](https://www.ulh.nhs.uk/Community-Diagnostic-Centres) And [Radiology - United Lincolnshire Hospitals \(ulh.nhs.uk\)](https://www.ulh.nhs.uk/Radiology).

Findings – Grantham CDC

Overall

The Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) is a recently established healthcare facility in Lincolnshire, primarily focused on providing diagnostic services to the local community. Since its opening on April 25, 2022, it has been the first of its kind in Lincolnshire, located conveniently in Grantham. Operated by the United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT), The CDC is open 7-days a week with some services (i.e. echocardiography and CT/MRI available 7-days a week and others i.e. x-ray services available 5 days a week). For full details, patient information, the Trust's website offers full details of opening times/service provision throughout the week. This is available at [Community Diagnostic Centres - United Lincolnshire Hospitals \(ulh.nhs.uk\)](https://www.ulh.nhs.uk/Community-Diagnostic-Centres). And [Radiology - United Lincolnshire Hospitals \(ulh.nhs.uk\)](https://www.ulh.nhs.uk/Radiology).

Feedback from patients indicates generally positive sentiments towards the CDC. Many patients found the journey to the centre to be easy, particularly for those residing in Grantham, with positive remarks on accessibility and friendly staff. However, some respondents noted challenges with signage on the main road, leading to confusion for first-time visitors.

Among the reasons for visiting the Grantham CDC, X-rays, ultrasounds, echocardiography, and Diabetic eye tests were among the most common. Patients appreciated the convenience of the location, with many expressing satisfaction with the referral process, whether it be from a specialist, general practitioner (GP), or through a national program.

Findings

Grantham CDC

The waiting area at the CDC received positive feedback for its comfort, spaciousness, cleanliness, and lack of clutter, although some respondents suggested improvements such as playing music instead of the radio for ambience.

An accessibility audit highlighted areas for improvement, particularly in signage clarity, accessibility features, and public transport options. Despite these areas for enhancement, the CDC overall offers accessible facilities, contributing to a positive patient experience.

Feedback and Observations

Reasons for visiting Grantham CDC	Number
X-Ray	2
Ultrasound	2
Aortic aneurysm screening	1
Echocardiography	3
Diabetic Eye Screening	7

The journey to the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre was described as generally easy by most respondents, with positive feedback on accessibility. For many, it was a short and convenient walk or drive, particularly for those residing in Grantham, saving them the trip to the hospital. They appreciated the friendly staff and the ease of navigation, especially for those familiar with the area.

However, one respondent, visiting for the first time, encountered some difficulty finding the centre due to inadequate signage on the main road, almost mistaking it for a nearby factory. Overall, despite this minor setback, the journey was considered straightforward and convenient, facilitating access to essential healthcare services for the local community.

How was your journey in today?

- *“Easy – a 10 minute walk”*
- *“Very easy, live in Grantham, saved me having to go to the hospital. Used to come here when they used the mobile unit. Staff friendly. Drove here with husband”*
- *“Very good – easy to find, live in the Grantham area”*
- *“It was my first visit – had a bit of trouble finding it as I almost went into the factory next door. Signage on main road not good. Getting across Grantham was okay”*

81% of those we spoke to travelled less than 30mins to get to the Grantham CDC.

Many did mention some confusion with finding the centre and a need for clearer road signage.

- *“They might want to get better signage on road network to direct people as I am sure that many will end up in the factory (Moy Park)”*
- *“Yes knew where to go but signage needs to be better from road as new people might not find it straightaway”*
- *“Wasn't very clear but managed to find it after a false turn”*
- *“Wasn't clear – but found it on second attempt”*
- *“Once on site was okay, though it was a bit confusing with car park as the front area is part of the factory. Someone told me to drive through to the side of the building where Reception is located. Parking is also free – a bonus”*

How convenient is this location for you to travel to? Why?

- *“This is so much easier than having to go to the hospital. Easy access, from arrival having my X ray and leaving less than 25 minutes. Great service”*
- *“It is within 20 minutes of my home, convenient and familiar. Staff are lovely. Consistency with communication and staff”*
- *“I live in Grantham so straight forward and didn't involve a journey to the hospital for the test.”*

Reasons for attending

Among the respondents, eight individuals were referred for their diagnostic tests or scans by a specialist, indicating that their healthcare needs were identified and directed by a specialised medical professional. Six respondents were referred by their General Practitioner (GP), suggesting that their primary care provider recognised the need for further investigation or evaluation. Additionally, one respondent mentioned being referred through a national program specifically aimed at men over 65 years old.

The feedback indicates a positive experience with the referral process, with one respondent expressing satisfaction with the swift appointment scheduling following their GP visit, highlighting the efficient service and minimal waiting time. Another respondent expressed a preference for returning to the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre for future tests or screenings, citing the convenience and time-saving benefits compared to other healthcare facilities.

- *“GP suggested that they would refer me from the surgery + I was given an appointment within the hour of leaving the surgery! Great service.”*
- *“My choice will be to come here when possible for tests and screenings in the future. A lot of time not wasted and stress free, I can get on with the rest of my day.”*

Did you feel well informed about what to expect from your appointment today before attending?

- *“Yes – it was an X ray. I have had them before so felt comfortable about attending.”*
- *“Yes, because this is not my first annual check up for my eyes so knew what to expect from that. The only difference was the location.”*

Staff

Patient feedback regarding staff treatment at the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre was overwhelmingly positive. Patients described the staff as very nice, professional, helpful, friendly, caring, and attentive. They appreciated staff members' ability to answer questions clearly and effectively, as well as their communication skills, including explaining things in layman's terms and listening to patients' concerns attentively.

Although no specific questions were asked about communication needs, all patients spoken to felt listened to by staff, highlighting the staff's responsiveness and engagement during interactions. Patients valued the staff's immediate responses to questions and their attentive body language, which included maintaining eye contact, smiling, and nodding, contributing to a positive and supportive experience during their visit.

Patient Feedback: How did the staff treat you today?

- *"Very nice"*
- *"Very good"*
- *"Very professional and helpful – answered my questions when asked"*
- *"Very well, friendly, caring and professional"*
- *"Very well. Asked about pain levels"*

100% said they were able to communicate effectively with staff. Feedback included:

- *"Staff Explained very clearly"*
- *"They listened to my concerns"*
- *"Able to explain"*
- *"Good communicator"*

However, no one was asked if they had any specific communication needs.

100% said they felt listened to by staff

- *"Explained in layman's terms"*
- *"They responded immediately when asked questions"*
- *"Listened and gave me time to answer the questions. Explained everything in a way that I understood"*
- *"Their body language, not distracted by doing something else, looking at me, smiling, nodding their head and asking me questions"*
- *"Answered questions asked straight away"*

Waiting Area – Environment

Overall, the waiting area at the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre received positive feedback from respondents, with many describing it as very comfortable. They appreciated its spaciousness, cleanliness, and lack of clutter, contributing to a pleasant environment for waiting. However, one respondent suggested playing music instead of the radio, expressing a preference for a different ambiance. Despite this minor suggestion, the waiting area was generally perceived as comfortable and well-maintained, with easy access to clinic rooms, ensuring a stress-free experience for patients.

How comfortable do you find the waiting area?

- *“Very comfortable – spacious, clean and clutter free.”*
- *“Very comfortable, very spacious. Though I wish that they would just play some nice music in background rather than the radio. Station chosen is not to my taste. Very clean and tidy, not any clutter lying around.”*
- *“Yes, spacious bright very clean and tidy, no clutter. Not to much 'stuff' on walls.”*
- *“It is very comfortable, spacious, clean, tidy, no clutter and not overcrowded. Clinic room is next to the waiting room so you can't get lost along a long corridor.”*

Accessibility Audit Summary – Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre

Public Transport Options: Accessible via train and bus routes from Boston, Lincoln, and Spalding, with hourly services.

Equitable Availability: Limited public transport in Lincolnshire, with some areas potentially having better access than others.

Patient Transport Services: Non-emergency transport is available for eligible patients, including community car schemes and Call Connect services.

Parking Facilities: Over 30 general parking spaces are available, but no marked Blue Badge spaces were observed. Parking is free, and there is a drop-off point near the entrance.

Signage and Accessibility: Signage to the CDC from Grantham is limited, and improvements are needed for clearer directions. On-site signage to the main reception area is pending but expected to be clear. Accessibility features such as ramps, assistance bells, and handrails are present.

Findings – Grantham CDC

Facility Environment: The facility is spacious, clean, and uncluttered, with minimal trip hazards and accessible pathways. However, improvements are needed for better visibility and access.

Additional Support: Quiet rooms are available for patients with autism, and staff interactions are described as positive and supportive.

Overall Assessment: Grantham CDC offers generally accessible facilities with some areas for improvement in signage clarity and accessibility features. The environment is clean and supportive, contributing to a positive patient experience.

Note: The accessibility audit findings highlight areas for improvement in signage, accessibility features, and public transport options, aiming to enhance the overall accessibility of the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre.

Provider Response – Grantham UTC

Group Response to Healthwatch Lincolnshire Enter & View Visits Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) & Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

Group response:

The group are grateful to Healthwatch Lincolnshire for their work and valuable insights provided in response to the Enter and View Visits to the Grantham Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC), operated by United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust and the Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC), operated by Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS).

From the 1 April 2024, United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust (ULHT) and Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS) began working together in a Group model. As such, recognising the visits during January 2024 where to ULHT and LCHS operated services respectively, this response is representative of both organisations as a Group response.

For ease and clarity of actions taken already and/or planned, the response is broken down into location specific sections, beginning with Grantham CDC.

Provider Response – Grantham UTC

Response to the Grantham CDC visit:

Recommendation 1: Enhance Signage for Improved Accessibility:

- Since the visit in January 2024, the signage has been improved on the main road to make the CDC location easier to find
- In addition signage within the car parking area and inside the CDC has been improved to better signpost the reception and patient waiting areas.
- Also, since the visit in January 2024, the car park area has been resurfaced, which improves accessibility of the CDC for all service users.
- Whilst improvements have been made already, further improvements are being considered as part of the CDC Programme Board, a collaborative alliance between United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust (ULHT) and the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

Recommendation 2: Optimise waiting area experience:

- Since the visit in January, and in response to other forms of feedback to the service, using ‘experience based design’ principles, the following improvements to the CDC are being progressed to enhance the waiting area experience:
 - Drinking water fountain in the waiting area
 - Magazine subscriptions
 - Vending machine
 - Televisions for the waiting area
 - Brighter decoration for the waiting area (i.e. wall art)
 - Improved orthopaedic seating for patients waiting
- These improvements have been approved and are in the process of being purchased. Future service users to the CDC will benefit from these improvements.
- The Trust noted the feedback from 1 of the 15 people spoken to during the Healthwatch visit about the radio playing in the background. This feedback will be considered alongside other feedback from service users as part of the oversight via the CDC Programme Board.

Provider Response – Grantham UTC

Recommendation 3: Continuously Seek Patient Feedback:

- Regular patient feedback audits are undertaken to support the CDC Programme Board obtain feedback and ensure this feeds into the CDC project (for Grantham, but also the wider CDC development work underway in other locations). The most recent feedback audit undertaken covered October – December 2023 and obtained feedback from 127 patients.
- In addition to the current schedule of patient feedback audits, the CDC are also in the process of installing posters within patient waiting areas with QR code reference to enable feedback to be provided via 'Care Opinion'. Options around ability to obtain feedback via other non-technological routes is also being scoped with the Trust's Patient Experience Team.

Additional Comments related to Streamline Referral Process:

- Appointments are already available to access electronically by referrers wishing to refer patients to the service, therefore streamlining the referrals process significantly compared to previously employed paper based referrals processes.
- The Trust and ICB are aware that at the time of the Healthwatch visit not all GP's were using the Electronic System to refer to the CDC (or other Hospital based diagnostic services). Work continues with the ICB to raise awareness for all community based referrers on the processes available to ensure streamlined referrals. This is overseen via the ICB/ULHT CDC Programme Board structure.

Additional Comments relation to Communication Regarding Appointments:

- Patients referred for diagnostics within the CDC will in the majority of cases receive a letter from the Trust detailing location of the CDC along with, when indicated, specific guidance on actions/steps needed prior to attendance (i.e. more complicated procedures where fasting is required prior to undertaking the diagnostic examination).
- The only exception is in the case of patients with cancer related diagnostics, where urgency may result in no time for a letter to be issued. In such cases, the Trust ensures communication takes other formats so patients know the location and any preparation needed.
- The Trust and ICB are working collaboratively to improve communications with referrers throughout Lincolnshire, to ensure that the referrer is able to explain the ability for some investigations to be accessed by direct attendance/walk-in. The Trust and the ICB will continue to monitor this via the CDC Programme Boards.



Skegness - Urgent Treatment Centre

The Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre provides medical care for urgent but non-life-threatening conditions. It offers services such as treatment for minor injuries, illnesses, and infections, as well as urgent medical assessments and diagnostics. The centre typically operates outside of regular primary care hours, providing accessible and timely care for individuals who require immediate attention but do not need to visit Accident and Emergency (A&E) .

Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre is:

- Open 24 hrs a day / 7 days a week.
- Managed by Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS).
- It has two Inpatient wards (39 beds, 3 in palliative care). 24 hr walk in UTC. CQC Rating: Outstanding (2018).

Findings – Skegness UTC

Urgent Treatment Centre, Skegness
Date of Visit: Monday 29 January 2024
Time: 10 am to 2 pm

Overall

The Skegness Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) is a vital healthcare facility providing prompt medical care for urgent but non-life-threatening conditions. Operated by the Lincolnshire Community Health Services MHS Trust (LCHS), the UTC operates 24/7, offering services such as treatment for minor injuries, illnesses, and urgent medical assessments. Patient feedback indicates overall satisfaction with the facility's convenience, accessibility, and staff professionalism. However, there are areas identified for improvement, particularly in reducing waiting times and enhancing amenities for patient comfort.

Patient feedback highlighted the relief of having a local service, sparing patients from travelling long distances to larger hospitals. However, frustrations were expressed regarding long waiting times, with some patients waiting up to 3-4 hours for consultations. Suggestions for improvement included reducing waiting times through better scheduling and increasing staff numbers.

Regarding the environment, the Skegness Community and District Hospital, where the UTC is located, is over a century old and in need of maintenance. While the facility is functional and kept clean, patients noted limited amenities such as a lack of refreshments and a need for temperature control improvements.

In terms of staff interaction, patients overwhelmingly praised the professionalism, friendliness, and attentiveness of the staff. However, some patients suggested increasing staff numbers to address perceived inadequacies in service provision. An accessibility audit revealed that the site is well-maintained with measures in place to ensure safety and accessibility for patients with various needs, including those with dementia and autism. Clear signage and privacy measures are in place, and staff interactions are described as supportive.

Overall, while the Skegness UTC effectively meets the urgent healthcare needs of the community, there are opportunities for improvement to enhance patient satisfaction and optimise service delivery. Addressing concerns related to waiting times, amenities, and staffing levels can contribute to a more positive patient experience at the facility.

Findings

Feedback and Observations

All patients expressed that they were glad and appreciative that there was a local service in Skegness and that they did not have to travel 23 miles to Boston Accident and Emergency to sit and wait much longer.

Many patients expressed frustration that they came to the UTC because they had been trying to get an appointment with their GP Practices but were told that there were none available. They therefore came to UTC so that they could be seen by someone and reassured or get treatment if required.

Day of Visit: All our ID badges were checked by staff on our arrival. All patients were made aware of who and why we were there and that taking part was voluntary. The patients were informed that there was only one Doctor available on the day and many patients were waiting around 3- 4 hours on average to be seen once triaged. We were able to interview 10 individuals.

Environment: Skegness Community and District Hospital is over 100 years old and needs a lot of TLC. It is functional and is kept in reasonably good repair and clean and tidy with no additional clutter in corridors allowing free passage for patients to move through the hospital with relative ease.

Noticeboards are tidy with posters laminated and in English only. There was no indication of how to get any additional support such as Hearing Loop, Translation etc. Patients would have to ask at the reception area and staff do their best to support patients as they come in. Patients have a walk in experience so the staff have to deal with the situation as it arises.

Parking and Access to Site: Skegness UTC has limited car parking at this entrance for the UTC. There is off street parking on roads in and around the hospital with a short walk and additional parking at the opposite side of the hospital with a slightly longer walk. Public Transport is within easy walk from bus stop / train station for able bodied people (approximately 15 minute walk and crossing a busy main road).

Reception Area: is found at the entrance to the UTC with a small waiting room.

Signposted internally. There is a second waiting area called the Oakes which is signed once inside the building and Reception staff give oral instructions to patients to locate the second waiting area or will escort patients if they need extra support.

Face masks: On the day, face masks / coverings had to be worn. Patients were given one at the reception desk on arrival, though many did not wear them in the waiting areas. However, all staff wore them and patients were asked to wear them when they went into the clinical areas. Although the Enter and View representatives were not going into the clinical areas we were asked to wear them in the area where interviews took place.

Patient Feedback: How comfortable do you find the waiting area?

- *"Not very comfortable"*
- *"OK adequate"*
- *"No water fountain, drinks machine not working"*
- *"As a waiting room okay but it sitting for any length of time chairs aren't comfortable enough"*
- *"Its a bit cramped"*
- *"OK, basic but suitable"*
- *"Adequate although no drinks machine available"*
- *"Not very good. Too crowded - too many people waiting"*
- *"OK - Not working drinks machine"*

Patient Feedback: Do you feel the site provides adequate privacy and dignity?

- *"Yes not required"*
- *"Not really in the waiting area"*
- *"Yes"*
- *"No privacy available - questions at reception open room"*
- *"No issues"*
- *"Just waiting, don't need privacy. When seeing doctor/nurse do need privacy"*
- *"N/A But not in waiting area"*
- *"OK - with area in waiting area"*

Refreshments: In the second waiting room the refreshments were not available to patients. Snack machines did not belong to the LCHS Trust but to an outside agency. It had been reported and the Trust was waiting for them to come and check the vending machines out. No water fountain was available during the visit so patients had to ask at the reception desk for water which was brought out to the patient. No signs were up to indicate this to patients. One of our Volunteers asked on behalf of a patient and was able to inform them of the process.

Patient Feedback: What works well

- *"Friendly staff"*
- *"All information about treatment, future treatment, given. Addressed the problem Didn't take a huge amount of time"*
- *Good to have the walk in facility here especially when you can't get into the GPs*
- *Being seen by a doctor/nurse. Being reassured"*
- *"Sent a prescription for pain relief"*
- *"Medication and follow up if necessary"*
- *"Friendly"*

Patient Feedback: What could be improved

- *"Time waiting could be reduced"*
- *"Possibly being referred to X ray immediately"*
- *"Definitely need a water machine in reception. Had to go to reception to ask for a drink"*
- *"More doctors on so that the wait would be shorter"*
- *"Less waiting time - but I did get seen (3 hours wait in total)"*
- *"Waiting time. Heat - too hot"*
- *"Need more staff. Waiting time too long"*
- *"Waiting was long"*

Patients provided positive feedback regarding several aspects of their experience at the facility. They praised the friendly demeanour of the staff and appreciated receiving comprehensive information about their treatment and future plans, which was conveyed efficiently without causing lengthy delays. The convenience of the walk-in facility was particularly valued, offering an accessible alternative when GP appointments were unavailable. Patients expressed satisfaction with prompt consultations with healthcare professionals, reassurance during their visit, and receiving prescriptions for pain relief as needed. Additionally, the provision of medication and follow-up instructions was noted positively.

There were suggestions for improvement, including:

- Reducing waiting times through better scheduling and resource allocation.
- Considering immediate referrals to X-ray services to expedite diagnostic processes.
- Installing a water machine in the reception area for patient comfort and convenience.
- Ensuring adequate staffing levels to minimise delays and improve patient flow.
- Addressing temperature control issues in the waiting area to enhance patient comfort.
- Increasing staff numbers to address perceived inadequacies in service provision.
- Implementing these recommendations can enhance patient satisfaction and optimize the overall efficiency of the facility.

Accessibility Audit Summary – Skegness

Safety and Accessibility: The site is well-maintained, with measures in place to ensure safety, such as nonslip mats, hazard tape, and clear corridors. For people with dementia, the facility provides contrasting floor patterns and colours, as well as clear signage. Patients with autism can utilise quieter areas if needed, and staff accommodate preferences for waiting outside. Signage, including toilet symbols and appointment information, is clear and easy to understand. However, there is no hearing loop sign, and electronic check-in screens are not available.

Appointment Process: Patients are called in person by clinicians, with wheelchair assistance offered when necessary. There are no electronic information or check-in screens, but hand sanitiser is available in the main reception area. There's no specific poster for the Accessible Information Standard.

Complaints/Compliments Procedure: Information on the complaints/compliments procedure is available in different formats, including leaflets at the main reception. Easy Read format is accessible upon request. Translator access is assessed at reception.

Noticeboard and Privacy Measures: Noticeboards are neatly organised, and measures are in place to ensure patient privacy and dignity, including designated waiting areas and clear signage.

Staff Interaction: Staff interactions with patients are described as friendly, professional, and supportive, enhancing the overall experience for visitors to the facility.

Provider Response – Skegness UTC

Response to the Skegness UTC visit:

Recommendation 1: Reducing Waiting Times:

- Since the visit in January a national waiting time reduction initiative has been launched by NHS England as part of the Integrated Urgent and Emergency Care (IUEC) recovery plan, known as the 76% project. We are working on this as part of the group model with United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT) and have daily meetings to manage and validate any breaches of the national 4- hour target. 76% is the target aim for all patients presenting to IUEC that need to be treated/discharged/referred within the first 4 hours. Since the launch Skegness UTC has operated on: February 91.25% – March 93.96% and April 95.69% which shows significant improvement month on month and is considerably above the 76% target. This is overseen by the Trust on a daily basis and will continue to be an important indicator of quality performance.
- We are also currently in the recruitment process for GPs for the Skegness site and recently have employed temporary GP staff to cover any shortfalls that arise.

Recommendation 2: Immediate Referrals to X-ray Services:

- A key performance indicator for all providers of urgent and emergency care is that patients have an initial clinical assessment within 15 minutes. This initial triage is designed to rapidly, following presentation, ensure safety of the patient waiting to be seen by categorising them, based on clinical presentation and acuity, and seeing patients in order of priority to prevent deterioration. Performance against the 15-minute standards at Skegness UTC is above the national average.
- Those requiring X-ray diagnostics may not be the highest acuity of patient in the department following assessment of their clinical presentation and will therefore be seen in priority order. Diagnostics will be decided by practitioners who will see and treat the patient, supporting them to be discharged.
- We appreciate that it can be frustrating to wait for imaging within the department, but as described above all patients must have a thorough clinical assessment prior to X-ray being requested by appropriately qualified staff who will validate the indication for exposure to radiation. Referring someone prior to this clinical assessment could lead to unnecessary exposure to radiation and result in a breach of the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations (IR(ME)R) that are designed to ensure the safety of patients from the risk of harm when being exposed to ionising radiation which includes x-ray.

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- The patients spoken to by Healthwatch during their visit were quoted as expressing frustration at their inability to obtain a GP appointment, resulting in their presentation to UTC. The Trust remain committed to collaborative working with our local Integrated Care Board (ICB) regarding improving communications and joint working with partners in the community.

Recommendation 3: Improve Patient Comfort:

- We apologise that on the day of your visit the vending machines in the waiting area were out of order, we can confirm these are now working and available again. In addition to this and to support patients remaining hydrated, signs have been placed within the department that should someone want a drink of water, that this can be requested and obtained by speaking to staff at Reception. We have also put in place drinking water jugs into The Oakes waiting room. The Trust will also investigate quotations for more comfortable seating arrangements in the waiting area.
- During the summer months in Skegness, air conditioning units are used within the department and waiting areas to ensure patient comfort. The Trust will discuss further with partners at NHS Property Services (NHSPS) how a more comfortable room temperature for all can be achieved. It should be noted that individual personal preference will make this difficult to achieve in all cases. We gain regular feedback from staff and patients and have had no reported incidents or themes in relation to the temperature of the waiting area.

Recommendation 4 & 5: Ensure that the facility maintains adequate staffing levels to minimise delays and improve patient flow, especially during busy periods and; increasing staff numbers:

- Adequate staffing is the number one priority with staff and patients' wellbeing at the heart of this. This is monitored and overseen by daily meetings, with experienced temporary staff utilised occasionally when last minute shortfalls occur. Skegness, given its geographical location and proximity to tourist areas, faces both winter and summer pressures. In response, staffing is increased during these times of pressure to meet the increased demands on the service. The Trust have been successful in the recruitment of Senior Urgent Care Practitioners and have further interviews organised to recruit additional Urgent Care Practitioners. This is to support backfill arrangements following successful development of existing staff to Senior Urgent Care Practitioners and Trainee Advance Clinical Practitioner (TACPs).

Provider Response – Skegness UTC

Recommendation 6: Address Facility Maintenance:

- The Trust works with partners routinely within NHS Property Services (NHSPS) who operate the facility at Skegness. This ongoing collaboration aims to ensure facilities are adequate. However, as identified in the report, the building in which the UTC is housed, is over 100 years old so this comes with its own unique challenges. The Trust and NHSPS are currently in the process of relocating the UTC elsewhere within the hospital, alongside other internal and external stakeholders. This planned move will improve the space, facilities and overall comfort for patients when attending the UTC. This planned move in the future would improve the patient environment including the points noted about patient comfort.

Recommendation 7: Accessibility Improvements:

- The Trust have shared the findings of the Healthwatch visit report with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team who will arrange for Access Able to attend Skegness UTC and review accessibility of the site and advise on further recommendations to be taken in relation to accessibility (including use of hearing loops). Signage has already been reviewed and more adequate signage in relation to complaints/compliments, interpretation services and additional support services will be placed within the UTC environment.

Appendices: Accessibility Audit Table - Grantham CDC

<p>1. What public transport options can people use to travel to the site?</p>	<p>Train Station at Grantham Bus routes</p>
<p>2. What is the frequency of public transport to and from the service, and the operational hours of the available public transport?</p>	<p>Trains come into Grantham from Boston/Lincoln/Spalding Average journey time is 50 minutes with an hourly service.</p>
<p>3. Do you feel there is equitable availability of public transport to the site for all residents?</p>	<p>Public transport in Lincolnshire is limited. Coach travel Boston/Grantham - Hourly bus from Boston and Lincoln Call Connect Taxi cost Approx £45 each way Trains Lincoln to Grantham 5 x direct - 50 mins, Spalding to Grantham 50 mins, Boston to Grantham 51 mins.</p>
<p>4. Is accessible patient transport, including non-emergency patient transport services, available to and from the service for those who require it?</p>	<p>Patients who are eligible can get non emergency transport. Community car scheme (voluntary) Call Connect Service</p>
<p>5. Are there Blue Badge parking spaces available close to the site entrance?</p>	<p>No marked blue badge spaces. 30+ spaces outside clinic area. Front entrance within 50 yards of most parked cars.</p>
<p>6. Is there sufficient general parking available close to the site entrance?</p>	<p>30+ spaces outside entrance. No marked spaces outside</p>
<p>7. Is the parking adequately signposted?</p>	<p>Yes once on site by main reception area through Moy Park gates.</p>
<p>8. How much does parking cost per hour?</p>	<p>Free parking on site.</p>

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<p>9. Is there a drop-off point directly outside the entrance?</p>	<p>Yes, if required</p>
<p>10. Is there sufficient and clear signage to help people travelling to and from the site? If so, is the signage clear, unobstructed, and easily readable?</p>	<p>Signage to CDC from Grantham limited and difficult to find. Located next to Moy Park factory (using sat nav) postcode takes you into their site but is located to the side of the factory with Community Health Clinic.</p> <p>Located next to Moy Park factory Grantham and part of Health Clinic complex.</p>
<p>11. On the site, is there clear and sufficient signage directing people to the main reception area of the diagnostics centre? If so, is the signage clear, unobstructed, and easily readable?</p>	<p>Waiting for new signage on the site only been opened since May 2022. New spacious centre. Yes only on reception area - Blue background and white lettering, large sign on front. Reception immediate entry to CDC.</p>
<p>12. Is there a lift, ramp, or working assistance bell for people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters?</p>	<p>CDC is on a level ground floor. Sliding large door. Button entry at wheelchair level. Slight ramp incline at entrance.</p>
<p>13. Are there steps to the site?</p>	<p>No - level ground floor. Handrail on entrance (yellow).</p>
<p>14. Are there any trip hazards, sharp edges, or furniture in the main pathway?</p>	<p>Car Park - Tarmac/stones</p> <p>At front entrance when entering through the Moy Park currently scaffolding up and on first visit is a bit confusing for patients..</p>
<p>15. Is the site accessible for people with dementia?</p>	<p>Radio on in background. Large black mat in entrance between sliding doors and reception desk. Plain flooring / pale grey doors / cream walls / door frame white Radio (free standing) in AAA screening waiting room</p>
<p>16. Is the site accessible for people with Autism?</p>	<p>Main / first waiting area large clutter free</p> <p>Quiet room available if required.</p>

Appendices: Accessibility Audit Table - Grantham CDC

<p>17. 1. Are signs easy to understand?</p>	<p>Yes - very minimal Diabetic eye screening / AAA signage - black on white / blue edge. A5 zero tolerance signs. Your rights / your date A4, NHS fraud A4, No smoking, Toilet word / symbol.</p>
<p>18. Is there a hearing loop sign? If so, is the hearing loop working?</p>	<p>No - was removed when new screens put in and waiting to be replaced. There is a hearing loop in place.</p>
<p>19. If there is an electronic information or appointment check-in screen, is it accessible? (e.g., is it audio as well as visual?)</p>	<p>No By entrance opposite reception area.</p>
<p>20. How are people called to their appointments?</p>	<p>Clinician comes into waiting room and calls person in. Greeting patient and offering assistance if required. Friendly and professional.</p>
<p>21. Is there a poster informing people about the Accessible Information Standard?</p>	<p>Not seen.</p>
<p>22. Are fire exits clearly signed in different formats?</p>	<p>Standardised Fire Exit signs. Person walking green / white background. White area above the Emergency Exit.</p>
<p>23. Do fire alarms have lights as well as sound?</p>	<p>Lights go on / sound alarm to alert people. Tested Thursday morning</p>
<p>24. Is information about the complaints/compliments procedure available in different formats?</p>	<p>PALS Leaflets Printed off as required.</p>

Appendices: Accessibility Audit Table - Grantham CDC

<p>25. Is information available in Easy Read format?</p>	<p>Yes - master copies available from behind reception area. If a person has a booked appointment then the info can be sent out in the post.</p>
<p>26. Is there information on how to access a translator if required?</p>	<p>Yes - if booked appointment in advance this can be arranged. Reasonable adjustment can be made if it is a walk in patient e.g. X ray. (CT Scan / MRI Scans from February/March 2024)</p>
<p>27. Are the notices on the noticeboard easy to read?</p>	<p>No noticeboards - Posters. There are large posters depicting scenes from Lincolnshire (2 in front waiting area).</p>
<p>28. Are there measures in place to help ensure that patients' privacy and dignity are respected?</p>	<p>Large waiting areas (1 for AAA screen/Diabetic eye) at back. Chairs are placed around the outside of the room.</p>
<p>29. Do you have any comments or observations about how staff interact with patients or carers?</p>	<p>Very positive, confident, professional, friendly, supportive, reassuring and smiling.</p>
<p>30. Please record any additional observations about the space, building and internal environment.</p>	<p>Very clean, uncluttered space, bright and airy, spacious. Patients not waiting long to be called in to be seen.</p>
<p>31. Do you have any other comments or observations about the accessibility of the site?</p>	<p>Difficult to find the location from roadside if you do not know Grantham.</p>

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<p>1. Are there any trip hazards, sharp edges, or furniture in the main pathway?</p>	<p>Black nonslip mats between outside and inside sliding doors. Black & yellow hazard tape between floors All corridors free of clutter, generally very clean Corridors grey stone flooring edged with black border.</p>
<p>2. Is the site accessible for people with dementia?</p>	<p>Contrast in floor (pink 'marble effect' in main reception area, marble effect in corridors, doors are blue (with glass inframes), Automatic fire doors. UTC has orange strip on lower wall between floor and wall (contrast in colours) 2 x black mats (in entrance) would these been seen as 'holes' & cause distress. Chairs are in blue (wipe clean surface with black legs) can be clearly seen against the flooring.</p>
<p>3. Is the site accessible for people with Autism?</p> <p>(e.g., is there a quiet space available? Are there sources of sensory discomfort?)</p>	<p>When UTC not busy, patients can be placed in a suitable quieter area (e.g. Plaster Room) in not being used by patients. Many patients would prefer to wait outside and staff will go into car park to call them in the UTC to be seen by a clinician.</p>
<p>4. Are signs easy to understand?</p> <p>(e.g. pictures on toilet doors, contrasting colours, large print?)</p>	<p>Toilets have a symbol, yellow sign/picture of toilet in black lines within a red circle. Image of male / female /nappy changing on female toilet. X ray black font / white background, blue edge. Opening times on door - Monday to Friday 9 - 5pm Lunch 1 - 2pm.</p>
<p>5. Is there a hearing loop sign?</p> <p>If so, is the hearing loop working?</p>	<p>No. Connected via main reception area.</p> <p>Yes - patients need to let reception staff know.</p>
<p>6. If there is an electronic information or appointment check-in screen, is it accessible? (e.g., is it audio as well as visual?)</p>	<p>No electronic information check in screen. Hand sanitiser inside main reception area on wall on entry to area.</p>

<p>7. How are people called to their appointments?</p>	<p>Patients are called in person by the clinician who then guides them to the clinic area. Patients (where possible) follow the person to the correct area. Wheelchairs offered where required. No screens</p>
<p>8. Is there a poster informing people about the Accessible Information Standard?</p>	<p>No (not in main reception area)</p>
<p>9. Is information about the complaints/compliments procedure available in different formats?</p>	<p>PALS / posters displayed (leaflets available at main reception) This can be requested through staff. Information may be sent through via referral person / organisation</p>
<p>10. Is information available in Easy Read format?</p>	<p>Yes this can be obtained for people where appropriate. Needs to be requested / check notifications from the referral.</p>
<p>11. Is there information on how to access a translator if required?</p>	<p>Patients when checking in at Reception can be assessed where possible.</p>
<p>12. 1. Are the notices on the noticeboard easy to read? Is the noticeboard cluttered?</p>	<p>Yes - all laminated and A4 size in main reception area, ordered neatly in 2 x rows (12 x A4) 1 x A3, 1 x A5. 7 x A4 on wall under board. TV screen - 1 x A3, 2 x A4, 1 x A3 under TV attached directly to wall</p>
<p>13. Are there measures in place to help ensure that patients' privacy and dignity are respected?</p>	<p>Please wait here on floor. 2 x waiting areas for UTC 1 x X ray area (booked appointments only) Signage for nearest 24 hr X ray Pilgrim Hospital 23 miles away.</p>
<p>14. 1. Do you have any comments or observations about how staff interact with patients or carers?</p>	<p>All staff interact with patients very friendly and professional and supportive.</p>

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