



Enter and View Report

GP Access at Eric Moore Partnership Medical Practice

Visit: 30th March 2017

Report published: 17th May 2017

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Background

What is Healthwatch Warrington?

Healthwatch Warrington helps the residents and communities of Warrington to get the best out of local health and social care services. We gather the views of local people and make sure they are heard and listened to by the organisations that provide, fund and monitor these services.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out *Enter and View* (E&V) visits. Local Healthwatch representatives, who are trained volunteers, 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 (2012) allows local Healthwatch representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. *Enter and View* visits can happen if people identify a problem, but equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation. This enables lessons to be learned and good practice shared.

Healthwatch *Enter and View* visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. If safeguarding issues are raised during a visit, Healthwatch Warrington has safeguarding policies in place which identify the correct procedure to be taken.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to the findings observed on the specific dates set out below. This report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Warrington would like to thank the surgeries' staff, in particular Julie McCann (Practice Manager), Suzi Parkinson (Assistant Practice Manager) and Fred Butler (Patient Participation Group Member) for taking the time to show the visiting team round and for answering their questions. We would also like to thank our trained volunteers for their contributions.

Background and Purpose of the visits

Healthwatch Warrington made the decision to visit GP practices within the borough; with a focus on access and the general environment of surgeries. This is because access to primary care services (mainly GPs) has been identified as a recurrent theme within the public feedback data collected by Healthwatch Warrington.

GP access is often highlighted as a problematic aspect of patient experience, with common issues including; difficulties encountered when booking appointments, a lack of appointment availability and communication problems. However, public service reviews also hint at areas of good practice that could be highlighted and shared. Therefore, our authorised representatives visit GP practices in different clusters to gather feedback directly from patients and conduct specialist Enter & View visits.

Healthwatch Warrington engages with local Patient Participation Groups (PPGs), GP practices and partner organisations to share our findings and help make improvements through recommendations.

Details of the Visit

Location

The visit took place at Eric Moore Partnership (branch surgery), Orford Jubilee hub, Jubilee Way, Orford, Warrington, WA2 8HE.

Date/Time

The visit took place on Thursday 30th March 2017, from 9:15am - 11:15am.

Authorised Representatives (Visiting Team)

Clare Screeton (Surveys) - Healthwatch Warrington, Authorised Representative

Esstta Hayes (Surveys) - Healthwatch Warrington, Authorised Representative

Ildico Boden (Surveys) - Healthwatch Warrington, Authorised Representative

Jonathon Woodruff (Lead) - Healthwatch Warrington, Authorised Representative

Pat Taylor (Surveys) - Healthwatch Warrington, Authorised Representative

GP Practice Staff

Julie McCann (Practice Manager)

Suzi Parkinson (Assistant Practice Manager)

Fred Butler (Patient Participation Group Member)

Description of the Surgery

Eric Moore Partnership belongs to the North Central GP cluster. At present, this surgery has approximately 9,500 registered patients. As well as general consultations, the surgery provides a range of additional clinics and services, such as; all illness (acute or chronic), infections, joint injections, minor surgery, child health, womens' health, sexual health, pregnancy - joint-care, contraception services, terminal illness care, sports injuries, all chronic conditions, nursing home care, mental health, insurance related services (fees payable), medical examination for Occupational Health or Insurance (fees Payable) , chronic disease management

clinics, cervical Smears, well man/woman, contraceptive advice, childhood vaccinations, pneumococcal vaccinations (over 65s and at risk patients), influenza vaccinations (September-February), blood pressure clinics, blood tests, ECG's, minor surgery, post-natal care and child health surveillance, ante-natal services, travel immunisations / vaccinations, hosted services (Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Ultrasound Scans service, Psychological Counselling Services, Lyfinity Group Physio-Exercises and Private Patient Services), travel vaccinations and a range of non-NHS services.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) rated the surgery as overall 'good' (in all categories, with an 'outstanding' rating for 'Responsive') in its July 2016 inspection report.

Results of the Visit

Wherever possible the reports below are in the words of the E&V team members who were present at the time of the visit. The reports have been collated by a member of the Healthwatch Warrington team and some text has been formatted to allow for easy reading; however the essential facts of the visiting team's reports have not been altered.

Observations from the Visit

External Access and Appearance

The branch surgery is located at Orford Jubilee Hub; a relatively new building. The facility, which houses a number of other services, has a large (shared) car parking area. The car park is well maintained and has clear signage. Visitors can park for free (up to a maximum of 3 hours). Disabled parking spaces are also available. The building offers excellent public transport access; with bus stops located a short distance from the front entrance. There are also spaces to leave bikes, for those using this method of transport.

The approach to the front entrance is kept clean and tidy, with the pathway being kept in good condition. To the immediate right of the building entrance is a Rowlands Pharmacy. The surgery does not appear to have any signage or a logo upon the front of the main building, which would be especially helpful for newer patients.

The main building is accessed through two sets of wide, automatic doors (which is excellent for visitors with mobility issues and those using buggies). Once visitors are inside the building, the surgery is accessed via a wooden door on the right. However, this door is not automatic and is relatively stiff, which was observed to cause some difficulties for members of the public during the visit. Again, signage here is limited (with relatively small sized font) and it could be difficult for first time visitors to find. Furthermore, it should be noted that access is all on one-level, which is excellent.

Waiting Room / Seating Area

The surgery shares its waiting room with two other practices (Parkview Medical Practice and 4 Seasons Medical Centre Ltd). This area was brightly lit, very spacious and had a pleasant atmosphere. Plenty of seating was available, including lowered chairs with arm supports, despite the surgeries being very busy during the visit.

Eric Moore Partnership Medical Practice had a designated information stand (labelled) which had reading material available for patients. There was also a children's seating area to the rear of the space (with books available). The waiting area is also equipped with information notices and leaflets. There is lift and stair access for other services located at the upper level (including a Bloods clinic).

The surgery has an electronic display screen in the waiting area that is used to call patients for their appointment; although doctors may also walk into the reception area to collect patients and help to put them at ease. This screen also displays useful health and surgery related information.

Reception Area

This surgery's reception desk is the one closest to the entrance door (on the right). The desk is set back from the seating area, which is good for confidentiality purposes. In addition, the desk has a lowered section, which is a helpful addition for wheelchair users. This area is brightly-lit and kept tidy.

A range of patient information leaflets are available on the reception desk and arranged in a tidy fashion; with patient feedback forms (including a deposit box), Friends and Family Test forms and PPG information also displayed here. There is also a wall-mounted box for repeat prescription forms located adjacent to the reception desk.

Upon approach to the desk, the team were greeted politely by the receptionist. The visiting team were also asked to sign a guest book when entering and leaving (which is evidence of good security procedures being in place).

Additional Facilities

The surgery offers a number of facilities for those patients with additional access needs, including; foreign language leaflets and information, access to a translation service, British Sign Language support, a hearing loop and large print options on documents for people with sight impairments. Furthermore, the site has disabled parking spaces and there is a disabled toilet within the surgery and a separate one in the waiting room area. The visit team were invited to look inside the surgery's disabled toilet and it was very clean, had a neutral odour and a safety chord was in place.

Dementia Friendly Approach

All floor spaces were a single pattern and the surgery space is relatively small (a single corridor), which would make it easier for patients with dementia to navigate the practice. Furthermore, doors were clearly labelled and signage was well-positioned within the surgery. However, the waiting room was not fitted with a wall clock, which would be a helpful addition.

Navigation around building

The signage upon approach to the surgery via the main entrance is relatively limited. However, within the surgery space itself, signage is excellent and corridors are short, well laid out and free from any observable obstructions. The Practice Manager also told the visit team that doctors are sometimes able to greet patients in the waiting room and guide them directly into the consultation room.

Cleanliness and Maintenance of Communal Areas

All areas inside the surgery were found to be very clean, had a neutral odour and were kept tidy. The visiting team were invited inside all office spaces, one of the consultation rooms and a disabled toilet, all of which were in excellent condition. However, it may be useful to install a hand sanitiser near the entrance to the surgery space (there are some available in the waiting area, but near the entrances to the other practices).

Patient Voice and Feedback

The surgery has an active PPG that meets every 2-3 months. The Practice Manager is confident in the strength of the relationship of the PPG with surgery staff and is happy with the contributions that the PPG makes. The Practice Manager is also keen to facilitate the further growth and strengthening of the PPG. During the visit, the team were able to speak with Fred Butler, a member of the practice's PPG. Fred was very complimentary of the surgery and thought that access was very good; with nearby, regular bus access being particularly helpful for patients.

Fred was also impressed with the proactive efforts of surgery staff to provide excellent care for patients (such as Dr Kumar's physiotherapy initiative, which was featured on TV). In terms of the surgery's complaints procedures, the Practice Manager emphasised that staff foster an open, proactive culture that encourages patients to be open about their concerns; with patient requests being accommodated, wherever possible. Further to the above, the surgery's PPG is actively involved in gathering and assessing internal patient feedback (covering access issues), which has generally been very positive.

Safety

No obvious safety risks were identified during the visit and there were procedures in place to monitor visit flow (such as the visitor log book).

Staffing, Leadership and Promoting Positive & Respectful Attitudes

At present, the practice has 5 registered GPs, 2 Nurse Clinicians, 2 Practice Nurses, 2 Healthcare Assistants, 1 Practice Manager, 1 Assistant Practice Manager and 12 administration staff. In addition, the surgery is supported by a Community Matron, a Clinical Pharmacist, a Medicines Management Team, Community Midwives, District Nurse Team and a Health Visiting Team.

The visiting team were invited to view the staff spaces within the surgery, which were spacious, bright and well-organised.

The team spoke with the Practice Manager, Julie McCann, and the Assistant Practice Manager, Suzi Parkinson, both of whom were welcoming and spoke enthusiastically about the surgery's good practice (such as a care home GP project in which the surgery had been involved). The Practice Manager feels that there are no obvious problematic issues in relation to access at the surgery. The Practice Manager feels that there are strong working relationships with other surgeries in the cluster and staff are open to sharing good practice with other surgeries in Warrington.

Appointments

The surgery advertises its booking procedures and opening times both on-site and on its website. Patients can book appointments by phone, online and in-person by visiting reception.

The opening times are; (Orford Park Surgery) Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 18:00pm. The Medi Centre is open Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 20:00pm and also on Saturday mornings from 9:00am to 13:00pm.

Patients can also access evening appointments up to 8pm and 9:00am - 13:00am on a Saturday (at the main surgery site). Patients are also made aware of the Out of Hours service, when appropriate.

Same day (urgent) appointments are available and patients are able to request appointments with a named GP (with waiting times then dependent upon capacity).

The practice monitors patient 'Do Not Attend' (DNA) figures. SMS (text) messages are sent to patients, with their consent, to remind them of an upcoming appointment or alert them to a missed appointment. The surgery will contact a patient to investigate further if multiple appointments are missed. Depending on the situation, the surgery may then request that a patient registers with another surgery, if non-attendance issues are persistent. It is important to note that if an appointment is cancelled in advance, the surgery's online booking system will automatically update to show that this slot is now available. Both of these factors help to reduce waiting times and boost patient flow within the surgery.

Patient Survey Responses

The visiting team received a total of 7 survey responses relating specifically to Eric Moore Partnership Medical Practice; with the survey questions focusing on patient access experiences (please note, not all respondents chose to answer each question).

The visiting team asked respondents which appointment booking methods they were aware of being in place at the surgery. 6 respondents were aware that they could book appointments online, 2 were aware of the online booking method and 2 knew that they could book appointments in-person by visiting reception. This suggests that patients are aware of the surgery's online booking facility, but phone bookings remain the most widely referred to method of access.

When asked about the average length of time that it takes to reach reception (when booking by phone), 1 respondent indicated that it took them less than 5 minutes, with 3 respondents stating that it took around 5 - 10 minutes and 2 respondents stating that it took longer than 10 minutes. None of the respondents said that they were unable to get through due to busy lines.

The survey also asked participants how often they could get an appointment at the date and time they preferred. 2 respondents stated that they could 'always' get a suitable appointment, 2 said that they 'often' could and 1 respondent 'did not know'. Participants were also asked how often they could get an appointment with a named GP of their choice. 2 respondents stated that they could 'always' could, 2 said that they 'often' could and 1 respondent stated that they 'never' could.

When asked about their overall satisfaction level with the surgery's booking system, 4 out of 5 respondents stated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied', with only 1 out of 5 stating that they were 'very unsatisfied'.

Participants were also asked to provide general comments about the surgery and their suggestions for improving access. The patients spoken with during the visit were happy with the quality of care at the surgery: "The care I receive is good".

However, one patient wanted to offer some constructive feedback regarding online access: "I found online access difficult due to password and login issues." This patient felt that some extra help with using the online system would be beneficial as they "sometimes have to call 4 times to get through to reception" and getting more patients using the online booking method more often could help to improve this situation.

The patient also found parking spaces difficult to find. However, the Practice Manager mentioned during the visit that additional parking spaces are being built on the premises.

The patient also stated that: “I can wait up to 45 minutes to be seen by the doctor, once I arrive. However, on the positive side, I get as long as I need with the doctor once I am seen”. As such, although waiting times can be an issue for some patients, they are clearly happy with the person-centred care approach at the surgery and value the care given by the practice staff.

Summary

The visiting team gained the overall impression that this was a well-run surgery, offering good facilities and with staff that take a proactive approach to patient centred-care; resulting in a positive atmosphere. This was reflected in the majority of the patient feedback collected from the survey responses and informal conversations on the day. The Practice Manager also echoed these sentiments and told the visiting team that she was happy with access at the surgery.

However, the Practice Manager did feel that although she was happy to work with other surgeries to share good practice, “red tape” obstacles around data sharing sometimes impedes intra-cluster networking and this issue needs to be addressed by commissioning bodies.

Although some adjustments could be made to further improve access at the surgery itself, there were no obvious access issues that were causing problems at the surgery; with the management team being open to patient suggestions in the future.

Recommendations

- 1. Review External Signage and Non-automatic Doorway:** a large sign showing the surgery's name and logo above the building's front entrance and clearer signage showing the direction of the waiting area would help to improve patient navigation. The visiting team appreciate that this area is not owned or managed by the practice. However, the building management should consider any requests that the surgery puts forward in this regard, as there would be a clear benefit to the public. The fitting of an automatic door that leads to the waiting area would also be helpful for patients with mobility issues.
- 2. Install Hand Sanitiser Near Entrance:** as a further suggestion, providing an additional hand sanitiser near the entrance to the surgery space should also be considered.
- 3. Build upon and Share Good Practice:** the surgery should continue to strengthen its cooperative approach to other surgeries in the cluster and particularly those within the shared building space (especially with regard to sharing good practice and making improvements in the shared waiting room, etc.). The practice should also continue to work closely with its PPG to gather patient feedback and arrange for the delivery of short guidance sessions for patients wanting to use online access (if there is sufficient demand).

Distribution List

This report has been distributed to the following:

- *Warrington Borough Council*
- *Warrington CCG*
- *Care Quality Commission*
- *Healthwatch England*

Appendices

Appendix A

Response from Provider

Thank you for forwarding the draft report following the above visit to our Practice and as advised, we are now able to respond with our comments as follows:-

The Practice was pleased to welcome the Healthwatch Warrington team to the Practice on 30th March 2017. We welcomed their survey and assessment of our services and were pleased that they were able to meet with patients as well as a member of our Patient Participation Group as well as staff members too.

Our comments for amendments and on Healthwatch's recommendations would be as follows:-

Page 7. Signage. We agree with Healthwatch that the signage is both limited and small in size. However, as tenants in this building, we have not been permitted to erect own signage or indeed have any additional/larger signage installed.

Page 7. Absence of a Wall Clock. We note the comment and agree that a wall clock would be most useful for patients in the waiting area. The waiting area is a shared one for our Practice and the two other Practices based at Orford Park (Four Seasons and Parkview). We would therefore be pleased to put a request into the Landlord for a clock to be provided and placed in an area where patients from all Practices when waiting could view the same.

Page 14. Recommendations.

(1) Signage and Non-automatic doorway. As stated above, we have not been able to gain permissions for improved signage from the Landlord to help improve access and directional information for patients and visitors, but we will indeed raise this again at the earliest opportunity with the Landlords.

We would state that our neighbouring Practices also at Orford would probably have the same matters to raise too. The absence of an automated door is also something that we will be willing to raise with the Landlord to then be able to improve access to patients with mobility issues, again a concern that is common to all 3 Practices here at Orford as all use this same entrance.

(2) We note and shall liaise with the Landlord/Cleaning Services on the provision of an additional hand sanitizer to be installed closer to our Practice space.

(3) We agree and can assure Healthwatch that it is our Practice ethos to facilitate better communications and share good Practice with our neighbouring Practices and to the wider healthcare community. Our Practice is already in a Cluster group arrangement that includes both Four Seasons Practice and Parkview Practice that meets on a monthly basis, and we are all also most aware of the need to have Landlord/Tenant communications which have not been taking place for sometime now as we all have common and similar matters to raise.

At our next PPG meeting we shall feedback on this visit and the comment made by a patient on accessing online services and will be pleased for our PPG group to also support the communications with our Practice on ensuring this online access can be as simplified as possible and to reiterate the continuing Practice staff support when ever required on the same. Once again, on behalf of the Eric Moore Partnership Medical Practice team, our thanks to Healthwatch for their time at this visit attendance.

Yours sincerely

Julie McCann
Practice Business Manager

