



Details of visit

Service address: 60 Wheatfield Road, Luton, LU4 0TR
Service Provider: Wheatfield Surgery
Date and Time: 4th April 2018
Authorised Representatives: Dee Dillistone, Dave Simpson, Den Fensome, Linda Harrison
Contact details: Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire
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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire would like to thank the service provider, patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical), for their contribution to the Enter and View Programme.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical), only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



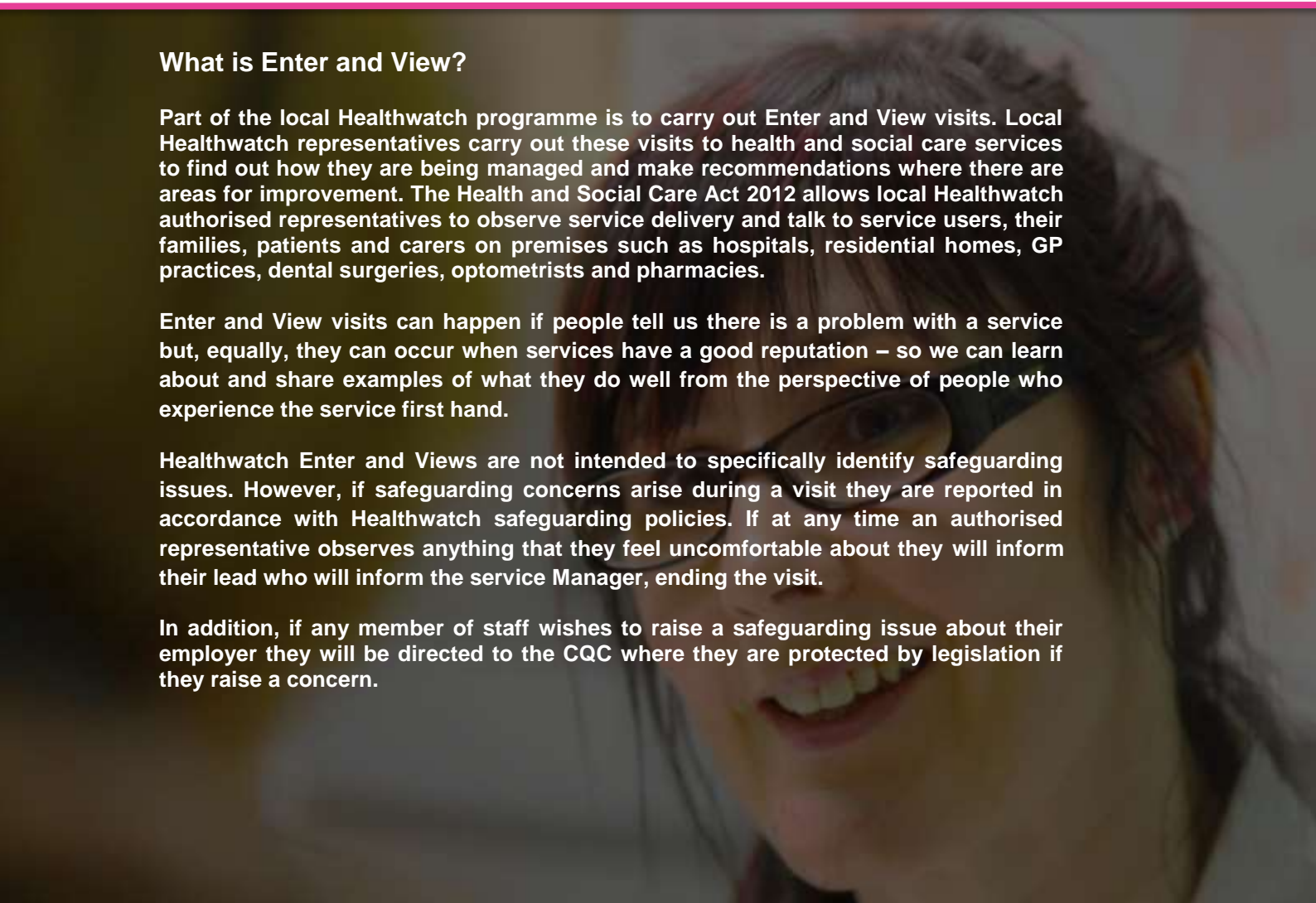
What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme 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 managed and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, patients 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 will inform their lead who will inform the service Manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.





Purpose of the visit

- To engage with patients of GP Practices and understand how dignity is being respected;
- Identify examples of good working practice;
- Observe patients engaging with staff (clinical and non-clinical), and their surroundings.

Strategic drivers

- Care Quality Commission dignity and wellbeing strategy.
- GP Surgeries are a Local Healthwatch priority.

Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View Visit carried out at Wheatfield Road Surgery in Luton, Bedfordshire.

A letter and posters announcing Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's (HWCB) visit were previously sent to the practice. A questionnaire was also sent to the Practice Manager to complete prior to the visit.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire delivered copies of a questionnaire for patients to fill in, together with a 'response box', to post their completed questionnaires prior to HWCB's visit. The purpose was to minimise disruption and inconvenience to patients during the visit. As an example of good practice HWCB has included this procedure in all future visits.

Representatives also undertook a tour of the premises to observe accessibility, including disabled access, the availability of patient information and condition of the building.





Summary of findings

The practice operates from a purpose-built two storey building, all patient areas are on the ground floor with good disabled access. There is an independent Pharmacy located off the entrance lobby.

The surgery is a registered training practice which has two GP trainers.

The overall impression gained was that this is a progressive Practice which is constantly streamlining its services, methods and approach in order to give its 13,168 patients the best possible experience.

Results of visit

On arrival, the team were asked to 'sign-in' at reception, and were then met by the Practice Manager and Assistant Practice Manager for introductions and initial discussions about the visit.

The Practice Manager arranged for HWCB representatives to talk to members of their administration and clinical staff when available. However, unfortunately HWCB were not able to talk to the clinical staff or the GP's as they were unavailable during the time of the visit, and discussions were only held with members of the administrative staff. Representatives undertook a tour of the premises to observe accessibility, including disabled access, the availability of patient information and condition of the building.

Unfortunately, the pre-delivered ballot box revealed no completed patient questionnaires inside. In addition, during the visit, the clinical staff were operating quickly and efficiently and patients did not remain in the waiting area long enough for HWCB representatives to conduct an interview. It was clear that patients are able to comment on the service received at the practice via the ever present NHS Friends & Family questionnaire, and the Practice also carried out its own survey in October 2017, to which 134 patients responded.

HWCB Representatives were given a copy of the survey results which had been published on the Practice website and on noticeboards in the waiting area. The report is also available to be viewed at the Practice.

Staff

The Practice has the following members of staff:

- 7 GPs: 4 male and 3 females
- 6 Partners
- 4 Practice Nurses
- 1 Nurse Prescriber
- 2 Minor Illness Nurses
- 2 Healthcare Assistants (HCAs)
- 6 Receptionists
- 8 Other Staff

Specialist Services provided

- Phlebotomy
- Chronic Disease Management
- Coil/Implant Clinics
- NHS Healthchecks



Surgery Hours

Monday	8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Tuesday	8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Thursday	8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Friday	8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

NHS Extended Hours access (Pre-booked appointments) 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm every weekday.

Environment

The building appears to be well maintained, light and airy, and although the waiting areas and corridors have limited outside windows the 'atrium' in the main reception area allows light to come in. The internal corridors to consulting rooms are fairly narrow and waiting room chairs sited in this area further restricts access along the corridor. The ambient temperature was comfortable.

Other observations included:

Car Parking

The car park is situated at the front of the building with 21 spaces plus two disabled slots, however, it is very narrow with only one way in and out, and turning round can be difficult. 'On street' parking restrictions mean there is only limited availability outside of the main parking area.

Patient Information

Patient Information leaflets are available in all three waiting areas, plus several posters on the walls. The practice website is comprehensive and fairly easy to navigate.

Registration at the Practice(s)

Registration can be achieved either online or in person at the Practice. New patients need to provide proof of identity and address, and upon registration, all patients receive a comprehensive Welcome Pack. Temporary residents may also register at the practice.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Practice had previously set up a PPG which met quarterly, however HWCB representatives were given to understand that this was disbanded as members did not use the group for its intended purpose; constructive discussion and debate.

The Practice Manager informed representatives that the Practice is currently attempting to recruit a younger and more representative cohort of patients.

Patient Consultation

The NHS Friends and Family Test leaflets are on display in the reception area, and are also found in clinical consulting rooms. The Practice carried out a 10 question survey of patients in October 2017 to which 134 patients responded.

There is also a 'comments and suggestions' option on SystmOne and patients may also comment via email on the website.



Appointments System

Appointments can be booked by telephone, online via SystmOne or in person at reception. Every morning from 8:30 to 9:30 all administrative staff at the surgery are assigned to answer telephones for booking appointments.

The surgery also has a dedicated 'Cancellation Line' for anyone who needs to cancel an appointment, which goes straight through without the need to 'queue' for a receptionist. This has resulted in a reduction in the number of DNAs (Did Not Attend) at the surgery.

Patients can also request telephone appointments with the GP's (5 minute slots), and can request home visits if they meet the necessary requirements.

Out of Hours Care

Out of Hours Care is accessed by the NHS 111 system for non-emergency issues. Patients receive information in their Patient Pack which is also displayed within the Practice and on the Practice website. Patients are also advised to call 999 for emergencies.

Medication & Prescriptions

Medication reviews are conducted annually unless more frequently required, and normally with the patient. The Practice is due to begin sharing a clinical pharmacist with another Practice which will relieve pressure on GPs and improve the patient experience.

Repeat prescriptions may be ordered in person by delivering a slip to the surgery, by email or online using SystmOne. The turnaround time for prescriptions is 48 hours.

Interaction between Patients and Staff

Representatives noted that patients are called in for their appointments by GP's, and other clinical staff, entering the waiting areas and announcing the name of the patient.

Representatives also observed the interactions of the receptionists (one of whom was a trainee) with patients, which were all conducted in a friendly and pleasant manner that all patients seemed happy with.

Clinical and non-clinical staff

Due to the clinical staff being busy during the entire time of the visit HWCB representatives were unable to secure an interview with them; however several members of the administrative team were spoken with.

All of the staff interviewed recognised that a lack of available appointments is a common concern in primary care today, and it is no different at Wheatfield Road Surgery. It is recognised that there are not enough GPs, and the practice staff are constantly working to maximise the available appointments.

Staff members spoken to all liked working at the practice and comments included; *'I like it here, it's fun and different'*; *'I'm generally happy, but it can be hard sometimes'*; *'We are a good team, and are constantly looking to improve the service to our patients – we are always open to change and new ideas.'*



Concerns/Complaints Procedure

The practice has a robust Complaints Policy and Procedure; leaflets are available from reception and also on the Practice website.

Additional Findings

The Practice hosts a fortnightly MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team) meeting – ‘Caring Together’ for five practices in the Chiltern Vale Locality. This is where clinicians, secondary care and social care meet to discuss particular patients’ cases.

Recommendations

On gaining access to the entrance lobby, representatives would recommend that a sign is clearly displayed to direct patients/visitors to the reception area.

Representatives noticed that a seat was clearly missing from one of the public toilets; this was flagged to the Practice Manager at the time of the visit with the recommendation that it be replaced as soon as possible.

The waiting areas do not currently have any toys or other distractions for children. HWCB recommends, whilst being mindful of infection control, that the Practice investigates the possibility of providing some play equipment for younger children.

HWCB representatives would also recommend a further visit to the Practice to specifically talk with clinical staff and some patients, perhaps through booked slots, to obtain a more all-inclusive view of the service delivered at the Practice.

Finally, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire recommends that this report is shared with the patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical) of the Practice and to advise that if they should wish to contribute any additional comments about the report, to contact Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire direct.



Service Provider response

Many thanks for the report

I would just like to add that we have replaced the toilet seat and there is now a sign in the foyer showing patients which way to go for reception


Kind Regards

Tracey

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Wheatfield Surgery

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