

## Denmark Street Surgery Visit

Information for young patients



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## Who are Healthwatch Darlington?

Healthwatch Darlington is a charitable company limited by guarantee which makes us a totally independent organisation. We help local patients, service users and their families to get the best out of their health and social care services in the Borough. We listen to the voices of service users and use their real-life experiences to influence and improve the delivery and design of services.

- Healthwatch Darlington is representative of diverse communities.
- Healthwatch Darlington's vision and mission focuses our work on what needs to be achieved to improve Health and Social Care services for local people.

### What we do:

- Enable local voices to influence the delivery of local Health and Social Care services
- Use local volunteers to gather views and experiences from local people
- Involve and engage local people, putting YOU at the heart of Health and Social Care service decision making
- Enable local people to make informed choices about their own, their families and friends' Health and Social Care
- Influence the way services are planned, designed, commissioned and delivered
- Have strong relationships with Health and Social Care providers as a critical friend using community views to influence and improve planning and delivery of services
- Provide information, advice and support about local services and signpost to them

**We are independent and we make Health and Social care providers answerable to the people who use their services.**



## Who are Youthwatch Darlington?

Youthwatch Darlington is a young volunteering group for 14 -25 years old who aim to improve health and social care for young people living in Darlington. They are the voice for young patients and service users living in the local area.



You can find out more about Youthwatch Darlington by contacting Jemma Austin via: [j.austin@healthwatchdarlington.co.uk](mailto:j.austin@healthwatchdarlington.co.uk) or by calling 01325 380145.

Alternatively, you can visit: [www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk)



YouthWatchDarlo



@youthwatchdarlo



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## Who are Denmark Street surgery?

Denmark Street Surgery is one of 11 GP surgeries based in Darlington located on Demark Street just off North Road.

## Why have we explored Denmark Street Surgery and information for young people?

Youthwatch Darlington were contacted by the practice manager who requested our assistance in giving and providing feedback, in response to their waiting rooms, in relation to young people. We were keen to get involved with this project as this would directly affect us and because it is very important to influence young people's experience at the surgery in a positive way. There is a lack of research and focus when it comes to this area, therefore our investigation will provide more help and advice for surgeries to connect with young people. Youthwatch were happy to conduct an observation visit initially as we believe it is important that the correct information is available to young people.

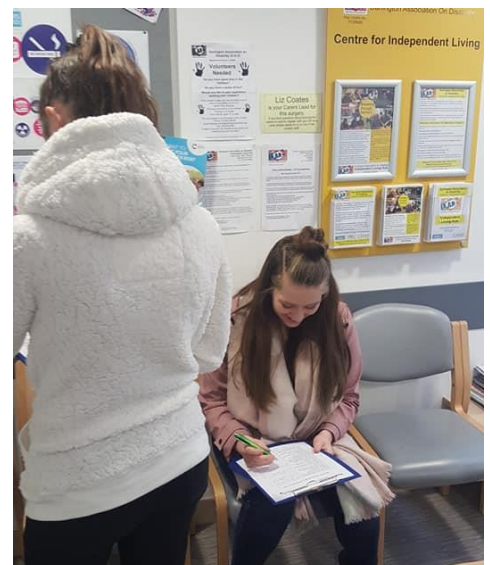
### Observation Visit

During the visit we observed the waiting areas within the main GP surgery and the annexe, which is across the road. Patients can access sexual and contraceptive health support from the annexe but it's important to note they may also access support from within the GP Surgery as any health professional within both buildings can give advice.

### Methodology

During the observation visit we used the following questions to help us look for certain information which may be available for young patients. There are 10 questions in the questionnaire, including:

1. Are there plenty of display posters with useful information for young people?
2. Is there a wide selection of information leaflets available for CYP?
3. Are there plenty of magazines or reading material for young people during the wait?
4. Is there a section for younger children such as a small selection of toys or books?
5. Does the waiting area seem welcoming for young patients?
6. Is it clear to young patients how to navigate the building, as they may be attending for the first time without a parent?
7. Does the website have a CYP section with plenty of information?
8. Is the website visually pleasing to younger patients?
9. Is there plenty of useful information and contact numbers available with a wide range of choice?
10. Is there information about rights for young patients on the website and in the waiting area?



## GP Surgery:

When observing and investigating the surgery we took note of a few different things, including the display of relevant posters and leaflets, how welcoming the surgery was, and what sort of information was available to young people.

Upon looking at the display of posters in the building, we found that there was quite a lot of general information, which could be useful to many, but not much choice relating specifically to young people and young carers. We also saw that some of the posters on display are out of date and display incorrect information. A lot of the information and posters shown on one particular display board was in black and white print, which is not as inviting to read and engage with as coloured posters would be. Along with this, there were positive comments from patients which were displayed on the wall, however, these again were in black and white, but are right in the corner of the room, so they were not very visible to anyone waiting in the room.

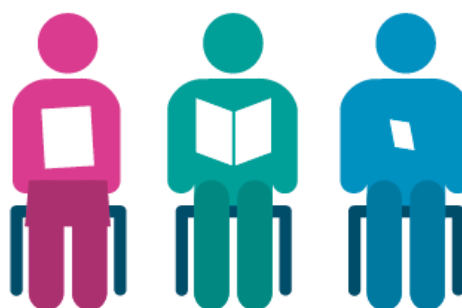
The GP surgery had a wide variety of leaflets about local services, but none of these related to younger people, and the issues that they may face. We feel there needs to be more information for young patients, for example; sexual health, mental health and young carers. When looking around the surgery we found a CASH leaflet, which can be very helpful to young people, however, we were unsure as to whether this had correct and up to date information included. Following this, we researched the current delivery of sexual health and contraceptive services in Darlington, and we are concerned that the information within the leaflet may be out of date, therefore this would need to be reviewed. There are a few small tables around the room, one of which, at the edge of the room, held reading material from a wide range of topics. This was good, as it encouraged a welcoming environment in the surgery where people can feel comfortable. However, we thought the placement could be more central, so that it is more accessible to people all over the waiting room, rather than just one side of the room. We think the addition of some children's books for very young patients, or parents that need to bring their children with them, should also be considered.

Overall, the surgery waiting room is welcoming for young people, however, the glass panels surrounding the receptionists is very unwelcoming and creates a closed atmosphere, which can make the patient feel closed off and intimidated. When we visited, there was a flu and shingles information board which was massively colourful and inviting to read and learn from. This was great, and we thought this could be implemented throughout the rest of the display boards, with more information regarding young people's health and wellbeing.

### Summary of findings:

- There is a wide variety of general posters and leaflets but not much relating to young people; need more relating to mental health.
- Some posters and leaflets were out of date.
- Some posters are dull and non-colourful.
- Reading material was good but could do with some aimed at children.
- Glass panels are very unwelcoming and intimidating.
- Colourful display boards were great and could be used throughout the surgery.

**RECEPTION**



### Annexe:

In the Annexe building we saw an increase of relevant posters to young people, of which most were in colour and were easy to read from afar. However, we noted that there could be more posters and information focusing on mental health.

There are loads of informative leaflets on the leaflet board; however it was around the corner so it was hard to see. Overall, the annex had a much more welcoming atmosphere, due to the radio and the lack of glass surrounding the receptionist.

One issue we highlighted was the navigation and signs for the other building the patient may need. We felt a young patient, attending the GP surgery for the first time, would not know about the second building, so they would automatically attend the main surgery. This would lead to the obvious need to look around, or possibly to ask for directions, which could be embarrassing in front of other patients. As this second building is for contraceptive services and sexual health, this can sometimes be a difficult subject to approach. One of our Youthwatch members has had first hand experience with confusing navigation regarding which building to go to. Therefore, we investigated this whilst we visited, and we noticed directional posters above the check in machine. Although this is can be informative, it is not in direct eye-line so can be easily missed, as our Youthwatch member did.

## Summary of findings:

- Relevant posters which were in colour and easy to read.
- Could have more posters focusing on mental health.
- Loads of general leaflets but hard to see as they are around the corner, not many directed at younger people.
- Good atmosphere with the radio and lack of glass.
- Difficult to navigate and to know which building to attend.



## Website:

Youthwatch Darlington visited Denmark Street Surgery's website and we initially struggled to locate information directed at young people as it was at the bottom of a long list of links. We think that the list could be reordered as we believe it looked random and some of the links take priority over others with young people towards the bottom.

Once we accessed the page for young people we noticed that it wasn't very inviting as there are no images but a large amount of text which had differing formatting throughout the page. Some of the text is not well written, for example, the listing of pharmacies provide the oral hormonal pill is very difficult to read as there is no punctuation to separate the different locations. Some information needs to be updated as it is out of date. For instance, DISC has had a name change and is now known as Humankind.

Youthwatch found that the website had a lot of information about the services that were mentioned, however we felt that there could be more information regarding different topics.

## Conclusion

Throughout this observation visit we were really happy to see such a wide selection of posters and information with colourful display boards. However, there does need to be some improvement made to the variety and selection available to younger patients. We think it's important to focus on pressing areas of concern for young people such as mental health, sexual health and young carers. Although the surgery itself was well presented and welcoming, the website was less informative and could do with more improvements.



Youthwatch have some recommendations and suggestions that we look forward to help and assist with in the future.

- Both the surgery and the Annexe should expand their range of informative leaflets for younger patients. **Youthwatch Darlington can provide a list of recommended leaflets that the surgery should order.**
- There is a broken leaflet display board that is taking up a large amount of free space which could be utilised by either fixing the board to display more leaflets or removing the entire thing to make space for a young person's display board as there isn't currently a permanent one.
- Youthwatch recommend that all posters and displayed feedback and comments should be printed in colour in order to encourage engagement with the patients. **Youthwatch Darlington will be providing the surgery with posters for young people.**
- We think that the table with the magazines could be a good area to rotate a small selection of leaflets, alongside the current available reading material.
- Regarding the navigation between the main surgery and the Annexe, we recommend that a clearer directional poster, with an image of the Annexe building is placed next to the check in machine rather than above, so it is more at eye level. Alternatively, there could be a pop up on the machine when checking in, so the patients are required to close it, so that patients take notice of it.
- Youthwatch recommend that a small selection of children's books should be provided for the younger patients whilst waiting.
- Youthwatch Darlington recommends that the website is kept up to date and that the formatting is kept constant.
- We think that the website should have more images and more sources for information. **Youthwatch can provide a list of relevant web links.**
- Youthwatch recommends that the surgery adjusts the listings on the website so the contain comma's or bullet points, so the lists are easier to read.

Youthwatch Darlington would like to thank Cherrie Hirst, the Practice Manager at Denmark Street Surgery for arranging this visit. We have really enjoyed working on this project and improving services for young people who attend the surgery.

## What happened next

Following on from Youthwatch Darlington's report being sent to Denmark Street Surgery they were invited to create a new display board for young patients within the GP surgery. The display board features within the main waiting area and the surgery now has posters, a website list and a leaflet list ready to continue developing the information available for young patients further.

The display board features information about mental health, sexual health, young carers, diet, young people and loneliness. The posters include crisis text lines, parent helplines and online links for further information.



From the left Hannah, Madi, Practice Manager Cherrie Hirst, Lauren and Alistair.



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