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**MACMILLAN**  
CANCER SUPPORT

WHEN TRUST MATTERS

# Macmillan Quality Environment Mark<sup>®</sup> (MQEM)

Assessment Report

Bolton Hospice

22 March 2021



# The Macmillan Quality Environment Mark (MQEM)

Working with the Department of Health in England and health and estates executives in the three Celtic nations Macmillan developed and launched the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark in January 2010, as the first national standard for cancer facilities in the UK. MQEM sets a benchmark for the patient experience in the built environment of cancer care, based not only on the published evidence base for healthcare environments but also the personal contributions of over 400 people affected by cancer.

The focus of the quality mark is on the design and use of built environments. However, it does not just consider the physical environment, but also considers how far the physical environment is designed, used and managed in a way that supports high quality care, and in turn, contributes to the enhanced wellbeing of people affected by cancer.

## The Macmillan Quality Environment Mark expects a place that:

- is welcoming and accessible to all;
- respects the privacy and dignity of all users;
- supports the comfort and well-being of all users;
- gives users choice and control; and
- listens to the users' voice.

**2010**

Year started

**650 +**

Assessments  
Completed

**240**

Award Holders

**94%**

Pass Rate

**69%**

of Award Holders  
are NHS

**37%**

of Award Holders  
are Information &  
Support Services

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# 1. Introduction to the facility (environment)

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 the MQEM assessment team undertook an assessment of:

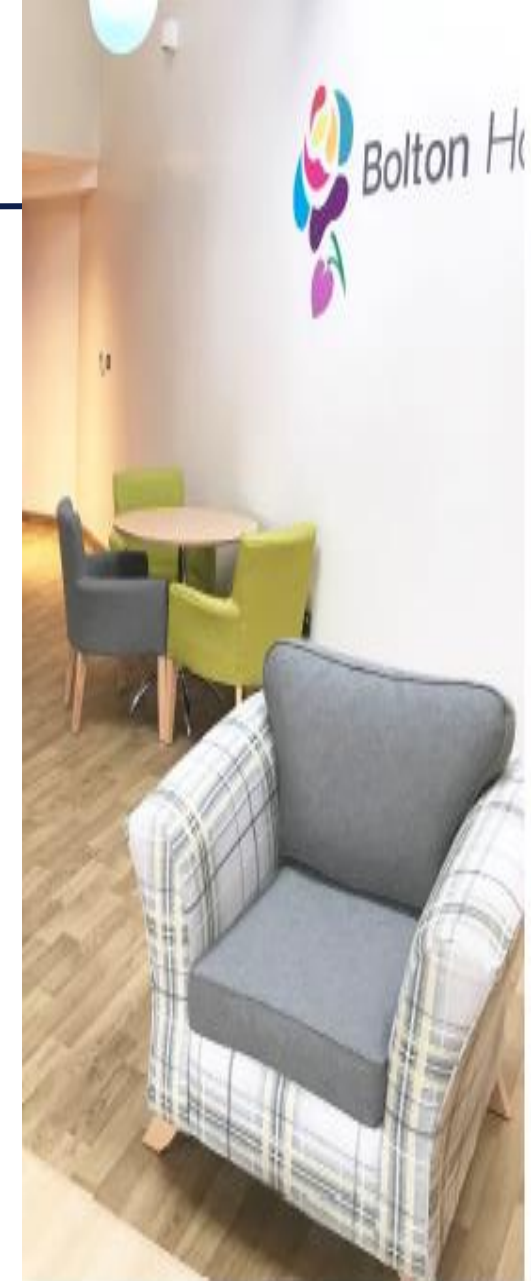
Bolton Hospice  
Queens Park Street  
Off Chorley New Rd  
Bolton  
BL1 4QT

The hospice already held the MQEM award having been last assessed in January 2018.

Bolton Hospice first opened in March 1992 and offers specialist palliative care services to people living with a life limiting or terminal illness. It provides both inpatient and outpatient facilities to people within the borough of Bolton. The hospice building is located about a mile from the centre of Bolton and is well known and supported by the local community.

The physical environment comprises of:

- The inpatient unit includes a nurses station, conservatory, family overnight accommodation and 18 private en-suite bedrooms, all with direct access to the Garden of Tranquillity.
- Outpatient facilities are located in the new Wellbeing Hub. This includes:
  - a reception;
  - a day therapy lounge;
  - dedicated areas for clinic appointments;
  - treatment rooms;
  - complementary therapy rooms;
  - a hairdressing salon;
  - a creative therapy area;
  - patio garden;
  - family space and quiet area.
- A multi-faith centre including ablution rooms and a prayer and reflection room which can be used by patients, visitors and staff.
- A kitchen.
- The top floor of the hospice building is a dedicated staff area and includes offices, break facilities and an education and training suite.
- A café and gift shop are planned to open later in 2021.



# Introduction to the facility (services)

A consultant-led team of doctors, nurses and other professional staff provide expert care within the hospice itself. There is planned day therapy for patients on four days a week, from Tuesday to Friday and consultant-led outpatient clinics are held at the hospice every week. Day therapy offers a range of services to patients including:

- A period of assessment and therapy provided by the hospice team, which includes giving carers at home some time to themselves.
- The opportunity to meet other people, get to know the hospice team and ask advice.
- Fresh approaches to care and support, for example through complementary therapies.
- An opportunity for patients to talk about their illness and how it is affecting them and their families.
- Weekly nursing review and monitoring of ongoing symptoms.

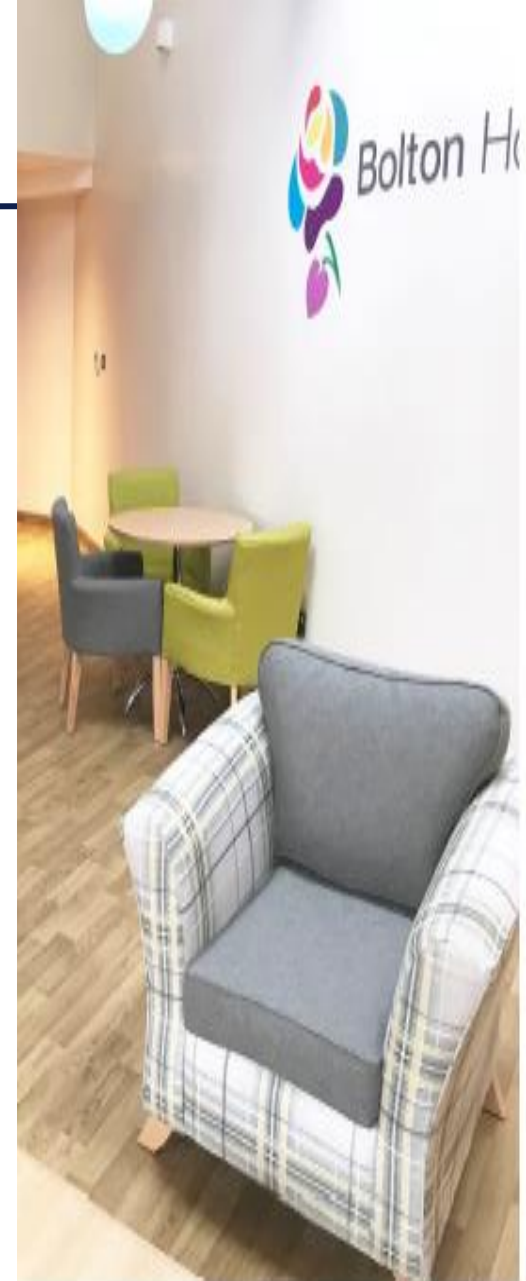
In addition, patients are able to access occupational therapy and physiotherapy services, social services, creative and complementary therapies.

Working with district nurses, GPs and Macmillan nurses the hospice also provides a care at home service to help those with specialist palliative and end of life care.

Families and carers are well provided for with the hospice offering 24-hour advice for patients, carers and healthcare professionals on palliative and end of life care issues. Bereavement support is also offered.

In total the hospice employs 132 staff and they are supported by a team of over 700 volunteers providing a range of invaluable services such as help with meals and refreshments, meet and greet, driving, gardening and flower arranging to working in the hospice's network of shops.

Adjacent to the hospice building is Giles House which is the main administrative hub of the hospice. Also, included within Giles House is a Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre which holds the MQEM award. Staff from the Macmillan centre provide information and support for patients, carers and families.



# 2. Summary Assessment Findings

## Overall Outcome

The hospice exceeded the level required to **retain** the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark ® and is to be congratulated on this achievement

Staff and volunteers are **proud** of the MQEM award and value the **recognition** that it provides.

As with previous years staff had, in advance of the assessment, completed an **accurate self-assessment** demonstrating continuing **good insight** into the requirements of MQEM. This was supplemented by an **evidence portfolio** which was one of the **best** seen by the assessment team.

Staff had additionally carried out a review of recommendations made in the 2018 assessment and were able to evidence that many of these had been addressed.

It was clear from discussions with staff that the facility is committed to providing the highest quality care for its patients within a **welcoming and safe environment**. This care extends to families and carers and it was clear from the assessment visit that the hospice is providing **family centred care** in an **environment that facilitates this**.

## Improvements since the last assessment

Improvements since the 2018 assessment include:

A new wellbeing hub has been developed within the hospice. This includes:

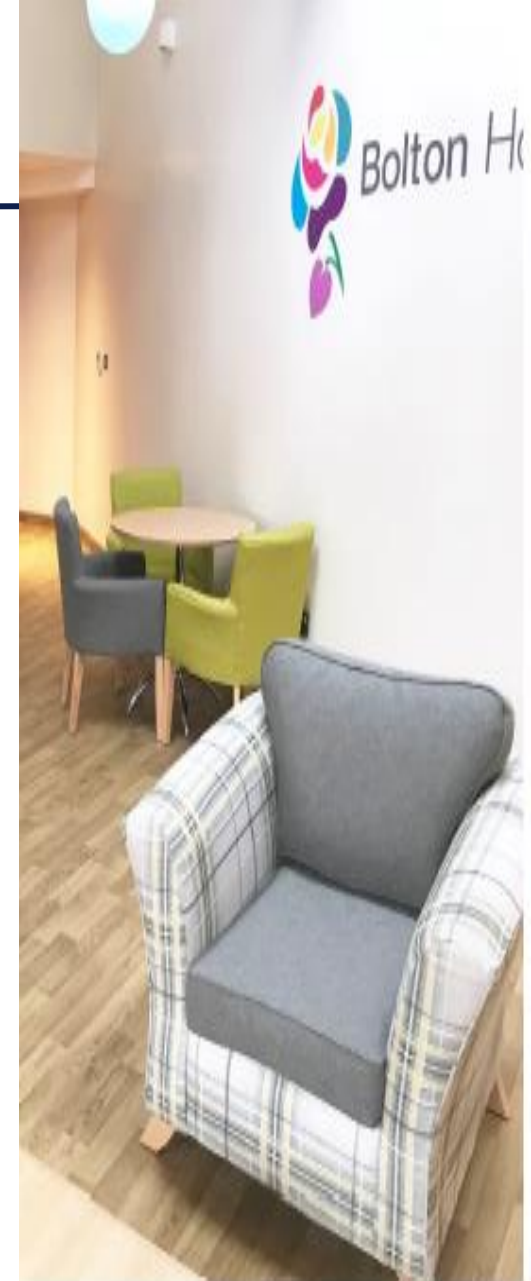
- A dedicated reception and waiting area
- A café and gift shop
- Hair salon
- Lounge
- Dining room
- Diversional therapy room
- Conservatory
- Consulting rooms
- Toilets
- Patio garden

Within the inpatient unit more dedicated space has been developed for families

There is improved WiFi throughout the hospice

The car park has been resurfaced

Services have expanded with partnership working allowing more satellite services to be held on site including phlebotomy and heart failure clinics.



# 3. MQEM Assessment History

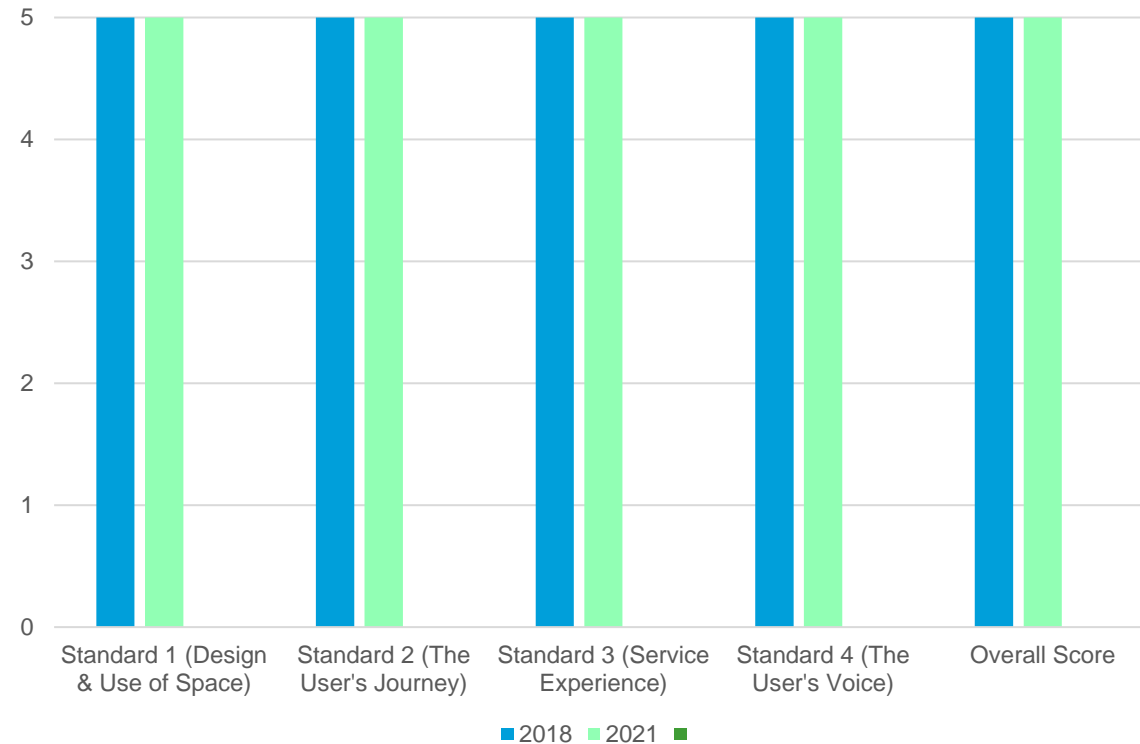
18<sup>th</sup> January 2018

- First assessment
- Pass

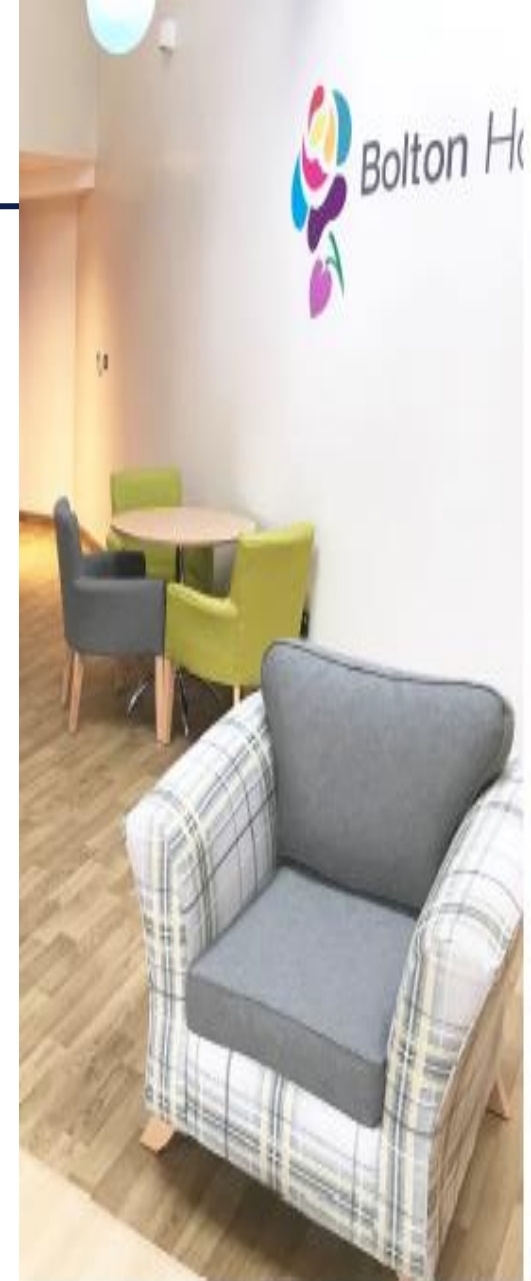
22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021

- Three year reassessment
- Pass

MQEM Assessment Scores by Year



**Scoring Explanation:** Within the MQEM there are five core principles of quality which are applied to four different standards. Contained within these are a number of indicators which facilities are assessed against. Assessment levels are: 5 is Excellent, 4 is Very good, 3 is Reasonable or Average, 2 is Poor, and 1 is Very poor. Level 4 is the average level that facilities need to achieve across all four Standards to attain/retain the MQEM award.



# 4. Detailed assessment findings and recommendations



## Standard 1: Design & Use of Space

This Standard relates to the design and use of space in the facility, and considers how far it underpins the principles outlined in the Quality Environment Mark.

### Key strengths

Bolton Hospice is located close to Bolton town centre and has good access to roads and public transport networks. The hospice site is easy to find thanks to good signposting within the local area and clear wayfinding guidance on the hospice's dedicated website.

Accessibility to both the inpatient unit and Wellbeing Hub is excellent with automatic doors providing easy access for all.

Receptions offer a welcoming environment. They are bright and airy with the use of colour and artwork providing a warm, homely ambience.

Within the inpatient area staff have gone to great lengths to provide a "home from home" environment and patients are encouraged to bring photographs, etc. from home to personalise their space. The inpatient rooms provide a calming environment and patients have full control over their lighting and temperature. All rooms have large patio doors which allow patients to enjoy the views over the lovely gardens. The doors enable patients to access the gardens directly from their rooms and are large enough to allow a bed or chair to be wheeled out.

En-suite bathrooms provide patients with privacy and there is ample space to store personal belongings.

Patients' relatives have access to overnight facilities and a comfortable lounge. Every need seems to have been considered in designing a space that allows patients and their families to be together during palliative and end of life care.

Furniture throughout the inpatient unit is comfortable and is adjustable by patients. The inpatient environment looked clean, fresh and well maintained throughout.



# Findings & Recommendations – Design & Use of Space

## Key strengths continued

Patients and visitors also have access to a well thought out multi-faith suite which includes facilities for ablutions. It has a calm and peaceful ambiance and is well used by those visiting and using the hospice.

Privacy and dignity are assured throughout the hospice. There are well develop training programmes for staff and volunteers which cover privacy and the environment has been designed to enhance privacy. Engaged signs are situated where required with curtains providing additional privacy in clinic rooms. Sound attenuation measures are good which helps to ensure aural privacy.

The new Wellbeing Hub has been extremely well designed and it was evident that staff and service users were involved in the design process. Attention to detail is evident throughout; from the blue sky ceiling insert in reception through to the co-ordinating colours it is clear that the patient has been considered at every step.

Artwork is displayed throughout the hospice and much of this was created by patients. The approach to artwork within the facility is impressive and sessions led by a Creative Therapist are regularly held for patients, families and carers, allowing them to create their own pieces. Participants have responded positively to these sessions with family members in particular appreciating the lasting memories that are created.

Storage facilities are good throughout the hospice ensuring that it is kept tidy and clutter free.

Space for staff and volunteers has been well considered with ample administrative space as well as dedicated toilets, storage and changing facilities and break areas.

# Findings & Recommendations – Design & Use of Space

Ref	Requirement	Score	Finding & Recommendations	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1.2.9	Toilets are easily accessible.	5	Most toilets are accessible within the hospice and have grab rails and appropriately positioned sink and toilet for wheelchair users. There are also raised toilet seats and shower chairs available as required.			
			<p><b>Photographic evidence and discussions identified that the bins within the toilets are foot operated. These may be difficult to use for those with limited mobility or for wheelchair users.</b></p> <p><b>Consideration should therefore be given to installing an alternative bin that will provide ease of use for those with limited mobility.</b></p>			
1.3.7	Artwork is used in the facility, including treatment areas.	4	Artwork is displayed throughout the inpatient unit. This includes artwork created by patients as well as photos of the hospice garden. Artwork for the new Wellbeing Hub still needs to be purchased/produced. Staff advised that they planned to consult with patients to ensure that the artwork meets their needs.			
			<p><b>Staff should continue with their plans to place new artwork in the Wellbeing Hub.</b></p>			

# Findings & Recommendations – Design & Use of Space

Ref	Requirement	Score	Finding & Recommendations	Proposed Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1.4.7	Inpatients have some control of the noise levels, light, temperature and climate in their immediate space.	5	<p>Inpatients have a high degree of control over the noise levels, light, temperature and climate within their bedrooms. During discussions patients commented on how comfortable the environment was. Patients and relatives did comment that at night it was possible to hear the noise of doors shutting. Staff were unaware of any concerns being raised regarding noise.</p> <p><b>Staff would be advised to consult with a wider selection of patients on whether noise, particularly at night, is a disturbance. If so it may be necessary to identify in any noise reduction measures could be implemented.</b></p>			

# Detailed assessment findings and recommendations



## Standard 2: The User's Journey

This Standard relates to how far the design and management of a facility contributes to positive experiences of people as they arrive and move through the facility.

### Key strengths

The hospice is well served by public transport. Bus services stop near the entrance and the hospice is located close to major transport hubs. The hospice benefits from having its own minibuses and both it and volunteer drivers transport day patients to and from the hospice.

Visitors and patients arriving by car have access to a large car park which is located close to the building entrance and drop off zones provides immediate access to the facility's entrances. Car parking is free of charge and there are always enough spaces as patients/families are always given priority. Staff use the parking on rotation to ensure availability for priority groups.

On arrival in the hospice, patients and visitors are normally met by a friendly team of staff and volunteers who will offer refreshments whilst they wait for their appointment.

Signposting throughout the hospice is good and does not rely solely on the written word meaning that it is easy for all visitors to find their way around. All members of staff and volunteers working in the hospice do however take responsibility for helping people to find their way around the facility and helping them understand how it works. Excellent patient handbooks have been produced and these are available on the website.

Day patients have good control and choice over any appointment times managed by the hospice. Should there be any delays there are well established systems in place to notify patients.

# Detailed assessment findings and recommendations



## Standard 3: Service Experience

This Standard relates to how far the services delivered in the facility reflect the key principles which underpin the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark

### Key strengths

Patients have access to a 24 hour help line and they indicated that they were highly appreciative of this.

Information packs have been developed for both inpatient and day patient services. These are available on the website and are provided to all new patients.

The hospice offers patients a wide variety of information from Macmillan, other charities and local support groups. Patients and visitors can also access the adjacent Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre. Staff from the Macmillan centre provide information and support for patients, carers and families. Information is well considered and an effective information management system ensures that information on display is relevant to users and is easy to locate. Information is made available in hard copy format as well as electronic versions and is easily accessible for those whose first language is not English.

The hospice has excellent systems in place to support patients with additional needs. There is ready access to interpreters and the hospice environment includes hearing loops to support those who are hard of hearing.

Staff have received training in organisational policies and procedures and all are familiar with local support services which allows for easy signposting of patients and visitors.

Inpatients have a wide range of meal choices and are able to access food and refreshments at any time of the day or night. Day patients are also offered a meal.

# Detailed assessment findings and recommendations



## Standard 4: The User's Voice

This Standard considers how far the facility in question has sound processes in place for listening to user voices, and uses these to inform the design and management of their facility as part of a process of continuing improvement.

### Key strengths

Staff have an excellent understanding of the individual needs of patients with information on needs gathered throughout the patient journey. Throughout the assessment it was evident that staff clearly place patients at the centre of the service.

The hospice has done and continues to carry out a huge amount of awareness raising in the local community with a view to increasing people's understanding of the hospice and services provided. This includes an impressive amount of work to reach out to communities not accessing the service and working closely with Bolton PRIDE, the Bolton Council of Mosques and the Bolton Hindu Forum. The annual business plan describes the demographics and political context of the area and this helps to inform service provision.

Staff are constantly looking at ways in which they can improve and enhance the services on offer. It is clear that they take a patient centred approach with a focus on making the patient journey easier for patients and relatives alike. This was supported by discussions with patients all of whom commented on the comfortable environment that has been created and the willingness of staff and volunteers to support not only the patient but also their families. The user voice is clearly of huge importance to the hospice and there was significant user involvement in the development of the new Wellbeing Hub.

The hospice carries out an annual PLACE assessment 'Patient Led Assessment of the Care Environment' which looks at all areas of the services facilities provide. Scores are always very favourable and results are published on the website.

Well designed process are in place to capture feedback and the hospice was able to evidence change as a result.

When asked, patients were hugely appreciative of the environment that has been created.

# Detailed assessment findings and recommendations

## User Consultation

As part of the assessment process the assessment team spoke with a number of users to ask about their experiences of using the facility.

The assessment team would like to extend their thanks to those patients that participated in the assessment and for their open and considered feedback.

*Enjoyable, responsive, pleasant, caring, dependable, professional, happy, relaxing, comfortable, contented and amazing.*

Words used by users to describe the environment

## Improvements suggested by users

Users were asked for their thoughts on how the hospice might be enhanced further.

Could the noise made by doors closing in the inpatient unit be reduced?

## Quotes from service users

The hospice has given me a sense of life again. I didn't think it was me but they treat everyone as an individual and make you feel safe.

They really have thought of everything. The environment is so relaxing with a beautiful outlook from the bedrooms.

The food is lovely. There is such a good choice and if you don't fancy what is on the menu they go above and beyond to find you something you will eat.

I was really apprehensive about coming to the hospice but the staff, volunteers and environment just draw you in. I feel so safe and relaxed when I am there.

The environment is spotless.

# 5. Next steps

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It is suggested that an action plan is developed to prioritise the recommendations made within this report. This will then help drive improvement and provide a focus for this work.

The action plan should be available for the next reassessment.

It is recommended that an annual self-assessment against the MQEM standard is undertaken. This will help to ensure that the environment remains a focus for the organisation. It would be advisable to have user representation in the self-assessment to ensure that the user's voice is heard.

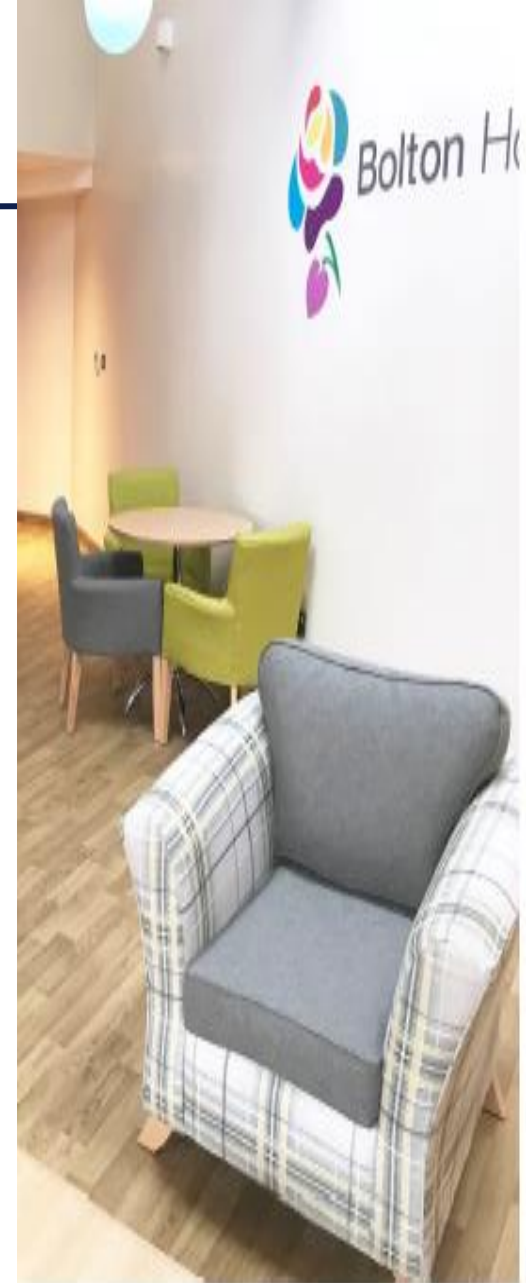
Should the organisation make any changes to the environment it will be important for future assessments to evidence that users were consulted and that they had an opportunity to influence plans.

On-going user feedback should remain a priority for the organisation as it will be important to demonstrate at future assessments that the current cohort of users remains satisfied with the environment.

The facility will need to be reassessed in March 2024. The assessment team will contact the facility in late 2023 to agree upon a date.

## Publicity

The organisation is encouraged to publicise the successful outcome from this assessment on its website and on social media. Highlighting strengths identified during the assessment will help to raise awareness of the excellent work that the organisation is doing to improve the experience of those affected by cancer. Please use #MQEM and #CancerEnvironments in any publicity.





# 6. Background information on MQEM



**Background** - Launched in January 2010, MQEM was the first ever standard for assessing whether cancer facilities meet the holistic needs of people living with cancer. MQEM aims to set the highest possible standards for cancer care environments, driving forward the design and use of these facilities, based on a robust understanding of the needs of people affected by cancer.



**Methodology** – The assessment process has two key parts:

1. local self-assessment followed by;
2. external review.

First, each organisation assesses its own performance against the Macmillan Quality Environment Mark ® (MQEM). An external review team then further assesses performance, both by considering the self-assessment findings and visiting the organisation to validate this information and discuss related issues.



**External assessment** – The assessments are carried out by a DNV healthcare assessor and a Macmillan appointed volunteer assessor (a person affected by cancer). DNV manages the assessment process from booking through to reporting and trains the volunteers. Each assessment consists of a document review and observational study of the environment. User feedback is hugely important and at every assessment patients, families and carers are interviewed. Assessments cover a range of environments including treatment (chemotherapy, radiotherapy, inpatient, palliative) and supportive (information, complementary therapies, hospice).



*The MQEM identifies five core principles of quality in cancer care environments:*

- ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Privacy and dignity
- ✓ Comfort and well-being
- ✓ Choice and control
- ✓ Support.

## Disclaimer

The comments and findings of the assessment recorded in this report reflect the opinions of the assessor(s) based on the evidence provided by the organisation in relation to the requirements contained in the relevant Macmillan Quality Environment Mark ® (MQEM) standards.

The comments should therefore not be read as approval or comment in any other context. This report presents findings and recommendations pertaining to the physical environment in which people with cancer access information, support and treatment, and does not comment on the quality of service provided, clinical practice or the behaviour of any service provider.

The contents of this report are confidential between DNV, Macmillan Cancer Support and the organisation assessed, and must not be disclosed, copied, or elements reproduced in an amended format to any third party.

All queries regarding the report or assessment process should be sent to [mqem@dnv.com](mailto:mqem@dnv.com).