



Enter & View

Probus Surgical Centre

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1 Introduction

1.1 Details of visit

Service provider: Probus Surgical Centre

Service Address: Tregony Road, Probus TR2 4JZ

Date: 8th June 2026

Authorised representative: Nigel Oakes

1.2 Purpose of visit

The purpose of this Enter and View visit was to observe the environment and care processes within the home/practice/ward, hear directly from patients/residents, relatives and staff about their experiences on the day, and identify opportunities to improve patient wellbeing and quality of life.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cornwall would like to thank patients and staff who took the time to share their experiences during this visit.

1.4 Disclaimer

This report relates to findings observed on the specific date above and is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all residents and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time of the visit. Findings should be interpreted as a snapshot of observations on the day of the visit and not a judgement of clinical effectiveness.

1.5 About Healthwatch Cornwall

Healthwatch Cornwall is an independent organisation committed to amplifying the voices of Cornwall's residents in the planning and delivery of health and social care services. Through public engagement, we gather their views and experiences with these services. We ensure these perspectives are represented in decision-making processes both locally and nationally, driven by the belief that community feedback is vital to improving standards of care.

1.6 What is Enter and View?

As a local Healthwatch we are authorised to "Enter and View" health and social care services through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Local Authorities Regulations 2013 (part 4). These services can include hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies.

Enter and View visits are an opportunity to see services in action, listen to and understand the experiences of individuals who use them, and make recommendations where there are areas

for improvement. The visits are organised based on feedback received about individual services or in response to themes identified in our research.

2 Visit Summary

Conversations with staff

Healthwatch Cornwall spoke with a senior manager, two members of the nursing team and a member of the administrative support team

Conversations with residents

Twelve patients and carers were asked about their experience of the service.

Observation of facilities

Observations were made throughout the visit, focussing on the condition of the facilities, administrative procedures and patient experience.

Observations and feedback indicated a generally positive experience of care, alongside areas where improvements could enhance patient experience and service delivery

3 Service overview

Probus surgical centre provides NHS specialist day case surgery in a primary healthcare setting. The centre carries out approximately 6000 NHS procedures each year in two operating theatres. The centre has two single occupancy recovery rooms and a shared post-operative rest and recovery room. The service had a CQC rating of 'Overall Good' when last inspected in 2017. The centre has published results of their latest family and friends test on their public website, where 100% of respondents have rated the service as 'Very good' or 'Good'.

4 Observations

On arrival we were met at reception, our credentials were checked and we were asked to sign the visitors book. We were also asked to read and sign a patient confidentiality document prior to entering the unit.

We met with patients and carers in the post-operative recovery room. This room had a several chairs situated around the perimeter. These were raised to a height suitable for patients with reduced mobility. There were a few adjustable tables adjacent to the chairs and patients were observed using these to store personal items and refreshments. This room was free from obstructions and had a large window looking out onto a garden area. A radio was playing a local radio station at a moderate volume.

There was a nurses station in this room, with computer display equipment angled away from the patient area. There was a self-service hot beverage machine and a selection of snacks

available. There was a large, prominently displayed sign advising patients not to eat or drink anything prior to surgery.

A refrigerated medication storage unit was observed in the recovery area. Whilst the unit itself was locked, the key was left in the lock. The area was unattended for short periods during the visit. This observation was raised immediately with senior management, who provided assurance that remedial action would be taken.

There were hand sanitiser and personal protective equipment stations at several locations throughout the centre, and all appeared to be in operation. Patient toilets were available and clearly signposted; they appeared clean and well stocked with sanitary items.

Notices throughout the centre were neatly displayed and contained information on a number of healthcare related topics such as safeguarding, service availability and self-care.

Staff interactions observed during the visit appeared respectful and patient centred. Patients were supported at a pace appropriate to their mobility needs, with staff providing assistance where required. Staff were observed administering eye drops to patients, explaining procedures and providing post operative care advice.

5 Patient feedback

Staff attitude

All twelve of the patients and carers we spoke with described the staff as kind or caring. One said, 'I couldn't have been better looked after, the staff were all so lovely and very professional'. Another told us, 'I feel properly looked after, from the receptionist, the surgeon and through to the nurses here, everyone is so kind and helpful'. A carer collecting a relative said, 'I was really impressed that one of the team walked my wife out to the car when she was finished, that really sums up the great care she's received today'.

Waiting times

Five patients commented on the time they had waited for their surgical procedure. Four said that they were happy with the time that had waited, one told us, 'I was pleasantly surprised at how quickly my appointment came through, you always hear about long waiting times in the NHS but that's not my experience with this service'.

One patient commented that the process had been too quick in their opinion, they told us, 'I didn't really get the chance to speak to anyone about what to expect, I was referred by my optician and next thing I know, I've been called in today'. They added, 'I would have preferred an interim appointment so I could discuss any concerns I had about the procedure'.

Service location

Four patients and two carers commented positively on the location of the service. One said, 'I'm so grateful to have had my procedure here, it's so convenient, you can always find a parking space and it's free'. A carer who was picking up a relative told us, 'I have to bring Mum to all her medical appointments, and I much prefer coming here than anywhere else, the parking is a huge bonus, and you don't seem to have to fight through the traffic like you do at Treリスケ'.

6 Staff feedback

Management team

A senior manager in the centre met with us and described the current service. They told us that staffing was one of the challenges faced by the centre, as they were competing with other healthcare providers in the County for staff. They told us they believed their workforce was generally stable but were currently recruiting for nursing posts to provide maternity cover. We were told that they had a pool of regular bank staff to call on and that they did not use agency staff.

We were told that the surgical centre aimed to maintain and protect the services they provide, to help patients throughout the county. We were also told that the centre actively welcomed opportunities to work with other local healthcare providers in providing services to assist with waiting list reduction initiatives.

Healthcare team

Staff described a supportive team culture and spoke positively about training opportunities. A member of the nursing team said, 'It's a great place to work and I would definitely recommend it to anyone, the team work well together, and management are approachable and responsive'.

Another member of the administrative support team told us that recruitment was a challenge, they said, 'We sometimes struggle to get staff and have had to readvertise posts on occasion'.

7 Recommendations

Healthwatch Cornwall have offered some recommendations based on observations and feedback from both patients and staff to improve experiences in the surgical centre.

- 1) The centre should continue to monitor workforce recruitment and retention to ensure it remains able to meet future service demand and maintain service resilience.
- 2) Healthwatch Cornwall observed a refrigerated medication storage unit with the key remaining in the lock whilst the area was unattended for short periods. The centre should review current medication security arrangements and ensure storage practices remain aligned with local policies and safe medicines management procedures.
- 3) A patient reported they would have liked the opportunity to discuss their procedure before the day of admission. The centre may wish to consider how patients can access information ahead of their procedure. This may help reduce patient anxiety and address any concerns they may have.
- 4) The centre should continue to explore opportunities for collaborative working with local healthcare providers to support patient access and waiting list reduction initiatives

8 Provider feedback

Probus Surgical Centre Response to Healthwatch Enter and View Findings: Probus Surgical Centre

Probus Surgical Centre welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Enter and View report and thanks Healthwatch Cornwall for their feedback to improve experiences in the Surgical Centre.

We are encouraged by the positive findings, particularly regarding patient experience and staff feedback.

We fully support ongoing collaborative working with Healthwatch to strengthen patient experience.

KEY ACTIONS TO RECOMMENDATIONS

1.

Workforce recruitment and retention

We acknowledge the ongoing need to maintain, strengthen, and continuously monitor our workforce recruitment and retention. This commitment ensures that we can attract talented individuals, support the growth and development of our existing staff, and foster a workplace

where experience and dedication are valued. Our hardworking and highly skilled team members are central to the quality of care we provide, and we remain steadfast in our efforts to uphold service resilience. By doing so, we safeguard the wellbeing of our colleagues and ensure that our patients continue to receive the highest standard of service, even in the face of evolving challenges.

2.

Refrigerated Medication Storage Unit

We acknowledge the need to strengthen and further develop our current medication security arrangements to ensure that all storage practices remain fully compliant with our local policy and the principles of safe medicines management. In response, we have taken steps to reinforce awareness among our team by revisiting and re-communicating our medicines management policy and associated procedures in detail. To support this, we have implemented a programme of regular spot checks designed to verify adherence to our Standard Operating Procedure and to identify any areas requiring improvement. These checks will be documented, and any findings will be addressed promptly. Progress and compliance will be monitored and reviewed through our established governance processes, ensuring that any necessary corrective actions are implemented in a timely and effective manner.

3.

Patient request to access information ahead of procedure

We acknowledge and value the feedback we receive regarding patient access to information ahead of their procedure. It is important to us that every patient feels fully informed and supported before attending their appointment. To ensure this, we provide all patients with a formal appointment letter, accompanied by comprehensive written information about what to expect before, during their procedure, post-procedure and risks and complications in advance. This allows patients the opportunity to review the details at their own pace and prepare any questions they may wish to discuss.

In addition to the printed materials, the same information is readily available on our website for easy access at any time. Our dedicated nursing team is also available to take phone calls from patients who may have specific questions or individual medical needs, offering reassurance and guidance tailored to each person's circumstances.

The feedback we receive consistently confirms that the majority of our patients appreciate the convenience of the one-stop service we offer for certain procedures, as well as the short waiting times we maintain across all our services. We understand that flexibility is important, and we are always happy to receive advance notice from patients who wish to rearrange their appointment to a date that is more suitable for them. Our aim is to make the process as smooth, efficient, and patient-centred as possible, ensuring that every individual feels confident and well-prepared for their care.

4.

Collaborative working with local healthcare providers

We continue to welcome and actively encourage collaborative working with our valued health partners across Cornwall, recognising the significant benefits this brings to patient care and service delivery. It is our hope that such collaborative arrangements will be fully reintroduced in due course, enabling us to work together more effectively to address and reduce RTT waiting times within the region. Both our Senior Partner and I remain committed to this approach, regularly attending and contributing to collaborative meetings at Elective, PCN, INT, and ICA levels. Through these forums, we engage in shared planning, exchange best practice, and support the development and implementation of joint initiatives designed to reduce waiting lists and improve patient access to timely care.

Conclusion

The report provides valuable insight into patient experience at Probus Surgical Centre. The positive findings regarding clinical care, staff professionalism and patient confidence in the service are reassuring.

The actions outlined above are focused on strengthening operational consistency, improving clarity for patients, and addressing identified. Progress will be monitored through governance processes and patient experience.

Probus Surgical Centre remains committed to maintaining an open relationship with Healthwatch, including sharing progress updates and seeking continued feedback to support sustained improvement and enhance both the quality and experience of care delivered at Probus Surgical Centre.

Kim Prowse

Senior Manager, Probus Surgical Centre

Contact us:

Healthwatch Cornwall, Suite 1, Calenick House, Heron Way, Newham, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 2XN

 0800 038 1281

 enquires@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

 healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

 @HWCornwall

 @healthwatchcornwall