

Enter & View Report

Whitwick Road GP Surgery

March 2022

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Report Details

Details of Visit	
Service Address	Whitwick Road, Coalville LE67 3FA
Service Provider	Whitwick Road Surgery
Date and Time	16 March 2022, 10am
Authorised Representatives undertaking the visit	Kim Marshal-Nichols and Howard Marshall

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire would like to thank the service provider, patients and staff for their contribution to the Enter & 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 service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

This report is written by volunteer Enter and View Authorised Representatives who carried out the visit on behalf of Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire.

Purpose of the visit

- To gather patient views of the service provided at Whitwick Road Surgery
- To observe the facilities and operation of the service
- To observe patient access

Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View visit.

We contacted the Practice Management Team in advance and had access to communal areas during our visit.

The visit was observational, involving the Authorised Representatives observing the surroundings to gain an understanding of how patients engaged with reception staff and the facilities.

To reach patients, we spoke to the management team prior to the visit about using the GP text messaging service. The text message was sent to the patients and we received 49 responses.

At the end of the visit, we gave our initial findings to the Management team.

Summary of the findings

- The waiting areas were spacious and clean.
- 96% of patients have had a telephone or online consultation with the doctor.
- Patients told us that the telephone system could be improved, and people found it frustrating to call at 8am to get an appointment.
- However, 74% of patients told us that for urgent appointments they could normally see the doctor or nurse on the same day.
- Patients highly rated the repeat prescription service.
- 92% of patients were 'completely or very satisfied' with the quality of medical care and treatment at this surgery.

Results of Visit

The Practice

Whitwick Road GP Surgery is a small single story surgery located in Coalville, North West Leicestershire, and serves approximately 7,000 of the population of Coalville and some of the surrounding villages.

There is a car park for patients with clearly identifiable disabled car parking spaces. There are four other GP practices in the area.

Surgery Layout

There is a spacious waiting area for patients and a new floor has recently been laid.

We noted that there was no electronic call system and patients are called to their appointments by their doctor or nurse.

There are no 'public' blood pressure machines, and all checks are being done by the staff.

There's a small staff room, which is also used as a storage for paperwork. Signage within and outside the surgery was being updated during our visit.

Reception and waiting areas

The reception area was shielded by windows with a roped off area to discourage patients getting too close. Some of the chairs in the waiting area had arm rests to help patients sitting down and standing up. There was no background music. Everywhere looked clean.



We were told that the surgery has planning permission for a much needed extension and currently waiting for approval from the Clinical Commissioning Group, which will give them two additional treatment rooms, a meeting room, records room and medical storage room.

Accessibility

There are disabled toilets with emergency alarms.

There is a children's waiting area with a decorated wall to help children to take their mind of having their vaccinations. We noted that breast feeding facilities were provided.



A Nursing Home is very close by, which is visited by the surgery staff. We were told by the staff that a lot of the patients have Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma or both and numbers are rising, especially since Covid-19.



Staffing

We were told that there are 4 GPs, (2 male, 2 female), of which two are partners and two salaried; 2 Practice Nurses, 1 Health Care Assistant (HCA), 1 Phlebotomist and 1 Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP).

The surgery is currently advertising for another GP, which is their 3rd attempt following previous unsuccessful attempts.

There is also an in house Pharmacist and a Physiotherapist who visits 2 days a week.

We were told by the staff that, as a rule, patients can see the GP they want.

Appointment Times

Appointment times are from 8am – 6pm with extended hours from 7.30am and an on-call doctor until 6.30pm.

Missed Appointments

The surgery allows 10 minutes of lateness, although there is some degree of flexibility, i.e., if a patient calls in to say they are stuck in traffic, they will do their best to accommodate them when the doctor/ nurse can fit them in.

We were told by Operation Manager and the Practice Manager that patients prefer telephone appointments, but the doctors prefer face to face, as phone appointments tend to take longer.

Prescriptions

There is a pharmacy attached to the surgery and there is an in-house pharmacist.

Patient Opinions

There is a very active Patient Participation Group (PPG) with over 20 members which meet with the surgery regularly.

Practice website

The website is maintained in-house, but it is dated and not easy to use. This is recognised by the management who are looking into alternative website developers.

The surgery use 'Engage Consult', a triage system and SystmOne is available via the website.

Patient Feedback

A survey was sent to the GP patients using the text messaging service, and we received 49 responses. We also gave patients the opportunity to contact us via telephone to share their feedback.

See Appendix 1 for the survey responses. Where we asked for comments, we have themed the responses and provided a selection of patient comments.

Recommendations

Both the Practice Manager and Operations Manager, seemed very passionate about their Practice and patients, saying "it's like a family". Hopefully, the CCG will grant permission to have the extension allowing more treatment rooms and much needed storage areas.

We recommend that Whitwick Road GP Practice

1. Consider all the comments recorded from patients and what the implications are for the operation of the practice.
2. The findings did indicate that the telephone booking system is a frustration to patients. We recommend that the surgery considers all options for patients to make appointments, including online systems.
3. Have information for patients explaining the triage system in place.
4. Routinely offer the patient the choice of seeing the doctor or nurse of their choice.
5. Review the practice website and ensure that it is up to date.

Service provider response

The report was agreed with the Service Provider as factually accurate. They have provided the following responses to the report:

The practice has read the report and discussed at full staff meeting so we can all have knowledge of the feedback from both patients and Healthwatch.

The practice has installed a TV screen that enables the clinicians to call patients in if they wish, but most still prefer to call their patients in themselves feeling that this gives a more personal touch. The practice has new signs outside and new infection control notice boards in the reception area, one of which is designated to the PPG.

After the meeting as we discussed we have a new website that allows patients to give feedback and is set out more user-friendly.

After discussion the clinical staff have moved to more face-to-face appointments, as they prefer this, at present the majority are face to face but the practice is happy to adhere to the patients requests and amend available appointments to suit.

The practice is aware the telephone system is under pressure at present and we are currently looking at alternative options. The practice now has 7,500 patients a large increase over the last couple of years which has put pressure on the current system along with the covid pandemic all have had an impact on the current system and updated system is required.

The practice is using an online option for routine queries, and this is reviewed regularly to see how this is working.

The practice continues to obtain feedback from patients, via friends and family, online questionnaire, PPG and just via phone to staff.

The extension has been agreed and we hope in the coming months this will be completed and give us additional much needed space.

All staff at the practice continue to be committed to helping our patients the best we can, considering the current climate regarding recruitment within general practice and the difficult situation over the last couple of years, we continue to try and offer the best possible service to our patients we can.

Distribution

The report is for distribution to the following:

- Whitwick Road GP Surgery
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Leicestershire County Council (LCC)
- West Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (WLCCG)
- NHS England (Leicestershire and Lincolnshire) Local Area Team
- Healthwatch England and the local Healthwatch Network
- Published on www.healthwatchll.com

Appendix 1: Survey Findings

49 Patients

Q1. How would you rate this GP Practice?

- 53% Very Good
- 32% Good
- 9% Ok
- 6% Poor

Q2. What do you like most?

Main themes: Friendly, Efficiency, Staff, Helpful, Availability

- “The practice is always well organised, clean and safe during these difficult times”.
- “Staff are friendly and efficient.”
- “Consistently supply a service exceeding my expectations of a busy surgery.”
- “Patient care is evident. Efficient service.”

Q3. What do you dislike the most?

Main themes: Phone waiting times, Appointment availability, No face to face appointments

- “Availability for appointments and hard to prebook.”
- “No face to face appointments sometimes it’s hard to talk over the phone.”
- “The time it takes to get through on the phone and you have to ring at 8am to get a face to face appointment. I used three phones to try to get through on the phone started ringing at 7.59 eventually got through at 8.20am. 120 calls. You should not have to ring at 8am to get an appointment most people are at work.”

- “After appointment at the doctors, I was told I needed to be seen again when I came out and asked to book the appointment I was told that I had to phone. They couldn't do it while I was there”.
- “Not being able to get an appointment after ringing for 30mins.”

Q4. What is your experience of getting an appointment at your GP practice?

48% Positive
38% Mixed
15% Negative

Main themes: Long telephone waiting times, lack of availability, not accessible

- “Held in a queue, all appointments have gone when it's your turn.”
- “Never get appointment unless it's an emergency.”
- “Can't always ring at time required”
- “Very difficult to contact for an appointment. Online booking has been removed”.

Q5. What method do you use to book an appointment? (tick all that apply)

90% Telephone
8% Online booking Service
2% In Person

Q6. When making your appointment, are you given the option of seeing the doctor or the nurse?

58% No
42% Yes

Main themes: No preference asked, sometimes asked, by telephone consultation only

- “You can't see a doctor until you have had a telephone appointment.”
- “Sometimes given the option.”
- “Don't get asked preference.”

Q7. Do you always see the doctor or nurse of your choice?

- 47% No
- 17% Yes
- 36% Sometimes

Q8. Have you had a telephone or online consultation with your doctor?

- 96% Yes
- 4% No

Main Themes: Good, Prefer face to face, Okay

- "Would rather speak face to face."
- "Ok but you feel rushed and forget to mention things."
- "Due to covid I thought it was a good option."
- "No problem at all. Doctors invite you for a face to face when deemed necessary."
- "I would've preferred in person at the time but looking back my issue was resolved over the phone, so it's fine."

Q9. For urgent appointments, can you normally see the doctor or nurse on the same day?

- 74% Yes
- 26% No

Main Themes: Low accessibility, Very good, Good staff

- "Only if you call in the morning."
- "Sometimes you can and sometimes it's hard."
- "Unfortunately, there are occasions when you can't see anyone the same day which can be very disappointing and frustrating."
- "Usually, all the appointments have gone by 8.15am, so you have to try the whole process of ringing back the next day."

Q10. How satisfied are you with the practice opening hours?

- 56% Completely satisfied
- 38% Very satisfied
- 4% Moderately satisfied

2% Slightly satisfied

Q11. How would you rate the reception service?

45% Very good

34% Good

5% OK

14% Poor

2% Very poor

Main Themes: Slow, Rude, Polite, Helpful

- "Certain receptionists are not always helpful, most are lovely."
- "Always pleasant and informative."
- "They can be abrupt at times."

Q12. What is your experience of getting repeat prescriptions?

78% Positive

18% Mixed

4% Negative

Main Themes: Efficient, easy online system, lack of communication

- "Easy online."
- "The system works very well and medication is delivered to me by Lloyds Pharmacy who are situated next door to the surgery."
- "You can ask either the surgery or pharmacy for your repeat and stuff is missing even though you have received regularly and when asking why you are being told that you have to wait three days because you are only just asking for the medication."

Q13. How do you rate the quality of medical care and treatment at this surgery?

54% Completely satisfied

38% Very satisfied

6% Moderately satisfied

2% Slightly satisfied

Q14. What single change would improve your experience of accessing care at your GP practice?

Main Themes: Better phone systems, More appointments, more accessibility

- “Better telephone system can take over 45 mins to try and make an appointment at 8am.”
- “More flexible appointments out of normal working times.”
- “Ability to book appointments in advance (phone or website).”
- “Being able to book an appointment online or even routine appointments in advance online.”



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