



Enter and View report

The Rycote Practice

February 2019



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1 Introduction

1.1 Details of visit

Details of visit:	
Service Address	Thame Health Centre, East Street, Thame, OX9 3JZ
Service Provider	
Date and Time	Monday 11 th February 09:00-12:00
Authorised Representatives	Carol Ball, Richard Maynard
Contact details	01865 520520

1.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to thank the service provider, patients and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

1.3 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, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



2 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 run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families 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 need to 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.

2.1 Purpose of Visit

- To observe how the facility operates and provides its services.
- To collect views from patients and staff on services.
- To identify 'Best Practice' and highlight any areas of concern.

2.2 Strategic drivers

In February 2019 Healthwatch Oxfordshire together with Healthwatch Buckinghamshire ran a two-week project based in Thame to hear from residents about their views of local NHS and Health and Social Care services. The Enter and View visit to the Rycote Practice was part of this project. Healthwatch Buckinghamshire carried out an Enter and View on Unity Health which is the other GP practice at Thame Health Centre.

2.3 Methodology

We made a visit to the Rycote Practice on 25th January to meet the practice manager and explain the purpose of Enter and View. On the 30th January the



Authorised Representatives held a planning meeting to determine which questions should be asked. Opportunity to input into this process was also given to the Practice Manager and the Patient Participation Group.

We carried out general observations of the environment including information available to patients. We heard from eleven patients and eight staff members

- We explained why we were there to staff and patients
- We discussed our findings with the provider.

2.4 Summary of findings

- The Rycote is one of two busy GP practices in the thriving town of Thame.
- Continuity of patient care is at the heart of the practice ethos.
- The practice is run by a hard-working and dedicated staff team who aim to deliver excellent care by working together.
- In general, patients feel well informed and happy with the care they receive.

2.5 Results of visit

The Rycote Practice is a General Practice based within the Thame Health Centre. It shares the building with Unity Health which is a Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group funded service.

On the day of the visit the Rycote had 12147 registered patients and patient numbers are growing at 3% per annum. There are five GP partners (plus a Managing Partner) and four salaried GP's plus eleven members of the nursing team, midwives, health visitors and community nurses who are supported by a practice team including admin, receptionists and secretaries. Appointments available are routine, same day urgent and 48-hour appointments with early appointments on Tuesdays and Thursdays and late appointments on Mondays. As part of the Government's pledge to provide 7-day care, they offer additional appointments on some weekday evenings and some weekends. South east Oxfordshire practices are working in partnership to open until 8pm on weekdays and for three hours on Saturday and Sunday mornings offering, routine pre-bookable appointments to all patients. Opening times are as listed

Monday*	08:15 - 19:15
Tuesday*	07:30 - 18:00
Wednesday	08:15 - 18:00
Thursday*	07:30 - 18:00
Friday	08:15 - 18:00
Saturday	08:30 - 10:30

The phone lines routinely open from 08:15 but the main doors open at 08:00 (except on Tuesday and Thursday when appointments are available from 07:30).

Observations

The Rycote Practice 'believes in providing modern healthcare based on traditional values'. Every patient is under the care of a usual doctor. The Rycote has just launched an eConsult service so patients can seek advice or start an online consultation.

We were warmly welcomed by the Practice Manager who showed us round the Rycote side of the building. Authorised Representatives spent some time looking at the environment and what information was displayed for patients. We found that the waiting area was easy to find, with additional waiting areas well signposted. The waiting area was comfortable, clean and hazard free with enough available seating. Magazines and toys were provided for patient entertainment. The waiting area was well lit and felt safe.

Reception staff were helpful and as the Rycote reception is set back from the main waiting area, confidentiality is maintained as conversations are not easily overheard. Routine checkups were available. There is an option for self-check in to avoid any queues. There is the option to make appointments online and information is provided about how to obtain test results.

We saw information about patient transport, hearing loops and information was available in other formats. We were told that when there is a need for translation or signing services, this would be triggered by reception at the point of booking, or by the GP if needed. Main language is recorded at registration and alerts are added to records to prompt staff to book translators in advance of contacts.

Patient Engagement

We saw evidence of patient engagement with information provided on how to make a complaint, the Family and Friends Test, comments box and patient satisfaction data. We also saw a Healthwatch Oxfordshire poster on display, plus information about the Rycote Patient Participation Group.

Patient Feedback

We spoke with eleven patients about their experience using the Rycote Practice. All patients had been to the practice before with the majority of six having attended within seven days of the Enter and View visit. The remainder had all been seen within a three month period.

Making an appointment

Eight out of eleven told us it was easy to make an appointment. Patients had used both the phone system and booked via reception. We heard that generally it was easier to make an appointment in person as the phone line can be busy, but it does depend upon the time of day as there are calling peaks at 08:00 and 14:00. The



practice are in the process of procuring a new phone system in order to give call queuing information and allow call analysis so resource can be matched to demand. We were not aware that any patients we spoke to had used the online booking system, but the practice does have high levels of online use with half of patients registered and over a third are active users. Approximately one third of GP appointments are available online and a project has just been undertaken to ensure online users have full access to their medical records.

“Booked appointment via reception and it was very easy. The staff are lovely, kind and very gentle.”

In our general outreach we often hear from patients that the GP receptionists will ask what the problem is when they book an appointment and a number of people are uncomfortable or unhappy about this.

We thought it would be useful to hear what the Rycote patients thought. Seven of the patients we spoke to were asked the reason for their appointment and no-one objected to this. All same day appointments are made after asking the purpose of the consultation. This question is mandatory for e-consultations. We were told that it does depend upon the issues and that some patients were unsure how much information they need to provide.

When it came to staff engagement, patients were very positive about their experiences with the reception staff, telling us they were excellent and very helpful, and particularly good with making appointments for children. We were also told that the GP’s are fantastic.

All eleven patients told us they felt listened to and taken seriously by the clinician who saw them.

“Practice is outstanding. All the doctors I have seen generally give an excellent service”

Waiting Room

The majority of patients we spoke to about the waiting area were fairly neutral about it telling us it was fine, and it was what it was. One patient said they would like to see some plants. The Rycote practice shares the building (including the waiting area) with another practice and they have to agree on use of these shared spaces as the premises are managed from a separate shared budget. They have previously suggested plants for the waiting area but the other practice did not feel this was a good use of resources. They plan re-open these discussions but it is not something that can easily be achieved in isolation. Three people told us that they were not informed if the clinicians were running late, but this didn’t appear to be much of a problem as they expected a slight delay and staff always apologized if they did run late. The practice will shortly be getting a new TV information screens

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that will allow real time information to be added, including information on waiting time delays.

We asked patients whether they knew what the process was for finding about a range of issues. Not everyone was able to give us feedback as they were called to their appointment before the end of the conversation. The results are as follows:

Issue	Yes	No	Not Sure
Repeat prescription	7	1	1
Test results	7		2
Follow up Appointments	9		
Referrals	7	1	1
Routine Check ups	7		
Choices and Advice	6	2	
Giving Feedback	4	2	2

As we can see, most patients knew how to follow up on the majority of queries/issues. In relation to giving feedback there was slightly less certainty with those less certain saying they would ask or assumed they would need to send someone an email. Information on how to make a complaint is on display within the surgery, with limited information on the website. Information on how to make a complaint is less clear on the website.

Only one of the patients we spoke with had heard of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) although there is a poster about it on the wall. Attempts have been made by the practice to recruit to the PPG including evening events. Patient newsletters are available on the website.

Additional Comments

“I feel comfortable coming to see my GP. Everyone loves her, she is so nice. I am happy to see any of the GPs, as they are all so nice.”

“Parking - that's a problem. On the whole it's pretty good.”



“Compared to friends' and family's practices I have no complaints.”

“Very good practice. Always been here. Really happy with it.”

“Raised concerns about treatment six or seven years ago but now feel properly listened to.”

“The practice is great at understanding our family and gives us time.”

Patient Demography

Gender

Gender	Number
Male	2
Female	9

Patient Age Brackets

Age Bracket	Number
26-35	2
36-45	3
46-55	1
56-65	1
66-75	1
76-85	3

Identified Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	Number
White British	10
White Other	1

Staff Feedback

We heard feedback from eight members of staff with job roles ranging from Receptionists, Records Administrator, GP Partner, Nurse Practitioner, Practice Secretary and Reception Manager.

Staff worked a range of part time and full-time hours depending upon their role and practice opening hours, working to a rota to ensure the surgery is fully operational for its Saturday morning opening.

Staff were very positive about working at the Rycote Practice and we heard what a great team they were with all colleagues being friendly and approachable. Staff also enjoyed the variety that their jobs provided them as well as looking after patients.

Frustrations that staff told us about varied upon their role. We heard that when essential computer software systems stopped working, valuable work time had to be used on calling helplines. There also appeared to be a lack of interoperability between the two main systems. Another big issue was high workload coupled with time constraints. Some staff told us that unrealistic patient expectations were challenging for them, particularly when patients were upset about issues beyond their control such as lack of parking spaces. High call volumes were challenging as was not being able to spend enough time with patients. From a clinical point of view delays and then cancellations of hospital appointments was an issue as was the impact of the changing benefits system.

“Universal Credit/PIP (is) an appalling betrayal of our most vulnerable patients.”

Staff would like patients to know that are working really hard and have their best interests at heart. They offer the best service that resources will allow under stressful and pressured working environments. Staff ask that patients try and remain patient with them when wanting to book appointments. The system at the Rycote is effective and staff do the best they can, so please treat them with politeness.

“To assure them that all Rycote staff have their best interests at heart. To please take time and fill in registration clearly and correctly. It saves so much time not having to telephone patients to clarify information or seek missing information.”

We heard from staff that the Rycote Practice is well run with good systems in place and is an enjoyable working environment with a great team of people.

2.6 Recommendations

- Ensure information on how to offer feedback and make complaints is clearly displayed on the website including relevant email addresses as not all patients will be comfortable phoning with a complaint. Ideally there should



be a complaints tab visible on the front page of the website as opposed to it being with patient participation.

- Display a poster at reception reminding patients that car parking is beyond the control of Health Centre staff.

2.7 Service provider response

- We believe that all the information required for complainants was available in the “Have Your Say” section of the website. However, we accept that it could be clearer and have now provided all information under a complaints tab within this section. We are also exploring options for a new internet solution with the aim of offering clearer (and more mobile friendly) information sharing.
- We have written several articles for the patient newsletter acknowledging parking issues at the practice and explaining that the practice does not own the car park. We have now added a poster to the waiting area to reiterate this message and added a slide to the TV screen at reception with a similar message
- We will also revisit discussions with our neighbours Unity Health regarding the décor of the waiting areas to endeavor to produce an environment that is more welcoming and engaging for patients

