



Details of visit

Service address: Stocks Lane, Gamlingay, Sandy, SG19 3JR
Service Provider: Greensands Medical Practice
Date and Time: 21st January 2016 10:00-12:30
Authorised Representatives: Dave Simpson, Diana Blackmun
Contact details: Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire
Capability House, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HR
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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.



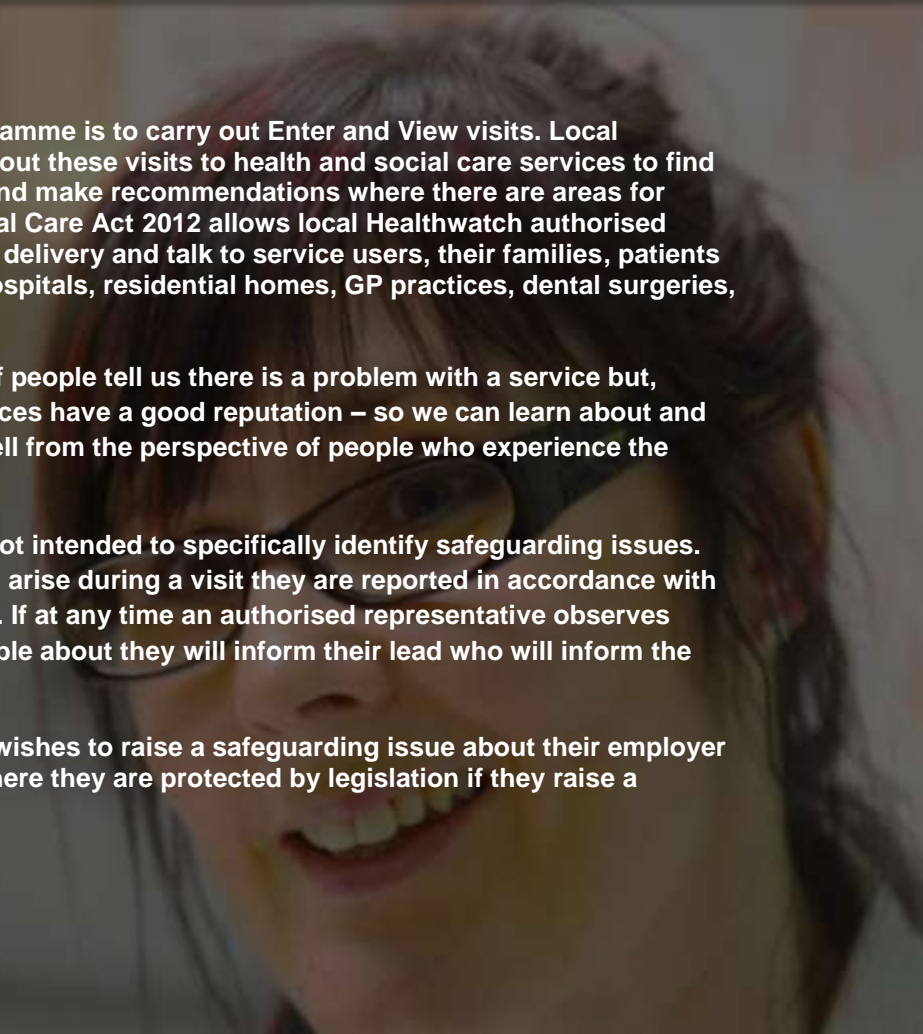
What is Enter and View?

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 the Medical Centre, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay which is part of the Greensands Medical Practice, Potton.

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.

On the day of the visit, the Practice Manager arranged 'booked slots' for HWCB representatives to talk to several GPs and members of their administration and clinical staff. This was in addition to speaking to patients in the waiting area. 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

Greensands Medical Practice is an accredited University Teaching Practice for Cambridge University. The surgery is located in a custom-built single storey building which is owned and maintained by the partners.

The premises are wheelchair and 'buggy' accessible with a parking area for prams & buggies in the entrance lobby. There is also a wheelchair available for patient use.

Names of the GPs at the Practice are displayed on brass plates in the entrance lobby, and the website contains photographs of the GPs along with short biographies.

Easily accessible clean toilets are available (M/F and disabled) off the main corridor. An electronic booking-in terminal (SystemOne) is situated next to the reception desk.

Results of visit

Staff

The Practice has the following members of staff:

- Seven GP Partners;
- Five Male and two female GPs;
- One Practice Manager;
- Three Practice Nurses;
- One Nurse Prescriber;
- Two Healthcare Assistants (HCAs);
- Nine reception staff;
- Eight other staff members;
- As a training Practice, Cambridge Medical Students.

Specialist Services provided

- Phlebotomy;
- Near Patient Testing;
- Sexual Health;
- Vasectomy Clinic;
- Minor Surgery;
- Minor Injury;
- Travel Health;
- Cytology;
- Child immunisation;
- Wound Care
- Ear syringing;
- Vaccinations
- Cryotherapy;
- Minor Illness Clinic;
- Slit Lamp for Ophthalmology;
- Asthma & Diabetes clinics;
- Anticoagulation;
- Smoking cessation;
- NHS Healthchecks;
- Dermatology;
- ENT

Surgery Hours

Monday	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	2:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Tuesday	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	2:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	Closed
Thursday	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	2:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Friday	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	2:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Saturday	Closed	
Sunday	Closed	



Environment

Other observations included:

A warm, light and airy environment with all fire exits and toilets well signed. A hearing loop is available and patients can ask at reception for water, tissues etc. A good range and selection of information leaflets available for patients and public.

Car Parking

Patients are able to park in the surgery car park which appears to have a sufficient number of parking spaces for the size of the Practice.

Patient Information

The waiting room has a wide selection of patient information and leaflets etc. The Practice website is easy to navigate and provides a variety of information regarding the services available at the Practice, staff, clinics and links to other forms, articles and websites including the bi-monthly newsletter.

Included on the website is a selection of information leaflets detailing the role of UK Health Services in a selection of foreign languages available as downloads.

Registration at the Practice(s)

The Practice Manager informed HWCB's representatives that new patients can register in person at the Practice with proof of identity and residence. They would need to complete a general questionnaire and Form GMS1. These forms, including a Temporary Services form for temporary Residents, are available and can be downloaded from the website.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Practice has an active PPG with a core of eleven members drawn from both surgeries and meets bi-monthly. The age range of members is 30-70, with the majority in the 60-70 age range. The Practice is actively seeking new members for the PPG and advertises in the surgery and on the Practice website.

The group has assisted with the running of flu clinics and also devised questions for a survey of patients on the quality of service within the Practice. The results were used to inform an Action Plan and are displayed both on the notice boards and on the Practice website.

Patient Consultation

The Practice gains feedback from patients from these main sources:

- PPG meetings and surveys.
- Patient comments/suggestions directly to the practice in the Suggestions Box.
- Results of the Friends and Family Test.
- NHS Choices website.

Comments from PPG members included; *'An amazing service at both Pottton and Gamlingay surgeries'; 'I don't mind which doctor I see, unless it's 'a male problem' then I ask for a male doctor!'; 'I have 100% confidence in the doctors.'*

Appointments System

The Practice Manager informed HWCB representatives that patients can book appointments in person, by telephone or online via SystemOne. The Practice is currently attempting to encourage more of its cohort of patients to use online booking.

Representatives were also informed by both the Practice Manager and the Chair of the PPG, that early morning, late evening or weekend appointments are not available. Such appointments had previously been trialled however; the take-up suggested there was no call for appointments at these times.

Patients who call for an urgent appointment will have their request triaged by a GP. The receptionists may also ask whether the patient would like to see the minor illness nurse rather than see the GP. All patients who need to have an urgent appointment will be seen on the same day.

Housebound patients requiring home visits are encouraged to telephone by 10:00 am. If the call is received after 11:00 the request will be handed to the Duty Doctor to attend to.

Out of Hours Care

This service is provided by M-Doc, the emergency contact telephone number is displayed at the entrance window and on the practice website with a link to further information about the service.

Medication & Prescriptions

Medication reviews are carried out at intervals depending on the type of medication, some may be three-monthly, others six monthly or annually. Some reviews may be carried out by the dispensers, and Asthma nurses may review patients' asthma medications.

Repeat prescriptions can be ordered in person at the surgery, online or by fax, but not over the telephone. They are normally ready within 48 hours.

Patient Questionnaire Results

A total of 28 questionnaires was completed at the Practice, results were as follows:

- 1) **When registering at the Practice, did you receive a Practice Leaflet/Handbook?** – seven replied 'Yes' two said 'No' or did not answer and 19 said they couldn't remember.
- 2) **Did you find it easy to register at the Practice?** - 21 said 'Yes', six couldn't remember and one did not answer.
- 3) **Do you know if the surgery has a Patient Participation Group (PPG)?** – Nine said they did know and 19 said they didn't.
- 4) **Are you a member of the PPG?** – None of the respondents is a member of the PPG.
- 5) **How do you book appointments at the surgery?** – The results show that 13 respondents book solely by telephone, two solely in person; twelve use a combination of the two with only one respondent using both plus online booking.
- 6) **Are there appointments available in unsociable hours? (e.g. before 8:00 am or after 6:30 pm)** – Three patients thought that there were, six said there were not and 19 did not know.
- 7) **Can you get an appointment when you need one?** – 21 replied that they could, two said they couldn't and five made other comments such as '*Sometimes*', '*not always*', and '*Not always as my Dr is very popular!*' and '*When you need one yes, if you're not well they will see you.*'
- 8) **Do you receive a reminder text message about your appointment on your mobile?** – 16 replied 'Yes' and six each replied 'No' or said they don't have a mobile.
- 9) **When booking an appointment with your GP are you given a choice of Health Professional?** – Eight respondents said they were only offered a GP, eight were offered a GP and Minor Illness Nurse (MI), one was only offered an HCA, one stated an HCA and a MI Nurse, four said just a MI Nurse and five were offered all three. One patient did not answer.
- 10) **Do you know what the surgery opening times are?** – 26 replied 'Yes' one 'No' and one did not answer. A comment was made that the surgery '*Could be open lunchtimes!*'
- 11) **What do you do if you need to see a doctor out of hours?** – Of those who answered, twelve would call the answerphone for the out of hours/Mdoc number, three would call 111, two would go to A&E, two said the walk-in centre at St Neots.

- 12) **At your appointment, do you feel you have enough time with the GP, nurse or Healthcare Assistant (HCA) to discuss your issues?** – 25 replied 'Yes', two said 'No' and one was unsure commenting '*Time allowed depends on what needs discussing.*' Another comment was '*She never rushes me.*'
- 13) **At your appointment, do you feel the GP, nurse or Healthcare Assistant listens to you and considers your opinion?** – 27 patients said 'Yes' with one being unsure.
- 14) **Are staff (Reception/Practice Manager) at your surgery helpful and understanding?** – All respondents replied 'Yes'.
- 15) **Do you know how to make a complaint about the surgery?** – 16 said they did, and twelve said they didn't.

Other comments made by patients were:

'We are very lucky to have such a great surgery.'
'A service that I value and appreciate - it's part of the reason why I'm still here!'
'Hopefully Q 15 (how to make a complaint) will never be necessary.'
'Outstanding in every respect. So kind, efficient and generally brilliant. Thank you.'
'Always polite and helpful.'
'Dr May is the only doctor that has ever listened to me and I really appreciate her time. Thank you!'
'The government's 'concerns' about 7 day and out of hour's service I find are not an issue for me. I am perfectly happy with current arrangements.'

Interaction between Patients and Staff

HWCB representatives observed interactions between patients and staff, both administrative and clinical. All interactions witnessed were carried out in a courteous, professional and friendly manner.

Clinical and non-clinical staff

During the visit, HWCB representatives spoke with several GPs and other members of staff both clinical and administrative. All staff confirmed they regularly attend various training courses for their role, including in-house training and GP training.

All the GPs spoken to were confident that the Practice was offering a good service to its patients, and all said they would like to see shorter waiting times for patients. All GP's spoken to agreed that the introduction of the triage system had really helped improve patient experience. One GP stated that funding for another GP would be ideal but adding that physically the surgery needs to expand to accommodate. Section 106 money is available for the development of the surgery and has been for three years. The Local Authority are keen for it to be used however healthcare staff at the surgery feel that NHS England appear reluctant to give the go ahead. The frustration this causes is exacerbated by the fact that the surgery's patient population is expected to rise by up to 800 due to new housing developments.

HWCB representatives asked staff members if there were any changes they would like to make at the Practice, their comments ranged from; '*No, we made some major changes a couple of years ago and it's all good now*'; and '*The reception counter is not very private, but the majority of patients are happy with the reception area*'; to '*Coming here was like a breath of fresh air*'; and '*I enjoy it here, it's a pleasure coming to work, the Drs are lovely.*'

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

This branch of the Greensands Medical Practice was not visited during HWCB's Mystery Shopper report '**Investigating the Complaints Process – General Practice**' earlier this year due to its location on the border of Central Bedfordshire. However, since we received confirmation that patients at this surgery are the responsibility of the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, HWCB representatives are pleased to report that the Practice scores five out of five.

The Practice Complaints Policy and Procedure is available in the reception area, and is prominently displayed on the website for patients and the public to download.

Additional Findings

The overall impression gained during this visit is of a well-run, caring and innovative Practice which puts the needs of its patient population at the forefront of its *modus operandi*.



Recommendations

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (HWCB) recommends that the Practice continues with its proactive promotion of the PPG to raise awareness of its existence and to attract new members to the group.

HWCB also recommends that in light of the responses to Q 5 of the survey, in which only one patient said they used the online system, that the Practice encourages the patient population to use the online services, and considers a survey of its patient cohort to discover any reasons why the online service is not more widely used.

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

Thank you very much for the detailed report which we feel is an accurate assessment of our Practice visit. We acknowledge the recommendations made by the team. I have shared the report with the staff (clinical and non-clinical) and we will publicise on our website for patients to view.

On behalf of the Practice, I would like to thank you for visiting the Practice.

Nicola Gauge, Practice Manager
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