

## Enter and View – Visit Report

Name of establishment: Cricklewood Health Centre and Walk-in Centre  
Britannia Business Centre  
2 Cricklewood Lane NW2 1DZ

Staff met During Visit: Dr Nicolas Routledge (Medical Director)  
Ms Cheryl Williams (Acting Practice Manager)

Date of visits: Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2018  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Healthwatch authorised representatives involved: Lisa Robbins (Healthwatch Staff Member)  
Derrick Edgerton )  
Ellen Collins ) Healthwatch Volunteers  
Stewart Block )

### Introduction and Methodology

This is an announced Enter and View (E&V) visit undertaken by Healthwatch Barnet's E&V Volunteers, as part of a planned strategy to look at a range of Health and Social Care services within the London Borough of Barnet. Healthwatch E&V representatives have statutory powers to enter Health and Social Care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the views of the people using those services. The aim is to report the service that is observed, to consider how services may be improved and how good practice can be disseminated.

The team of trained volunteers visit the service and record their observations along with the feedback from patients, relatives, carers and staff. The volunteers compile a report reflecting all of this, and making some recommendations. The Report is sent to the Manager of the facility visited for validation/correction of facts, and for their response to the recommendations. The final version is then sent to interested parties, including the Head Office of the managing organisation, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Barnet CCG, CQC, Barnet Council and the public via the Healthwatch website.

**DISCLAIMER: *This report relates only to the service viewed on the date of the visit, and is representative of the views of the staff and***

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***patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.***

### General Information

This Health Centre and Walk-in Centre was set up in 2010 as a consequence of the findings of the Darzi Report (*High Quality Care For All – NHS Next State Review*) published in June 2008. Amongst the report recommendations was the following:

*"Greater access to primary care through 150 GP-led health centres (polyclinics) and 100 new practices in England. These will be open seven days a week, 8am to 8pm and open to anyone."*

The centre is located in the borough of Barnet but adjacent to the boundaries with Brent and Camden. The centre is open 8am – 8pm, 7 days a week and offers services (as stated on the noticeboard) to all UK and EU citizens and visitors. It is operated by Barndoc Healthcare Ltd<sup>1</sup>.

The GP practice currently has approximately 4300 patients registered and the list is increasing. Although the GP Practice and the Walk-In Centre share the same reception and waiting areas they are two separate facilities. Our visit focused on the Walk-in Centre. The team met with the Dr Routledge (Medical Director) and Cheryl Williams (Acting practice manager) and spoke a number of patients. Ms Williams has been seconded to cover the position of Practice Manager from Barndoc Healthcare Ltd Head Office, but it is hoped that a new permanent practice manager will be taking up post shortly. Two members of the Healthwatch team revisited the centre in March to fully understand some particular aspects of the service offered.

The centre, which is on the ground floor of a commercial block of offices, has recently been refurbished, doubling the number of consulting rooms, improving staff facilities and the overall décor, including provision of a

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<sup>1</sup> Barndoc Healthcare Ltd is a private company which provides the NHS commissioned out of hours service in Barnet, Enfield and Haringey, and a GP practice with walk in facilities at Cricklewood GP Health Centre.

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large screen TV in the waiting area. The property has recently changed hands and this has led to some issues, namely, availability of (limited) staff parking has been withdrawn and reinstatement will be at a considerable cost and is still under negotiation. There is no public parking allowed on site (although drop off/pick up is allowed) and patients are verbally directed to a local shopping carpark (3 hrs free parking) which is at least a 200m walk.

It was acknowledged that sign posting for the site is poor and we were told that the provision of a small directional sign on the main road took 4yrs to obtain! There was an NHS sign on the open gate to the car park announcing the service, but it was only visible when walking from one direction. Once through the gate, patients had to walk to the back of the car park and to the side of the building to find the entrance. We were advised that the area is well lit in the dark and there was CCTV at the entrance. Patients we spoke to, said that they had difficulty finding the unit the first time that they used it.

### **Facilities for patients**

There is an access ramp and automatic doors at the entrance. There are male and female toilets, both accessible, but only the female one has baby changing facilities.

There was a drinking water dispenser, but this was opposite reception, and not visible or signed from the waiting area. There was no vending machine offering snacks or hot drinks available.

There was a clock, but it was not working at the time of our visit.

The waiting area was a relatively small U shaped area with plastic chairs backed on to the wall. There was a large TV within sight of the majority of those waiting which was on, with text, during our visit. There was also an electronic/digital message board which alerted patients from the GP practice when it is their turn to be seen. Walk-in centre patients are called in by name.

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The wall facing the waiting area was covered with a plethora of posters and notices. There were also notices giving details of local pharmacies and alternative services outside by the entrance.

Patients registered with the GP practice at the centre are strongly encouraged to book appointments with the practice rather than use the walk-in centre. If an appointment is not available when requested, a telephone appointment or Hub<sup>2</sup> appointment may be offered or if neither are available a GP from the walk-in centre may assess their medical need and direct as appropriate. Patients registered with the GP practice (irrespective of which borough they live in) are eligible to take Hub appointments

Registered patients are residents in Barnet, Brent and (the smallest proportion) Camden.

Patients for the Walk-in service are logged and taken through a series of standard questions about their health need at reception. They should then be given an estimate of the waiting time to be seen. The medical staff periodically look at this information and do call individuals out of turn if they deem necessary. Urgent situations are alerted to medical staff when they are logged. If the patient is registered with another GP, a discharge report will be sent to their 'home' GP. The majority of Walk-in patients are from the local area and their reasons for attending included, not being registered with a GP, unable to get an appointment with their own GP and preferring the service offered by the walk-in centre.

Walk-in centre consultations are of 15 minute duration and approximately 70 walk-in patients are seen daily with peaks around 9.30am and 4 – 6pm.

Where patients present with conditions that cannot be treated by a GP they are referred to an A&E service, or if assessed as necessary an ambulance is called. (approximately once a day)

When demand for the walk-in service exceeds remaining capacity, the centre follows this procedure:

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<sup>2</sup> Extra GP appointments are available in the evenings and on weekends in Barnet. These extended hours – 6.30pm to 8pm on weekdays, 8am to 8pm on weekends – are provided from several GP practices (hubs) in the borough.

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- The receptionist on duty will monitor the number of walk in patients waiting to be seen.
- When the number of walk in patients waiting to be seen nears the remaining capacity (based on 4 consultations per clinician per hour), the receptionist will bring this to the urgent attention of the duty GP.
- The GP must be satisfied that accepting anymore walk in patients will exceed capacity. If there is no remaining capacity, the GP will give instruction to the reception to place the notice of closure on the front entrance door. The notice signposts the nearest alternative providers
- GP Registered patients will still be able to gain access to attend a pre-booked appointment, collect prescriptions and book an appointment or any other reception request.

### **Staffing and staff training**

From Monday to Friday there are always 2 clinicians on site from Barndoc Healthcare Ltd, supporting the Walk-in Centre. One GP, and either another GP and /or a prescribing nurse as a minimum. From 10am to 6pm there will be a nurse seeing patients, in addition to a GP who will be in attendance from 8am to 8pm. A second GP covers the sessions between 8am and 8.30am, and again between 6.30pm and 8pm.

At the weekends there will be a single Walk-in centre GP covering 8am to 8pm (two shifts 8am-2pm and 2pm – 8pm) together with a practice nurse from 10am to 6pm.

There are two reception staff on duty between 8am – 2pm, and one between 2pm – 8pm. A medical secretary/summariser and the centre manager are also present between 9am – 5pm and will assist on reception as required. All staff attend an induction course. Additional and mandatory training is then done electronically using a scheme run by Blue Stream Academy, a system widely used throughout the country by GP practices.

Staff supervision is done quarterly and appraisals annually.

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### **Compliments/Complaints/Incidents**

The volunteers talked to 7 patients attending as walk-in centre users. Almost all had either walked or used public transport to reach the centre. All expressed satisfaction at the handling of their case by the reception staff. The majority were given an approximate waiting time, but this was not updated. None were given any information as to the process and this caused annoyance when those that came in later (possibly registered patients with appointments at the GP surgery) were seen before them. All thought that hot drinks and a snack vending machine should be available. None had seen the water dispenser.

After they had seen a clinician, they were all satisfied with the consultation.

A leaflet was displayed in a dispenser at reception explaining how to make a comment, compliment or complaint.

### **Conclusions**

This GP led service fulfils a need within its immediate locality and is clearly well used and considered effective by patients we spoke to. It does not receive as much publicity as Edgware Walk-in Centre or Finchley Memorial Walk-in Centre and the range of services commissioned is different, which could lead to confusion. Concern was expressed by staff about whether the centre could cope with an increase in walk-in workload. Patients we spoke to were appreciative of the service offered and made some constructive comments. We felt there were some straightforward practical suggestions that would improve the experience of patients attending the service.

### **Recommendations for the Walk-in Centre:**

- 1) Work with the relevant authority to improve signage from the main road. Healthwatch Barnet is happy to try and support this.
- 2) Ensure that the water dispenser in the waiting area is visible and available to all patients.

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- 3) Look into the provision of vending machines for hot drinks and snacks, for patients while waiting for their consultation. (this could be more than 2 hours at times.)
- 4) Ensure reception staff give clear information on where parking is available, if asked.
- 5) Ensure that all patients are advised how the process of registering and seeing patients operates. Perhaps a leaflet could be available for patients attending for the first time.
- 6) Introduce a means of updating walk-in patients with waiting times.
- 7) Introduce a comprehensive system to check staff understanding of e-learning training, and that they can properly apply the training undertaken via e-learning.
- 8) Update the website, to make the service offer clearer to the public and ensure that all information is up to date.
- 9) Update and organise information on the notice boards to provide clearer up to date information for patients.

### **Response from the Walk-in Centre**

2. We agree that it would be helpful to move the water dispenser to a more visible position in the waiting room, and will arrange for this to happen.
3. We agree that it would be helpful to patients to have a vending machine and we will look into this further.
4. We are continuing to negotiate with the landlord around access to parking on-site.
5. Information has been developed and displayed about how the registration process operates and the order in which patients will be seen. This is displayed on the notice board, and patients should be advised when they register.

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6. Patients should be advised when they register about the expected waiting time. When the wait is likely to be longer, a card is displayed at reception informing patients of this.
7. We will consult with our Human Resources department about this.
8. We are aware that the website needs upgrading and updating, and we are currently looking at ways that this can be completed.
9. We are also aware that the notice boards need to be reorganised and updated. The new practice team will try and address this as soon as they are in post.

### **Recommendations for Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)**

- 1) To look at publicising the service more widely to the public, ensuring that the service offer is clear.
- 2) To consider if the title of the service gives the best description. It is clearly very different to those offered at Finchley Memorial Walk-in Centre, or Edgware Walk-in Centre, and we felt a more accurate description of this service could be found.

### **Response from Barnet CCG**

- 1) The CCG has produced patient information leaflets which are available at Barnet Hospital Emergency Department and Royal Free Hospital Emergency Department and the 3 Barnet Walk In Centres. The details are also available on the CCG's website. The CCG internet home page has a MY HEALTH LONDON widget which allows patients to search for local services. The CCG has a dedicated page on the CCG website to Urgent Care services which includes information of the commissioned services ie location, opening hours and a brief description of what the service offers.
- 2) The CCG is in the process of reviewing its Walk-in Services in the light of national guidance regarding Urgent treatment Centres (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/urgent-treatment->



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centres-principles-and-standards/) and the need to standardise urgent care services. The standardisation of services should be complete by December 2019. The CCG is currently considering its options for taking their Walk In Centre review forward.

Report Date: April 2018