

Brighton Station Health Centre

Service address:	Aspect House, 84-87 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XE
Service Provider:	Contracted to Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group
Date and Time:	Monday 20 th July, 09:00 - 12:00
Authorised Representatives:	Paul Wilson and Sue Seymour
Healthwatch Address:	Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Community Base, 113 Queens Road, 3XG

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove would like to thank the service provider, patients, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

Who are Healthwatch?

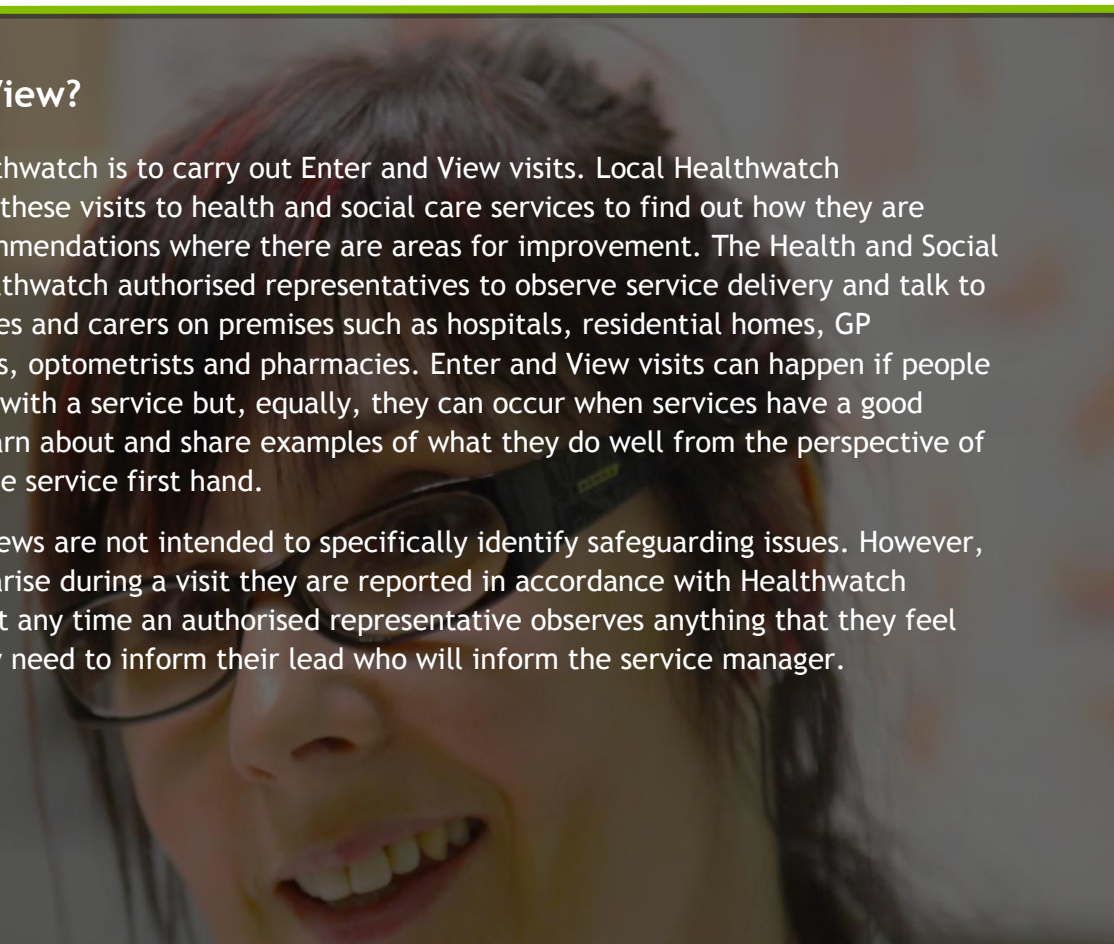
Healthwatch Brighton and Hove supports local children, young people, adults and their communities to influence the design, delivery and improvement of their local health and social care services, now and for the future. We enable people to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing by assisting them when they have concerns or complaints about these services.

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is a part of the Healthwatch national network, established by the Government under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to ensure local patients and users have a greater input to shaping and designing local services. There are 148 local Healthwatch organisations across England.

What is Enter and View?

A part of the role of Healthwatch is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager.





Why is Healthwatch Visiting GP Practices?

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove (HWB&H) is undertaking a programme of visits to GP Practices across the city during 2015. In total we will visit 15 GP practices, including 3 pilot visits in March 2015. As part of this, HWB&H is undertaking an online survey asking the same questions to ensure that as many people as possible are able to give feedback on their local practice.

During our time in each service, volunteer authorised representatives will be talking to patients about their experiences of care and accessing services, and recording what they see in the waiting rooms. At a time when GP practices are going through significant change both locally and nationally¹, Healthwatch wants to understand how patients feel services in Brighton and Hove are performing, and make recommendations to ensure high quality health and wellbeing services.

We want to understand what a good practice looks like from a patient perspective, and to examine how patients can be empowered to have more of a say in how they are run. The Clinical Commissioning Group² and Brighton and Hove City Council are currently working with GPs in the city to transform primary care and there are many new initiatives in place. These include 'EPIC³', which is run by BICS⁴ and aims to bring multi-disciplinary teams into surgeries, together with extra services such as 'Community Navigators⁵'. It should be noted however that Healthwatch does not act as an inspectorate or regulator for Health and Social Care; that is the job of the Care Quality Commission.

Healthwatch chose the visits based on a range of criteria:

- Those practices about which we had received calls via our helpline.
- Those not recently visited by the Care Quality Commission.
- A cross city representation of the 6 GP clusters⁶ in the city.
- Feedback from NHS choices.
- Patient populations.
- Soft intelligence from partners and community engagement.

¹ [Important Changes to Healthcare in the Community](#), Department of Health

² [Clinical Commissioning Group](#) NHS organisations set up by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to organise the delivery of NHS services in England.

³ [EPIC](#) Stands for Extended Primary Integrated Care

⁴ [BICS](#) stands for Brighton Integrated Care Service

⁵ [Community Navigators](#) provide community service signposting to individuals

⁶ [Developing Enhanced Health and Wellbeing Activities](#), Health and Wellbeing Board, March 2015



Methodology

Two Authorised Volunteer Representatives for Healthwatch Brighton and Hove visited Brighton Station Health Centre on Monday 20th July. It was one of a programme of 15 visits to GP Practices which Healthwatch Brighton and Hove chose to undertake in 2015-2016. Both representatives were fully trained and supported by the Healthwatch office. They have also both completed a full Disclosure and Barring Service check prior to the visit.

The visit focused on the part of the practice which takes on registered patients, and not the walk-in element of the service. We received 16 completed questionnaires in total, 10 through the visit itself and 6 through an online version of the survey. The details of the visit were shared with the practice manager in advance of the session, however staff were not informed about what time or day the representatives would arrive; only the week of the visit was disclosed. Healthwatch B&H stresses that the E&V method is intended to be a snapshot of patient opinion, and therefore may not capture the wider concerns of the patient population.

Patients completed a set of questions with the representatives (see appendix 1), who were located in the waiting room of the practice. If any surveys were not completed at the end of the session, they were left on reception with freepost envelopes for patients to complete and return separately. Alongside talking to patients, the volunteers also conducted an observation (see appendix 2) in the waiting room. The representatives had a checklist to encourage them to note down observations for a variety of key information. Equalities information was also collected for those who took part, to help us to understand the issues that might face particular groups in the community.

About the Centre

Brighton Station Health Centre currently has around 6100 registered patients, and also operates the city's walk in centre and a sexual health clinic. They have just set up an online patient participation group and are a part of the EPIC project.

What does n= mean?

In the results section of this report, you may notice that we use the term 'n='. This is a



way to show how many patients responded to each individual question in a particular way. It is a way for us to be more honest and transparent about our findings. If we say that 100% of patients agree with a statement, but next to this is an (n=2), you will know that whilst 100% sounds impressive, only two people agreed with the statement.

Results of Visit

Appointments & Referrals

As with the majority of GP practices, at Brighton Station Health Centre it is possible to book appointments with nurses and doctors over the phone, in person and via the internet. Of these options, patients found it easiest to book an appointment via telephone and in person, although some patients did report having issues accessing these services too. Very few patients used online booking at this particular centre.

How has it been for you to	Very easy to do	Easy to do	Difficult	Very difficult to do	I have not used this service
Book an appointment in person	4	4	0	4	3
Book an appointment by telephone	4	5	1	4	0
Book an appointment online	2	0	1	0	10
Order repeat prescriptions online	0	1	0	0	12
Get your test results back via telephone	2	2	2	4	3

The one person who told us they had requested repeat prescriptions online felt the process was easy. However, a majority of patients who had phoned the centre to receive test results found the process difficult or very difficult.

74% (n=11) of patients we spoke to said they were able to get a non-emergency appointment within 3 days. 13% (n=2) said they have had to wait longer than a week. A patient commented that they had always got emergency appointments on the same day, and another commented that they had experienced the centre not calling back when a call back had been requested.



Telephone consultations are good in some situations, but in other situations I'd really prefer face to face.

- A patient at Brighton Station Health Centre

Sometimes if face-to-face appointments are not available, GP practices will offer telephone appointments with doctors as an alternative. 69% (n=9) of those asked thought that a telephone appointment was not as good as attending a face-to-face appointment. Of the patients we have spoken to, 77% (n=10) said they had received this service.

Of those patients who had experienced referrals to hospital care, 46% (n=6) felt that the process went smoothly. Of those who experienced delays, 31% (n=4) felt that they were not kept up to date with their referral. A patient told us about delays and difficulties in getting the results for a smear test, and another patient told us that they have had a range of experiences from quick easy referrals, to longer delays.

Quality of service

Of the patients we asked, most said that reception staff (85%, n=11), nurses (77%, n=10) and to a lesser extent doctors (64%, n=7), gave them enough time to explain what they needed to. Patients also felt listened to most by reception staff (77%, n=10) and nurses (77%, n=10), and again doctors to a slightly lesser extent (64%, n=7). When asked whether patients felt they had been informed about their treatment, 85% (n=11) said that nurses at the centre achieved this, and 61% (n=8) felt doctors did. With regard to having a choice in their treatment, 60% (n=9) of the patients we asked felt that nurses did this, whilst 45% (n=5) said doctors did.

The staff are very good to me when I come in

- A patient at Brighton Station Health Centre

38% (n=5) of patients felt that when they attended an appointment with the doctor, the doctor had all the relevant medical information for them available during the appointment. One patient commented that they felt their doctor was good at having an initial look at medical records prior to an appointment, whilst another said that a drug they had been prescribed was not on their medical records, and that they had been called for a smear test a year early.



On the day of our visit, the volunteer authorised representatives observed reception staff dealing with high volumes of patients in a helpful way. One patient became aggressive towards reception staff, but they were dealt with in a diplomatic and professional way. Conversations with receptionists cannot be overheard easily by others in the waiting room, so confidentiality could be maintained. Medical staff could be heard clearly and politely calling patients in to their appointments. However, one patient told us that because they are deaf they can easily miss their appointment being called, and would prefer a screen with patients' names on it.

We asked patients what is important to them as patients when visiting their GP practice. Of the 11 patients who responded, the majority made reference to the importance of feeling listened to and treated with respect by medical staff. Others mentioned the importance of a quick turn around for test and referrals.

Environment

Hand gel and information about infection control was available at the centre. There was also access to a disabled toilet in the waiting room. The waiting room itself was clean and comfortable, with a TV playing Channel 4. Children's toys were available but no magazines were present, which could have been for infection control reasons. Another screen was present in the waiting room but was not in use at the time of the visit. Previously the screen had been used to show waiting times, but had to be turned off in the meantime as it had some advertisements for a private health company which was not in line with the organisation's contract.

Providing information

Leaflets on cancer and cancer screening were available in the waiting room, including information about breast and testicular screening. 36% (n=5) of the patients we talked to were aware of cancer screening services being available at the centre. Information was also present on free NHS health checks for those between the ages of 40 and 74, which 21% (n=3) of the patients we asked were aware of. Smoking cessation services were mentioned in the centre's newsletter on display, and had a higher awareness rate at 42% (n=6). There was no information on annual health check for those with long term conditions, and awareness of this service was low (21%, n=3). Of the patients we talked to, 6 were unaware of any of the programmes we asked about.



The centre is a part of the 'EPIC' project, however information was not observed around this. Additional information was available regarding LGBT issues, support for patients who have English as an additional language, and mental health. The noticeboards available were observed to be very clear, tidy and up to date.

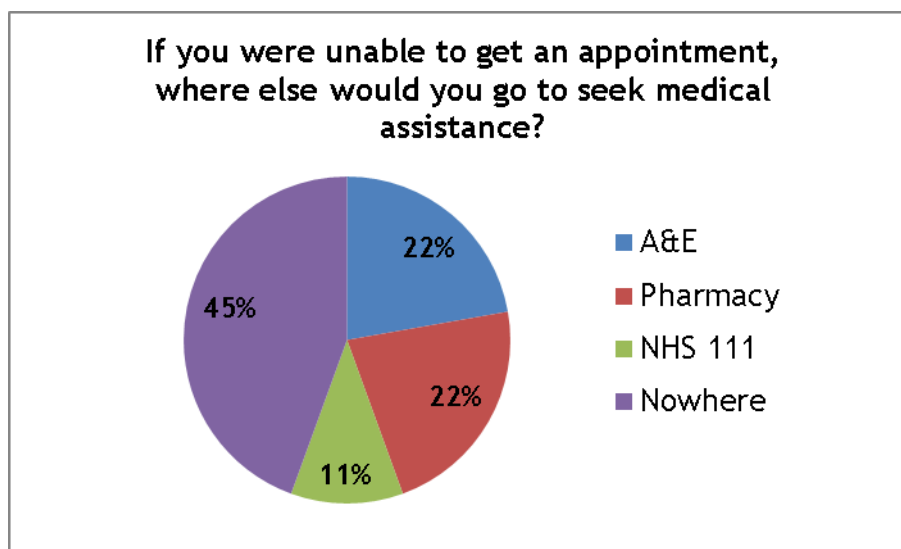
Feeding back to the service

Information on how to make a complaint about the centre was not visible to patients on the day of the visit. When asked if they knew how to complain if they needed to, 43% (n=6) said that they knew what to do. However, no-one was aware of what the national 'GP Patient Survey' was, and 27% (n=3) felt they understood what a practice manager's role was.

Brighton Station Health Centre has just started an online patient participation group, using social media as its platform. Of the patients we talked just to 7% (n=1) knew what a patient participation group was, or how to join their centre's group. Other feedback systems available on the day of the visit included an email address which could be used to obtain a CareUK feedback form, and friends and family test information, which was behind reception and only available on request.

Out of Hours

We asked patients where they would go if the centre was closed and they needed medical assistance. Most patients replied with a range of options, and said that their actions would depend on the severity of the issue. The average number of options provided by patients was 1.3. The detail in the chart below shows that whilst 33% (n=3) would approach places like their local pharmacy and NHS111 first, 22% (n=2) would go to A&E. One person said that if they were unable to get an appointment they would google the problem. Leaflets helping patients to make decisions on where to go for care if their GP practice is closed were not observed.



Summing up and looking forward

Brighton Station Health Centre is a busy practice with a range of functions including a walk in and sexual health clinic. In general it seems patients are receiving timely appointments, and the majority of staff make patients feel listened to and understood. However, there are some areas requiring improvement which if addressed will build on the positives at the centre. In particular HWB&H recommends that the centre focus on the promotion of online services, checks and screening, patient feedback, and work on improving the patient experience of doctor's appointments.

We asked patients to rank the centre from 0-10 (with 0 being the very worst, and 10 being the very best). Of the 13 patients that ranked the centre, the average score was a 6.4. The lowest score we received was 1, and the highest 10. The centre met all 5 CQC criteria in their last inspection in February 2014⁷, where they received 'good' status overall. The national 'GP Patient Survey' information confirms concerns around doctors' listening and involving patients in decisions⁸.

Our representatives asked patients what other improvements they would like to see at the centre. Some key themes came through in the answers that were given, most notably obtaining appointments and reducing waiting times.

⁷ [Care Quality Commission](#) visit summary, Brighton Station Health Centre

⁸ [National Patient Survey](#) summary results, Brighton Station Health Centre



Additional findings

Alongside telling us about their experiences of the Brighton Station Health Centre, patients also told us about issues outside of the surgery. Patients at this centre shared concerns they had about the administration of health and social care services more generally, and concerns about infection control and record keeping. Another patient commented that they felt TAPA mental health services are an essential service that work brilliantly. Teen to Adult Personal Advisors are a service provided by the NHS for young people between the ages of 14 and 25 yrs. They offer advice and support to those young people who are experiencing mental/emotional health problems or related issues and who are not currently engaged with the mainstream services.

Our Recommendations & Responses

- 1. The amount of patients who felt that it was difficult or very difficult to receive test results over the telephone was higher than expected. Consider using the new patient participation group to find out more about patients' experiences and how systems could be improved**

Provider response: The workflow for test results will be altered to include administration staff providing patients with feedback for normal results within a timely manner. Appointment times will be allocated daily for feedback of abnormal test results.

- 2. A number of patients who had received telephone appointments thought that these were not as good as a face to face appointment. This should be fed back to EPIC, and the centre should consider what improvements might be necessary.**

Provider response: Patients are now offered timed telephone triage appointments and following the clinical assessment a face to face appointment can be booked.

- 3. Create an action plan around improving patient knowledge and access to ways to feedback their experiences to the centre. Information on how to complain and about the friends and family test could be accessible without request, to reduce unnecessary barriers to doing so. Posters or leaflets could promote other feedback routes such as the national patient survey.**

Provider response: All walk in patients receive information about the service and how to provide feedback. Posters and information now available to patients within the waiting area regarding feedback. Patient questionnaires are now available in reception area and a box is provided so patients can submit feedback anonymously.

4. In our quality questions, doctors appeared to do less well than other staff on a range of measures, including listening well to patients. This contradicts what patients told us they felt was most important about their GP. Consider why this might be, and create an action plan around this.

Provider response: Consultation skills for patients have been discussed within our clinical meetings and monthly newsletter.

5. Health checks are a useful early intervention/prevention tool. However, patients seem to have a low awareness of their right to a range of checks and there seems to be no information at all for those with long term health conditions regarding the importance of the annual check. These issues need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Provider response: Patient participation group every Friday involves inviting patients to relevant health checks and a drop in service providing information and appointment bookings for future health checks.

6. Increase awareness regarding online services, as for some patients this will be a useful way to book appointments

Provider response: Brighton Station are looking into providing patients a daily set of appointments online via the Patient Access service.

7. Information should be made available about out of hours services, such as ‘We could be heroes’ campaign by Brighton and Hove CCG.

Provider response: This is publicised within the practice and a link to the campaign is shared on our social media platforms on a regular basis.



Next Steps

Once the provider has responded to each of the recommendations, we include these responses in the final report, which is published on our website⁹ for the general public to see. The report will also be shared with key organisations in the city including the Care Quality Commission, Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group and others. After the report's release, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will conduct some planned follow up activity to ascertain whether changes have been made following the visit. The online survey will be available until 30th September 2015. Any surveys collected after this report is completed will be included as an appendix to the report at a later stage.

Once we have visited all 15 practices, we will also compile a larger strategic report which will pull together key themes across this snapshot of primary care provision in the city. This report will also be made available to all practices visited as well as partner agencies. An easy read version will be made available to the public.

⁹ [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove](#), 'What We've Done'

Appendices

Appendix one: The questions we asked

- 1. How has it been for you to:** Book an appointment in person; book an appointment by phone; book an appointment online; order a repeat prescription; get your test results back via telephone
- 2. How long do you usually wait between booking a non-emergency appointment and attending it?** The same day; up to 3 days; up to a week longer than a week; I have not booked an appointment
- 3. Have you ever been offered a same day telephone consultation instead of a face-to-face appointment?** Yes, it's as good as a face-to-face appointment; yes, it's not as good as a face-to-face appointment; no, but it wouldn't be as good as a face-to-face appointment; no, but it would be as good as a face-to-face appointment
- 4. If you were unable to get an appointment here, where would you go to get medical help?**
- 5. Please tick or cross below (grid)** Do the Doctors/Nurses/Reception staff give you enough time/listen to you/make sure you know about your treatment/give you choices about your treatment
- 6. Are you aware of the following services which are available through the practice? (please tick if you are aware of them)** Free health checks for people between the ages of 40 - 74; cancer screening services; annual health checks; services to help you to quit smoking (smoking cessation); I have not heard of any of these programmes.
- 7. What make a fantastic GP practice, including the things that are most important to you as a patient?**
- 8. How much do you feel you know about the following services at your practice:** How to make a complaint about your GP practice; what a PPG is; how to get involved in your PPG; what the patient survey is; what the practice manager does
- 9. What is your experience of being referred to a specialist?** My referral went smoothly; my referral was delayed, but I was kept up to date; my referral was delayed, and I was not kept up to date; I haven't needed a referral.
- 10. Do you think the doctor has all the relevant medical information about you available during your appointments?** Yes; No; Unsure; I haven't had an appointment
- 11. Overall, how would you rate your GP practice out of 10? (10 being excellent, 0**

being very poor) 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

12. What changes would you like to see to make your GP practice better?
13. Is there anything you would like to tell Healthwatch about other NHS or social care services in Brighton and Hove?

Appendix two: The Observation Checklist

1. **Noticeboard:** Is it cluttered, does it have up to date information, is the information easy to read?
2. **Hygiene:** Is hand gel available in the practice waiting room, and information about stopping bugs from spreading? Is there a bathroom available and is it accessible for people in wheelchairs?
3. **Information through leaflets, posters and TV screens** Healthwatch Materials, ICAS Materials, We Could be Heroes Campaign, Free NHS Health Checks, Cancer Screening Programmes, Smoking Cessation, The EPIC Project,
4. **Communication:** How are receptionists and other staff interacting with patients? What is their tone of voice, and how helpful are they being? Are conversations easily overheard by other patients? Are patients clearly informed/ called in for their appointment?
5. **Waiting area:** Is there any information about the practice's patient group, feedback boxes, complaints info and forms, or any other type of feedback information available? How is it presented? Is there any information on the Friends and Family Test?
6. **Feedback:** Is there any information about the practice's patient group, feedback boxes, complaints info and forms, or any other type of feedback information available? How is it presented? Is there any information on the Friends and Family Test?
7. **Additional observations**

