



**Enter and View visit: Allerton Road Medical Centre**

**31 July 2017**

<b>Service</b>	General Practice
<b>Service address</b>	Allerton Road Medical Centre 34a Allerton Road Stoke Newington London N16 5UF
<b>Provider name</b>	<b>Allerton Road Medical Centre</b>
<b>Date/Time of visit</b>	31/07/2017
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**About Healthwatch enter and view visits**

The Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007 as amended by the 2012 Act and directed by Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013 imposes a duty on health and social care providers (including the independent sector) to allow authorised representatives of Local Healthwatch to enter premises that they own or control to observe the services that are being provided. These are legally binding directions and are often referred to as the: “Right to Enter and View”.

## **Purpose of our visit**

The purpose of our visit was to observe services being provided at Allerton Road Medical Centre and interview patients about their experiences. We conducted the visit:

1. Following comments from service users received during our routine comment collections across various health venues in Hackney which suggested that a visit would contribute to service improvement
2. To compile a report highlighting good practice and to make recommendations for improvement

Allerton Road Medical Centre Care Quality Commissioning (CQC) inspection in February 2015 and gave the centre GOOD overall rating for services

## **Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Hackney would like to thank the practice manager and staff for accommodating our visit. We would also like to thank the patients for participating in our interviews. We are also grateful to our volunteer authorised representatives for conducting the visit.

## **Important Information for management/provider**

- We expect Allerton Road Medical Centre to provide an 'Action Plan and Response' on issues raised under the 'Recommendations' section.
- Copies of this report will be circulated to City and Hackney CCG, the CQC and will be made available on the Healthwatch Hackney website
- We will publish Allerton Road Medical Centre's Action Plan and Response along with our report
- We would expect this report to be placed on the Allerton Road Medical Centre's website and to be made available to patients of the practice in other ways.

## **Disclaimer**

- The observations made in this report relate only to the visit carried out at Allerton Road Medical Centre on 31 July 2017 which lasted for a total of four and a half hours
- This report is not representative of all patients of Allerton Road Medical Centre on the day of the visit. It only represents the views of nineteen patients and two members of staff who were able to contribute within the restricted time available.

## **How we carried out our visit**

Healthwatch Hackney gave five working days' notice of our intention to visit and provided the practice with posters to advise patients of our presence on the day.

We spent four and a half hours recording observations and interviewed 19 patients and the practice manager.

## Key information about this provider

- Allerton Road Medical Centre is run by the Hurley Group which is an NHS GP Partnership
- Allerton Road Medical Centre has more than 5000 registered patients, mostly over 30 years of age, and is open for new registrations. A large proportion of patients registered with the practice are Hasidic Jews
- The practice is open for new registrations
- The practice has four general practitioners (GPs) employed by the Hurley Group, two of whom are Joint Lead Medical Directors.
- Two of the GPs are male and two are female.
- The two female GPs are salaried and two male doctors are long term sessional GPs (employed long term by an agency).
- The practice has advertised a vacancy for an additional GP.
- NHS Property Services manages and maintains the premises.
- GP services are offered for the whole day – Monday to Friday.
- The practice is open every weekday from 8am to 7.00pm with extended opening hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. It is closed over weekends and bank holidays.

Monday	8.00 - 6.30pm
Tuesday	7.30 - 6.30pm
Wednesday	8.00 - 7.00pm
Thursday	7.30 - 7.00pm
Friday	7.30 - 6.30pm
- Duty doctor services are available every day.
- The patient participation group (PPG) meetings are held every quarter. Only a few patients regularly attend these meetings. The Practice is publicizing the next meeting date a few weeks ahead, by sending text messages to patients and placing information about the PPG on the prescriptions. Information is also available on the registration forms
- Enhanced (extra) services at the practice include: a baby clinic, counselling sessions, health advocacy, a family clinic
- Priority consultations are given to children under the age of five and older people. They are seen as emergencies if no appointments are available, i.e. the GPs will see them as additional patients.
- The practice conducts a patient satisfaction survey every quarter (50 survey) every quarter and results are reported to Hurley Group and clinical commissioning group and discussed at the PPG.
- The practice website offers online GP consultations, with a response within 24 hours, although none of the patients interviewed said they had ever used the service

## Summary of findings/observations

The following findings and observations were made during our visit:

- Patients were very happy overall with practice and rated it on average 4/5 (where five is very good)
- Patients were happy with the reception staff who they described as kind and helpful
- The building lacks disabled access
- 18 chairs were available in the wide reception area
- Some patients complained about the lack of toys/books for waiting children
- The practice's website is not user friendly but is providing most of the general information on the front page. Some improvements required, **please refer to recommendation 5**
- The website widely publicises the online GP consultation
- Patients lack of awareness of PPG (Patient Participation Group).
- No information in other languages were seen on display

## Physical environment/ cleanliness/hygiene

- The reception area has both low and high desks enabling easy access for patients in wheelchairs who need to speak to reception staff.
- There was toilet available on the side of the waiting area – clean and accessible
- The waiting area was clean and tidy

## Transport

- The Allerton Road Medical Centre is located in North Hackney on the side road of the main Green Lanes Road.
- The area has good public transport links from Green Lanes (buss 106) and Lordship Park (busses 141, 341)

## Patient centred care/dignity/safety

- Most patients told us dealing with reception staff was easy; they are polite and helpful
- Two patients complained about delays in referrals for further tests/outpatients
- Some patients mentioned that care varied between practitioners.
- One patient was dissatisfied with the treatment received from locum GPs
- Few patients shared they felt rushed while seen by the doctors
- Some patients shared their dissatisfaction of the difference in the treatment they receive from different GPs
- Patients complained about being difficult to see a specific GP
- Most patients felt listened to and respected by their doctors
- Some patients mentioned the long wait on the phone while trying to book an appointment
- Patients find the practice was kept clean and tidy
- Patients shared dissatisfaction with long waits for non-emergency appointments
- Most patient were happy with the easy access to emergency appointments

### Communication with patients/ information

- Leaflet holders were well stocked with up to date health and care information
- There was no information provided in other languages
- The website was clear and up to date with key information on the front page.
- Complaint procedure and forms were available at the reception desk and on the website
- Accessible information standard information was not seen on the website or anywhere at the practice
- Only 3/19 patients surveyed on the day were aware of the PPG although information was on display in the reception area and on the website

### Access issues (physical or accessible information)

- There is poor disabled access to the practice from the street through the main entrance door. Access for wheel chair users or visually impaired patients is restricted as the main entrance door is not automated. The door is also heavy to push
- There is second door immediately after the main entrance, which we were told stays open at all times. Once at the reception area, there are low and high counters to provide easier access for patients with wheel chairs.
- **Patients, particularly those with mobility problems, would find it difficult to access the health service without assistance.**
- Practice staff collect information about patient special characteristics, e.g. their disability, diabetes etc. The information is coded and the coding placed in their notes so that an alert will pop-up notifying staff of the disability. The coding is also used as a reminder when patients are due for clinical reviews, procedures etc.
- The reception desk has high low and high counters to serve patients with wheelchairs.
- There is hearing loop available at the reception area.

### Appointments system

- Patients spoke of long waits (up to two weeks) for a scheduled GP appointment
- Patients reported that they were unable to see a specific GP of their choice.
- Patients told us it was easier to book an emergency appointment than a scheduled appointment which can take more than 2 weeks.

## **Recommendations**

**All recommendations are based on patients' feedback and our own observations**

### **Recommendation 1**

Immediately contact the Hurley Group and NHS Property Services for urgent action to provide an automated, fully accessible main door, to improve access to the building for disabled and frail patient, and those with wheel chairs and prams.

The practice considers immediately contacting NHS Property for urgent action to provide an automated main door to improve disability access to the building

### **Recommendation 2**

The practice should publicise the Patient Participation Group information more effectively (by text for example) and promoted by the GPs during their consultations. Information posters about the PPG should be made more visible to encourage better patient involvement

### **Recommendation 3**

Monitor awareness, use and effectiveness of the hearing loop in the reception area to ensure easy access for deaf people.

### **Recommendation 4**

The practice provides leaflets and advice sheets in other languages.

### **Recommendation 5**

The practice takes steps on improving its website by redesigning it to make it more patient friendly, including adding a font size option and to include a translation option for patients whose first language is other than English.

### **Recommendation 6**

The practice to publicise the complaint procedure and NHS Free complaint information with posters in the practice.

### **Recommendation 7**

The practice to publish regularly up to date PPG meeting notes and Patient satisfaction survey results on their website

### **Recommendation 8**

The practice considers steps to address some of the inconsistencies in treatment from different GPs patients reported on and share information with Healthwatch. Considering patient focused training for all clinical staff in the practice to improve consistency and quality of the care that patients receive from practitioners

### **Recommendation 9**

The practice considers reviewing its telephone appointment system and introducing an extra line for better patient access to the service.

### **Recommendation 10**

Provide patients with clear visual/printed information on how the Electronic Prescribing System (EPS) works and the timescales involved. An efficient EPS process would ease pressure on reception staff and reduce patient complaints.

### **Recommendation 11**

The practice considers reintroducing the children's play area

## **Patient feedback**

**Patient 1** *'Receptionists here are very kind, understanding and helpful and the doctors as well. I am always able to get the same day appointment. I live very close by, that's why I prefer to walk in and get the appointment rather than call. My daughter has two sons and anytime she needed emergency appointment she always gets it. I think there is a priority for children, which is great. The referral [to hospital] process has always been quick and smooth. I had to have it twice. I've always felt well looked after and respected, listened and well explained. Never had to complain about anything but if one day I need it I will probably go to the reception first. Unfortunately, I am not always able to see a specific doctor. This would be nice in terms of feeling even more comfortable knowing that the GP knows me well. I have never been part of the PPG but I know about it. It was while ago I was given information about it and have seen the poster at the reception. It would be nice if they had children's play area here like before. My grandson would enjoy the wait more today'. 5/5*

**Patient 2** *'All staff here are nice and kind. I called this morning for an emergency for my 6 year old daughter and was given an appointment for after hour and a half which worked well for me. I've always been able to book an appointment. I only felt a bit rushed in an emergency but I never complained. I am not sure I know how to do complain. (The patient was referred to the complaint procedure form at the practice reception). They used to have toys to distract children while waiting but not anymore. It would be good if there was something for children. Apart from that, everything else is fine. I feel listened and respected as a person and for my culture and beliefs. Doctors are good in explaining. The place is always clean and tidy. Never heard of PPG and never seen or received any information about it'. 5/5*

**Patient 3** *'Generally they are doing well apart from the locum doctors. I don't think they are as good as the regular ones. I feel like they don't care much about how we feel. I don't find them approachable. It feels like they automatically talk to you without listening. That's why I have less trust in them. I don't feel comfortable and try to avoid being seen by one. Because they don't have the same responsibility as the regular doctors here. When I need a referral they don't give it to me and say 'you should talk to your regular GP'. I am not a complaining person that's why never had to do it, but if needed I would probably go to the reception first. Referrals have been smooth with other doctors. The place is always clean – toilets and waiting area. Never heard of PPG but is not something I would be interested in'. 4/5*

**Patient 4** *'Booking regular appointments can take up to three weeks. I can't say the service here is excellent, but is not bad. There are two lady doctors who I always see. With one of them I always feel a bit rushed. The other one gives me more time, explains better and I feel more comfortable. 10 minutes for an appointment is ridiculous. It happened few times when I called at 8am to book an appointment and the line was always busy and when they finally pick up there are no more appointments available – without knowing if it is serious emergency or not. Never been called by a duty doctor. No appointments, no care. This is not good. The waiting area always seems clean. It would be good to see the same doctor and if they made more emergency appointments available, because it is an emergency'. 3/5*



**Patient 5** *'Receptionists here are lovely. They are always helpful, face to face or over the phone. Unfortunately regular appointments can take up to two and a half weeks which is a lot, but there are emergency appointments too. They work much better. The doctors are lovely, listening and explaining everything but I would prefer to see regularly the same doctor each time rather than different ones. The nurse here is also great. I am aware of online services available on their website from the leaflets at the centre but I have never had to use any of them. Never heard of PPG and never had to complain so not sure how it works. Will be great if there is a homeopathic service here at least once in two weeks'. 4/5*

**Patient 6** *'Staff here are great. The doctors, receptionists and nurses are just amazing. I have been patient here for more than six years. I recently moved to another area but kept the practice because I feel comfortable, respected and well looked after. Regular appointments can take 1-2 weeks but this is ok for me. I always have enough time to spend with the GP. English is not my first language and I don't speak it very well but the doctors always speak slowly and repeat when they see that I don't understand. Never had an issue with it. Referrals are good'. 5/5*

**Patient 7:** *'They are doing well, no need to close them. I usually have a good experience with the doctors and receptionists. In general they are good. I am not aware of the complaints procedure but I have never needed it. Online appointment booking is a problem but then I go through the receptionists. Sometimes I have to wait for a week to get general appointment'. 4/5*

**Patient 8:** *'I walk half an hour to be able to come and see the doctor because there is trouble with the parking meter outside the building. It is easy to book an appointment but sometimes I can wait up to half an hour after the appointment time to be seen. Otherwise, the doctors here are good. The place is good for kids. They have great kids' chairs. Never heard of PPG'. 4/5*

**Patient 9:** *"I find the building easily accessible and the reception staff are good. I called at 8am this morning to book an emergency appointment. They picked up after the third try. I hardly use the surgery but even then I never see the same doctor and that's why I can't build a relationship with any. But there is one lady doctor here who I find very nice and kind, not sure if she is still here. I'm not sure how exactly the complaints procedure works but I think the complaints go to the comment box at the reception". 3/5*

**Patient 10 and 11 (husband and wife):** Both patients said that there's at least a week's waiting time for a [non-emergency] appointment.

The husband had his blood tested and had to wait for the doctor to call back and give the patient the results or arrange another appointment. The patient had to wait for another week to get the results and shared that this was long exhausting process of chasing it up. The patient didn't find the repeat prescription system to be working well as he had to chase the practice up many times over the phone when at the end he had to walk in to sort it out.

Both patients find it easy to choose which doctor they want to see. Both shared they never heard of PPG and not aware of what exactly does'. 3/5

**Patient 12 and 13 (husband and wife):** *'The wife booked her appointment at 8:50 after a phone call this morning and was given appointment for later on today. She complained she can't see the same doctor every time, but there is a kind lady doctor who she prefers. Sometimes she has to wait 30 mins to be called by the doctor after the appointment time.*

The patient also shared that the repeat prescription process isn't well explained. She has been told it will be at the pharmacy in two days but then had to wait for another two days to get her medication.

The husband shared that they have to chase the doctors for hospital referral. The patient finds some doctors are good, others don't seem to understand his needs. The patient finds receptionist always nice and kind. They both rated the service 3/5

**Patient 14:** *'I called three times from 8am today to book an appointment and the telephone line was always engaged. I am lucky, most time I see the same female doctor. She understands my needs and explains my treatment well. The staff are good in general. The repeat prescription system seems to be working well. I just needed to chase them up a little for my hospital referral. They used to have toys for the kids here, especially for the babies. Not having them any more really upsets me. Never heard of PPG'. 3/5*

**Patient 15:** *'The staff are great. The doctors always give me attention, the nurse is great – 10 out of 10 for everything. The only thing is that you have to wait for two weeks to see the nurse. The staff are good and friendly. I never heard of PPG or and I don't know about the complaints' procedure but I guess that is because I never needed it'. 5/5*

**Patient 16** *'I am quite new patient and when I registered they I had a three week wait for and appointment to see the doctor. I had to book an emergency appointment for a blood test which took 10 days. The doctor didn't seem to care much about me, because I was keep asking him for referral when he didn't even once ask me what was wrong with me. I am well aware of how to make a complaint as I had to do it before. I left my details at the reception and said I have complaint to make. After that they called me to take my complaint. It was about the rude and aggressive doctor's behaviour towards me. Never heard of PPG'. 3/5*

**Patient 17:** *'The doctors and the rest of the staff here are good. I am happy'. 5/5*

**Patient 18:** *'It's is easy to book an appointment. I call at 8am to book an appointment for the same day, otherwise have to wait for 2-3 weeks for a regular one. I usually request seeing a female doctor and never had problem with it. I have heard of PPG but is too far to go. The clinic for the elderly at Homerton is a waste of time for me as they keep sending me back to my GP. Instead of them booking me in or dealing with the problem in the hospital they send me back here. I feel the elderly unit at Homerton is a waste of time'. 5/5*

**Patient 19:** *'The waiting time to see a doctor after checking in at reception can take up to a 30 minutes. There is no play area for the kids which is sad'. 4/5*

#### **Carer feedback**

No carers were interviewed on the day

**Staff comments**

After the visit we spoke to the practice manager and asked her questions about the issues below

**Lack of toys/books for waiting children**

**Response:** No resources and capacity to provide toys for children

**Information in other languages**

**Response:** Information can be provided in variety of formats and interpreter can be provided on request

**Heavy front entrance door** which make the practice inaccessible for disabled or visually impaired patients and for people with buggies.

**Response:** The practice manager she shared her dissatisfaction with the slow response from NHS Property Services and added that staff provides assistance to patients with mobility problems We also discussed the slow response from NHS Property Services to repairs and the lack of communication if work was completed or needed further investigation.

**Accessible Information Standard**

**Response:** The practice is using a clinical system/ software to code patients' information which creates alerts and enables the recording of all of the data items or categories associated with the subset defined by the Accessible Information Standard.

**Appointments system**

The practice provides home visits up on request to patients who are unable to get to the practice.

**Staff training**

Every new employee is provided in-house mandatory/induction training within the first three months including basic life support, safeguarding, health and safety, custom safety provided by the Hurley Group. Staff most recently received 'Customer Care & Coping at the Sharp End training and training on cultural differences, female genital mutilation, safeguarding adults and children, domestic abuse and Prevent.

### Summary of demographic/equality information collected

<b>Ethnic category</b>	
White	12
Other White	4
Black or Black British	1
Other Black	
Asian or Asian British	2
Other Asian	

<b>Gender</b>	
Male	6
Female	13

### Allerton Rd Medical Centre Action plan

Recommendation	Action and progress	Comment
<p>Immediately contact the Hurley Group and NHS Property Services for urgent action to provide an automated, fully accessible main door, to improve access to the building for disabled and frail patient, and those with wheel chairs and prams. The practice considers immediately contacting NHS Property for urgent action to provide an automated main door to improve disability access to the building</p>	<p><b>Pending</b> - waiting for permission from the Landlord to proceed.</p>	<p>The Hurley Group have been liaising with NHS Property Services who manage the premises on behalf of the Landlord. We have applied for CCG funding towards the changes needed to access and this has been approved. We are waiting on NHS Property Services to obtain permission from the Landlord so that we can proceed. We have obtained several quotes in preparation.</p>
<p>The practice should publicise the Patient Participation Group information more effectively (by text for example) and promoted by the GPs during their consultations. Information posters about the PPG should be made more visible to encourage better patient involvement</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>We now have a large laminated poster displaying the next meeting date, this is placed on the front door, date is added to website and meeting invites are attached to prescriptions. Reception staff also verbally invite patients, invite sent by email and texts sent. A large demographic of the practice population does not use technology and rely on written or verbal (in person) communication. This does present the practice with challenges to engage patients and keep them well informed in a financially viable way.</p>
<p>Monitor awareness, use and effectiveness of the hearing loop in the reception area to ensure easy access</p>	<p>Already in place</p>	<p>There are signs in the waiting area and reception desk advising that we have a hearing loop. Staff have been trained how to use the equipment, there is also a portable</p>

for deaf people.		hearing loop for use in consultation rooms. Equipment is check regularly
The practice provides leaflets and advice sheets in other languages	completed	Leaflets in different languages have been ordered according to our patient population
The practice takes steps on improving its website by redesigning it to make it more patient friendly, including adding a font size option and to include a translation option for patients whose first language is other than English.	Done	We have a group website. We are currently reviewing websites with a view to improving them and making them more informative and patient friendly. We will take your comments into account as part of the review. In the interim adjustments can be made to font size on patients home computers and language translation is available through Google translate etc
The practice to publicise the complaint procedure and NHS Free complaint information with posters in the practice.	Already in place	<p>The complaints process is available to all patients in hard copy in the waiting room and also on the practice website.</p> <p>We encourage patients to contact the practice manager in the first instance if they have a complaint. Patient are informed to contact us or they can approach NHSEngland direct at <a href="mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net">england.contactus@nhs.net</a> or on 0113 254 5000</p> <p>If neither body helps resolve the issue, pateints are informed they have the right to approach the Ombudsman on 0345 015 4033 and at <a href="mailto:phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk">phso.enquiries@ombudsman.org.uk</a></p> <p>Patients are informed that the Care Quality Commission is always interested in both issues and outcomes. Details can be forwarded to <a href="mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk">enquiries@cqc.org.uk</a> though please be aware they are not involved in the resolution process.</p>

<p>The practice to publish regularly up to date PPG meeting notes and Patient satisfaction survey results on their website</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>PPG minutes and reports are published on the surgery website along with results of our surveys. PPG minutes are sent to PPG members PPG minutes are made available in the waiting room for all patients to see</p>
<p>The practice considers steps to address some of the inconsistencies in treatment from different GPs patients reported on and share information with Healthwatch. Considering patient focused training for all clinical staff in the practice to improve consistency and quality of the care that patients receive from practitioners</p>	<p>Already in place</p>	<p>All clinicians attend regular patient focused workshops within CCG and Homerton Hospital, which helps ensure all are up to date and following current processes. Access to Hackney GP website is available to all GPs and locums. This details all clinical pathways and referral details to assist GPs in providing care the patients Referrals / referral pathways are discussed at clinical meetings This all aids a unified approach by GPs for patients</p>
<p>The practice considers reviewing its telephone appointment system and introducing an extra line for better patient access to the service.</p>	<p>Pending - Discussed with Hurley Group, who are reviewing current telephone system and looking at options available to enable improvements</p>	<p>Changes to the staff rota has enabled more staff available at peak times to answer phones. The phone system notifies patients on their position in the queue We encourage patients with routine queries to call during quieter times of the day (rather than first thing in the morning) We encourage patients to manage their appointments and prescription requests using online access We encourage patients to use online self help via our e-consult app We encourage patients to consult with us online using e-consult We have a telephone message to inform patients of our online services.</p>
<p>Provide patients with</p>	<p>All staff have</p>	<p>There are leaflets available for</p>

<p>clear visual/printed information on how the Electronic Prescribing System (EPS) works and the timescales involved. An efficient EPS process would ease pressure on reception staff and reduce patient complaints.</p>	<p>received EPS training. There were initial problems when system was set up but these have been resolved. Any issues are reported to CCG.</p>	<p>patients advising how EPS works and all patients have a nominated pharmacy</p>
<p>The practice considers reintroducing the children's play area</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Under Infection Control Policy, we do not have children's toy or books due to the risk of cross contamination / cross infection and the compliance requirements for risk assessment, decontamination and monitoring.</p>