

Peel House Medical Practice Accrington

Friday 26th January 2024

9:30am- 12:00pm



Disclaimer: This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

Contact Details

Peel House Medical Practice

Located in Accrington Pals Primary health Care Centre

1 Paradise Street

Accrington

BB5 2EJ

[Peel House Medical Practice - Accrington Pals Primary Care Centre, 1 Paradise Street, Accrington, BB5 2EJ](#)

Registered Manager:

Katy Tregartha (Assistant Practice Manager)

Date and Time of our Visit:

Friday 26th January 2024

9:30am-12:00pm

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Emmy Walmsley (Senior Engagement Officer)

Louise Dewhurst (Engagement Officer)

Introduction

Healthwatch Lancashire is the independent public voice for health and social care in Lancashire and exists to make services work for the people who use them. We believe that the best way to do this is by providing the people of Lancashire with opportunities to share their views and experiences.

Healthwatch Lancashire has statutory powers to listen, act, challenge and gather feedback to improve Local Services and promote excellence throughout the NHS and social care services.

To help achieve this, Healthwatch have a statutory power to 'Enter and View' health and social care services that are publicly funded. The purpose of and enter and view is to listen to people who access those services and observe service delivery.

Following the Enter and View visit, a report is compiled identifying aspects of good practice within the service visited along with any recommendations for any possible areas of improvement.

As we are an independent organisation, we do not make judgements or express personal opinions, but rely on feedback received and objective observations of the environment. The report is sent to the service provider providing an opportunity to respond to any recommendations and comments before being published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at:

www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk

The report is available to members of the public along with the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations. Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to monitor the progress of improvements and celebrate any further successes.

General Information

Peel House Medical Practice is situated in the heart of Accrington town centre and is located in the Accrington Pals Primary health Care Centre.

The Medical Practice serves just over 17,000 patients. The practice offers services such as routine appointments, physio, wellbeing coaches and social prescribing services.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank patients, staff and management, for making us feel welcome and for taking the time to speak to us during the visit.

What did we do?

Healthwatch Lancashire Enter and View Representatives made an announced visit to Peel House Medical Practice on Friday 26 January 2024 and received feedback from:



Pre-visit practice survey

Healthwatch Lancashire emailed a pre-visit questionnaire to the Practice Manager to learn about the patient population, services offered and how the practice manage appointments for patients. Information from this questionnaire is included in the summary below.

Introductory meeting with Assistant Practice manager

At the beginning of the enter and view visit, Healthwatch Lancashire met with the Assistant Practice Manager to discuss The Medical Practice and to view the facilities. The manager explained that appointments can be booked via the phone, via the online app and also in person at the practice.

One to one discussions with patients and their relatives

Healthwatch spoke with patients and their relatives about their experiences including appointment booking, how they felt about the service and the care and treatment delivered by the staff at the practice.

Discussions with members of staff

Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives spoke with members of staff about their experiences of delivering services to patients. Questions centred around support for patients and any improvements staff felt could be made at the Medical Practice.

Observations

Observations were made throughout the visit. This included patient and staff interactions, accessibility measures in place throughout the Medical Practice and the condition and cleanliness of the facilities.

Summary

Surgery Population



Discussions with the Assistant Practice Manager highlighted that Peel House Medical Practice is situated in the heart of Accrington Town Centre in the borough of Hyndburn. The area itself has high levels of deprivation which is evident in our weighted list size.

The patient list has high incidence of diabetes, multimorbidity's, mental health issues, safeguarding, respiratory disease, cancer, a large elderly population and a large care home population. We have recently seen a large increase in multiethnicity registrations, and an increased usage of language line and double appointments are provided for these.

The list size currently stands at 17013, with a weighted list size of 18732. Our list is growing on average of 500 patients per year over the past 3 years.

Appointment Management

Appointments at the medical practice can be made over the phone, in person at reception or via the online app. Patients are triaged with a member of the care navigation team and are then invited into the practice for a face-to-face consultation.

When calling the Medical Practice patients are given the option to have a call back which means they won't lose their space in the queue.

Conversations with members of staff showed that some patients are happy to come into the surgery and book an appointment instead of calling or using the app.

Appointments are released online every day at 7am and the telephone lines and the practice open at 8am. There are six telephonists/receptionists answering calls. There are also morning and afternoon staff as well as front desk reception staff, back-office admin and secretarial. Appointments with GP's are released to be booked on the day and one week to 2 weeks in advance. Advanced Nurse



Practitioners are book on the day for acute issues. Practice nursing team, first contact physio, health and wellbeing coaches and social prescribers can be booked up to 4 weeks in advance. "Appointments with the pharmacy team are care navigated into by reception and pre-booked by the practice."

Staff explained during the visit that patients using all options to book appointments was balanced and more patients are using the app to book their appointments than before.

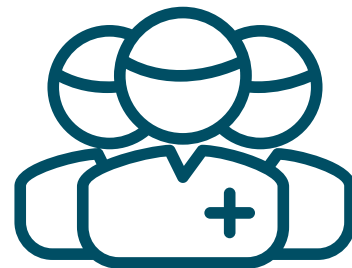
When speaking to staff Representatives were made aware that Co-Sign is booked in advance for patients who are BSL Users. They can also provide large print letters for visually impaired patients and they use the language line to translate for patients. The assistant practice manager told us that they have some clinical staff members who speak fluent Urdu and Punjabi, and they will allocate patients to them if they need to.

Visit Summary

Healthwatch Representatives viewed facilities that were available. This included the waiting areas, reception office and clinical rooms.

At the time of the visit there were thirty-three staff working within the practice and two working remotely, the following staff were present;

- Two members of Management
- Five Admin staff
- Seven Telephonists/ receptionists
- Six GP's
- Three Advanced Nurse Practitioners
- Two Practice Nurses
- Two Nurse associates
- One Medical Secretary
- Two Clinical pharmacists
- One Pharmacy assistant
- One Physician associate
- One Psychological practitioner
- One Social prescriber and one remote working
- One Health and wellbeing coach and one remote working
- Three Staff called in sick
- One Telephonist receptionist
- ANP and locum ANP who was covering for ANP



Overall, the feedback received from patients was positive with several patient responses being positive about the quality of care and the attitude of staff. Some areas that patients expressed concern about included long waits on the phone in the morning. Some patients shared their concerns about having to wait outside in the morning to get an appointment with the doctor or nurse due to not being able to access the phone or access the app to book an appointment.

Overall, the feedback received from staff members was very positive with staff working at the medical practice for many years. Staff members shared comments around the support they receive, the training that was provided and what they believe could be improved within the Medical Practice.

Enter and View observations

Location and External Environment

The medical practice is accessible via two entrances to the back and front of the Accrington Pals Primary health Care Centre. Both sides are accessible via lowered curbs and ramp access with hand rails. There were nine disabled parking bays to the back of the centre and plenty of parking spaces for patients at the back of the centre. The car park has a two hour time limit on for patients, which is clearly visible to all patients on arrival to the car park.

Peel House Medical Practice is within half a mile of the nearest bus stop and 0.3 miles away from Accrington train station.

Internal Environment and Waiting Area

Peel House Medical Practice is on level one of Accrington Pals Primary Health Care Centre and is accessible via stairs or a lift. There were two waiting areas available, one for appointments with the nurse and one with the doctors. Waiting Room One is to the left of reception and has eleven clinical rooms. Waiting Room Two is to the right of reception and has nine clinical rooms. There was enough seating available in both waiting rooms for patients to use with ease of access to the screen which displayed a visual and audio appointment call out. There was different size seating available with lower and higher chairs provided for patients to use. The radio was on in the background in both waiting areas.

The practice was accessible for wheelchair users, which was witnessed with a patient using the lift to access the surgery and the lowered reception desk to book in for their appointment.

The reception desk was visible immediately upon arrival into the practice with signs above the area to show where to check in manually, where to check in yourself and prescription drop off point. During the visit representatives observed the use of the reception desk and the self-check in, patients were seen using both options. Healthwatch Lancashire representatives noticed a long queue at one point during the visit but the staff on reception dealt with all enquiries in a timely manner.

There was a private room available for patients to use if they needed and the assistant practice manager mentioned that this could be used for private conversations with patients, patients living with autism or if a patient needed one to one support away from the waiting area.





There were several displays containing information about the Patient participations Group, MMR information, shingles information, how to use the NHS app, stroke support and a carers support board. There were leaflets in reception for patients to take away with them including; social prescribing information, The NHS app, a guide to services, carers support and health and wellbeing. The board in the waiting room had small font and was not easy to read and so patients weren't aware that the Patient Participation Group was being advertised . (See recommendation 1) There was laminated information in reception but was not consistent throughout other areas of the building. (see recommendation 5)

A visual display was in operation in both waiting areas which were on loop displaying support services, support lines, PPG, patient survey results, flu clinics, repeat prescriptions, information about the practice, new staff and what is available at the practice. This used pictures, videos and some information was provided in different languages. The screen alerted patients when it was time for their appointment and read out their names and where they needed to report to, this was black writing on a yellow background.

There was signage in and around the practice with a consistent style, with blue backgrounds and white writing. These were scattered throughout the practice for patients to find their way around. There were separate signs in different waiting areas to show patients the location of clinical rooms.



These signs were helpful for patients but some comments around finding the room once in the corridor were mentioned by patients. (See recommendation 2) The signage in and around the practice were not dementia friendly and did not have words and pictures in main areas, there was also no dementia clocks available anywhere in the practice. *According to Alzheimer's society People with dementia also experience difficulties in accessing general practice, which can create barriers when even the best care and support is in place. (1) (see recommendation 4)*

¹ [2017_dementia_friendly_general_practice_toolkit_guide_notts_derbys_project.pdf \(alzheimers.org.uk\)](https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/resources/2017-dementia-friendly-general-practice-toolkit-guide-notts-derbys-project.pdf)

Hand hygiene dispensers were located on the reception desk and near to the self-check in point. An accessible toilet was available for patients in both waiting areas which were clean and had room to move around.

Within the practice there is a staffroom with a wellbeing activity board and a notice board showing emails and compliments staff have received. There was also a 'You Said We Did' board to show what had been put in place following suggestions from staff. There was a staff suggestion box available and a weekly update in the kitchen to advise staff of practice updates or new staff joining the practice.

In the corridor leading out to the main reception there are pictures of past and present partners that have worked at the practice. Opposite this is a picture board of all the staff that work at the practice.

Patient Interactions

Healthwatch Representatives observed patients booking in for an appointment, making medication queries, new patient sign up and other queries around results. Reception staff were observed to be polite, gave patients time to speak and it was apparent that the reception staff knew the patients very well and spoke to them in a friendly manner.

One observation saw a patient come out of their appointment and the reception staff asking how they were and the patient being happy to discuss with them how they were feeling. Staff members were seen to be saying goodbye to patients leaving and this appeared to make patients happy they were being acknowledged. One patient asked how the reception staff were which was very well received, staff were familiar and knew the patient well.



One patient had checked in on the self-check in screen and sat in waiting area two but was unsure if they were in the right place. After asking the Healthwatch Representative if they were in the correct area, they then proceeded to ask reception staff. The staff member was polite and looked up the patient's appointment and then pointed them in the direction of the correct waiting area. (See recommendation 3)

Observations taken at the time of the visit revealed patients were not seen at the time of their appointments and were waiting five to ten minutes after their appointment schedule. One patient went to reception to ask what was happening with their appointment as they had been waiting fifteen minutes over their appointment time. The reception staff explained to the patient that the nurse was running slightly behind, but they would send a message to find out about the status of the appointment.

Patient Involvement

Peel House Medical Practice website is easy to access and navigate in order to find services, news on the home page and categories for the main reasons to visit.

There is also a health information and support tab for patients to use. There was a staff board present for patients to view but this would be more beneficial in a communal area with pictures to help patients identify them and their role. (see recommendation 6)



The recent friends and family test results were shown on the television in each room and in the staff area. This took place in August 2023 where there was a 88.2% positive response, 4.3% negative response and a 7.5% neutral response.

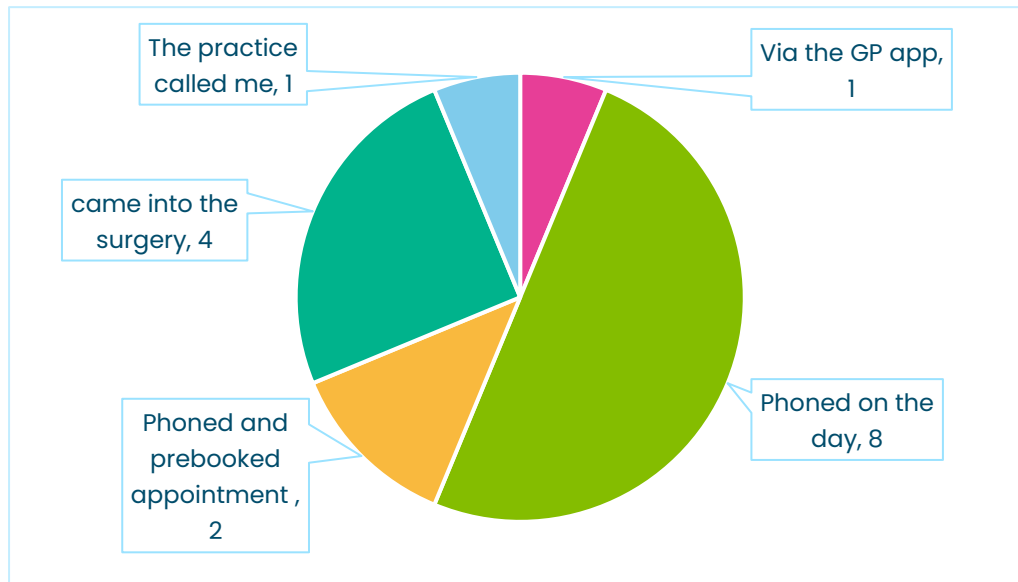
A Patient Participation Group is currently active with around 10 members and there is a board up in the waiting area advertising opportunities for patients to join. The Assistant Practice Manager shared that they had recently done a push on the PPG and were trying to get more patients involved. The PPG minutes and newsletter were available to view online but are not available within the practice for patients to view or take away. (see recommendation 7)



Patient feedback

Healthwatch Representatives spoke with sixteen patients at the visit.

How did you make your appointment today?



“I came in person at 8am I had to wait till 8.20am before I got an appointment made. I went home then had to come back for appointment at 10.15am”

Eight of the sixteen patients who told representatives they had booked via the phone, five of these patients mentioned they were in a long queue and were surprised they had got an appointment for the same day. The other three patients said they had got through quite quickly and got an appointment for that morning.

Two patients commented that they don't think it was fair that appointments are released at different times during the day.

“I came to surgery at 8am as I can't get an appointment over the phone. I don't think it's fair that at 7am if you use the app, you can make an appointment.....all appointments should be available at 8am”

One patient shared their concern that they were number 49 in the queue when they rang this morning. Three patients said they were happy with how long they were waiting.

“I phone up and I am 30 in the queue, I had to wait 10 to 15 mins in the queue didn't think that was too bad “

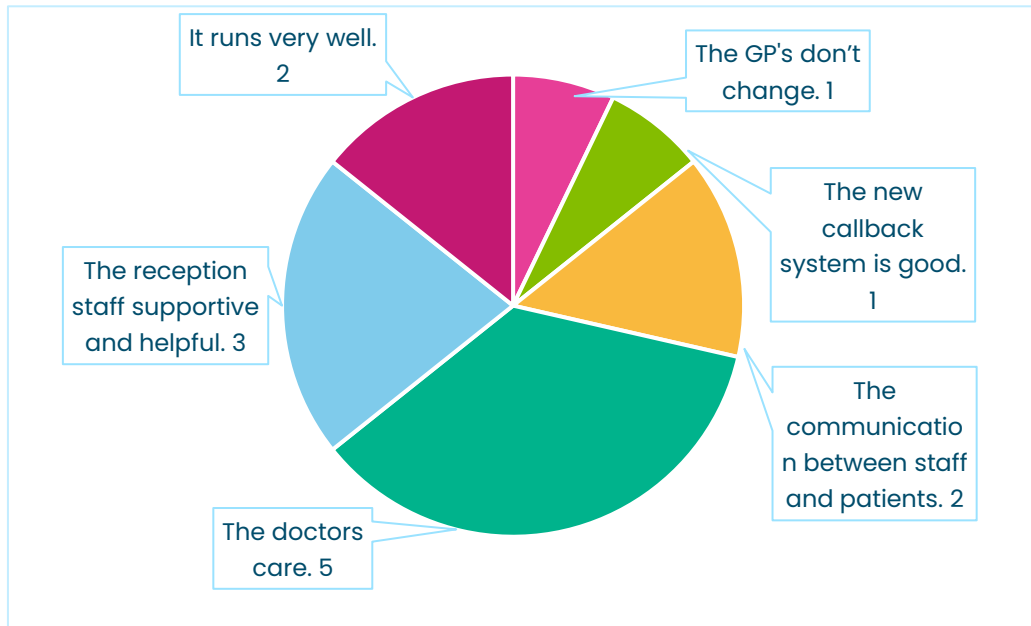
One patient explained that they had struggled to make an appointment this morning and found it quite traumatic.

“This was difficult I tried to book via the app, but it wouldn’t work so I went on my computer, I secured an appointment but then it told me it had gone so I had to ring. I don’t think this is a good system as I had to wake up at 6:30am in order to be online in time for 7am when the appointments go live.”

Four patients commented how they came into the surgery to make their appointment; two patients were happy with this but two patients voiced their concerns around coming into the practice instead of using other means.

“Not really I had to stand outside in the freezing cold from 7:45 until they open the doors at 8am.”

What works well at this surgery?



The main comments from patients were regarding the treatment they receive from the doctors at the surgery.

“The doctors are all very good and listen to you.”

There were also comments about the reception staff being friendly and helpful. The patients are happy that they see one consistent doctor often and there isn’t a high turnover of staff at this practice.

“The GPs here don’t change much which is great, I know a lot of practices that change staff very often.”



Other comments surrounded topics around the patient call back system which they like as this means they don’t have to sit on the phone and can get on with the morning knowing they won’t lose their place in the queue. Also comments around communication between staff and patients has been brought to our attention as a positive aspect of the practice.

“The new call back system is good; you don’t have to wait on the phone line and you don’t lose your space in the queue.”

One patient did comment on the fact that they were asked to send a picture to the GP before their appointment, but this was not possible because of where it

was, and they have no relatives at home to help them. The patient said they felt very frustrated that they couldn't do it and she felt this came across from the staff member that was speaking to her on the phone.

Is there anything that can be changed to meet your needs?

One patient mentioned that there are a lot of notices and leaflets in reception, but this does not continue into the waiting areas for the patients to read these whilst waiting for their appointment.

“There is a lot of information on the reception desk which isn't in the waiting area, I don't really stay in reception long so wouldn't necessarily know what they were about. It would make more sense to have these where patients can access them better.”

Five patients spoke to Representatives about the self-check in screen and how it is easier instead of waiting in a queue but sometimes they are unsure what waiting room to go in as they are unsure who they are booked in with.

“When checking in on the screen it doesn't tell you which waiting area to sit in. Sometimes I don't know who I am seeing so I wouldn't know which waiting area to sit in.” (see recommendation 3)

Four patients mentioned the online bookings would be better going online at 8am so they are accessible to everyone.

“Appointments should be issued at 8am and not 7am, I don't understand why they are released so early in the morning, maybe a few released at 7am and then some at 8am.”

Do you receive information from the surgery that is easy to understand?

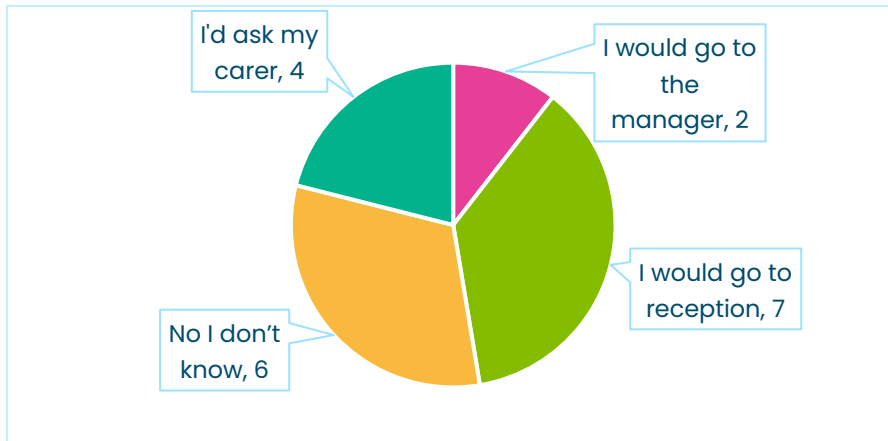
Fifteen patients explained that they find the information provided by the surgery is accessible, but they said they would feel comfortable to ask for something if they needed it.

One patient spoke to representatives about being dyslexic and required some extra support with this from the staff. They said they felt they received this support, and the staff are very helpful and friendly.

“I need an assistant to help with this, but the staff are really good and helpful here.”



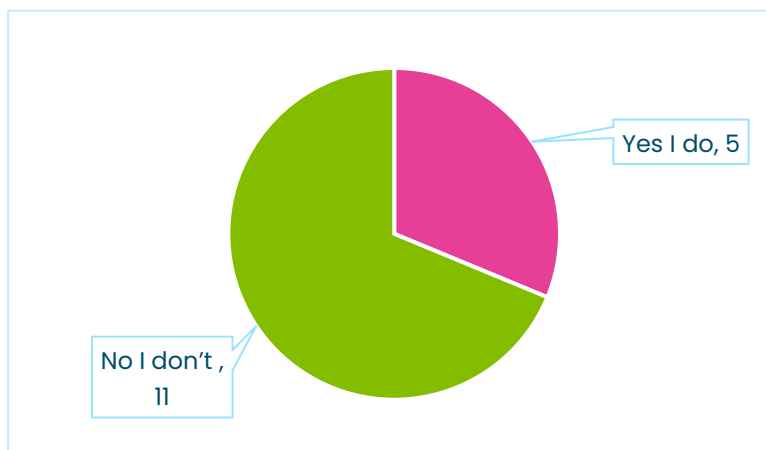
Do you know how to make a complaint if needed?



Most of the patients spoken with commented that they would go to reception and ask for a member of staff. The other common theme was patients said they would go straight to the manager to make a complaint.

“Yes, I would just go to reception and ask or id just go to the practice manager.”

Do you know what a Patient participation group is?



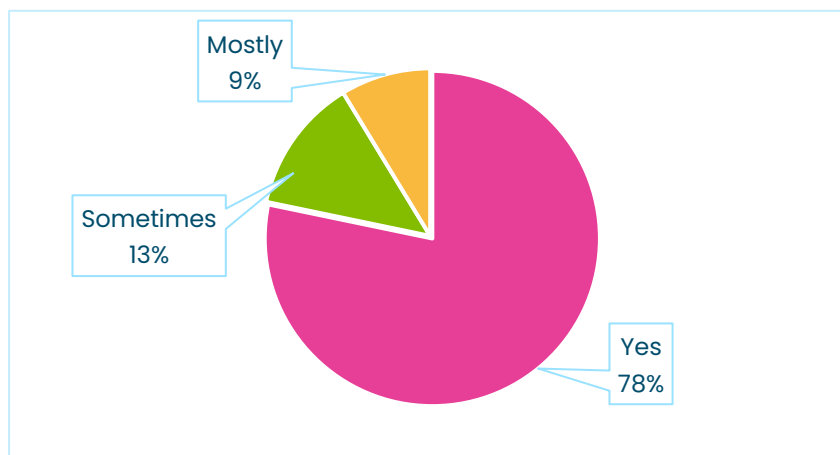
Out of sixteen patients, eleven patients said they were not aware what a Patient Participation Group was, and they wouldn't know how to join the group. Five patients commented that they did know about the group, but they wouldn't have time to join at the moment due to other commitments.

“Yes, I do but I don't have time to join at the moment.”

Staff feedback

Healthwatch received feedback from twenty three staff members prior to the visit.

Do you have enough staff when on duty?



All twenty-three staff members answered this question, and the consensus was that seventy eight percent of staff members were happy with the amount of staff on duty. Five of staff members either said sometimes or mostly and this was around staff sickness.

Staff members commented about how demand can be difficult at times and this impacts on patient expectations.

“I feel we do have enough staff but sometimes if the demand is high, we need to manage patient expectations, not all patients need to be seen and this creates excess demand.”

Do you feel supported to carry out a person-centred experience?

Twenty-one staff members said they do feel supported to carry out person centred experience.

“Absolutely, I feel we have a lot of support from senior receptionists within the practice, all staff focus on what’s best for the patients, going above and beyond for watch patient is what I try to focus on.”

“I feel fully supported with regular mentoring and clear supervision offered to help with professional development.”

Two members of staff mentioned they felt they could offer person centred experience most of the time.

Do you feel you have enough training to carry out your duties well?

All staff members mentioned that they felt they had enough training to carry out their duties well.

“We have opportunities for future training and any training needs identified and appropriate training given.”

Two members of staff mentioned that any gaps in knowledge are always addressed.

“Any gaps in knowledge are always addressed and training provided. I feel confident carrying out my day to day duties and tasks.”



What measures are in place for people with additional communication needs?

All staff members commented on a few measures that are in place for accessibility including lift access, Hearing loop, Wheelchair availability, Language line, Lower staff counter, Accessible toilets, Cosign BSL, disabled parking and extended appointments.

What is your experience of working here?

All staff members commented on how their experience working at the practice is very positive with many working there for many years.

“My experience with this surgery, I feel staff are helpful and strive for the best outcome for all patients. I would recommend this service to my relative.”

“Extremely positive, lots of support from management and other team members. Patient focused always aiming to provide the best possible care.”



Eight members of staff commented on the environment and ethos at the surgery.

“There is a positive working environment, friendly happy atmosphere. Since day one I have been made to feel part of a family not just a team.”

Are there any changes that can be made to improve the patient experience?

Fifteen members of staff mentioned that improvements were constantly being made within the practice. Seven members of staff made suggestions on what could be improved.

“Time is needed to identify, analyse and work with staff members needs, understanding and training and receive constructive feedback. It would be good to see staff rewards more often.” (see recommendation 8)

“More signs available for patients as they do often get lost especially when looking for rooms.” (see recommendation 2)

“I have heard that some practices have a bereavement service for patients, I feel this would be an asset for the practice.” (see recommendation 9)

“More team learning as one big team, allow opportunities to share feedback and idea sharing between the team.” (see recommendation 10)

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated based on observations of the environment and feedback gathered from patients and staff.

1. Raise the profile of the Patient Participation Group through additional advertising so patients are aware of what is involved and how to be a part of it.
2. Review signage in corridors and look into getting signs that are visible from the corridor for patients to see where they are going.
3. Ensure the self-check in machine clearly states which waiting room patients need to go in after checking in
4. Implement measures to ensure that the Medical Practice is more dementia friendly through the use of images on signs and dementia friendly clocks. (See appendix for more information)
5. Consult patients about the information they would like to see in the waiting area to ensure the correct information is available and ensure this is available in both areas.
6. Consider having a staff board up in the patient area with images so patients are aware who they are seeing and if they have a specialism.
7. Consider putting the practice newsletter and PPG minutes out in reception for patients to access and read if they are not able to access the website.
8. Review the way you give staff feedback and look into means of staff reward.
9. Look into the possibility of inviting bereavement services into the Practice to work alongside staff and patients.
10. Consult staff about the frequency of team meetings to allow opportunities to provide feedback and share ideas.

Appendix

<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-friendlyresources/organisations/dementia-friendly-environment-checklist>

Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe	Comments
Raise the profile of the Patient Participation Group through additional advertising so patients are aware of what is involved and how to be a part of it.	Signage to be reviewed and made more visible.	June 2024	
Review signage in corridors and look into getting signs that are visible from the corridor for patients to see where they are going.	Signage reviewed – signs already in place. To liaise with building management for the possibility of changing the colour so they stand out.	Ongoing	There are already signs which show the situation of the room numbers which are directly across from the entrance to the corridor. Met with building management on 14/02/24 – they have put through a variation request for wayfinding signage but ran out of money and she will pick this up again in April. We await their response.
Ensure the self-check in machine clearly states which waiting room patients need	Updated software requested for current machine. This now tells you which waiting room to go in.	Complete	

<p>to go in after checking in</p>	<p>Signage already added next to the machine, clearly stating which rooms are in which waiting room. Signs also in waiting rooms stating which clinical rooms are on that side.</p>		
<p>Implement measures to ensure that the Medical Practice is more dementia friendly through the use of images on signs and dementia friendly clocks. (See appendix for more information)</p>	<p>Dementia clock has been purchased and is up. The dementia friendly signs had been up but removed by the building management.</p> <p>Meeting with building manager on 14.2.24 and copies of dementia friendly signs emailed to her. The building manager for CHP has put in a variation request, however, cannot guarantee funding for this. Peel House have been told that we cannot put our own signs up as a fire risk and if we do they will be taken down. CHP have already had access able company in to look at the building and taken on board their recommendations.</p>	<p>Ongoing – await decision from building management regarding dementia signs.</p>	<p>As tenants in the building which is managed by CHP, we have raised the issue around dementia friendly signs for the whole building again. We have put dementia friendly signs up previously for these to then be removed by the building. We await the decision which is out of our hands.</p>
<p>Consult patients about the information they would like to see in the waiting area to ensure the correct information is available and ensure this is available in both areas.</p>	<p>Add to PPG agenda for discussion</p>	<p>Complete</p>	

Consider having a staff board up in the patient area with images so patients are aware who they are seeing and if they have a specialism.	To consult with staff for consent.	June 2024	
Consider putting the practice newsletter and PPG minutes out in reception for patients to access and read if they are not able to access the website.	To purchase a wall mounted holder for PPG minutes.	June 2024	
Review the way you give staff feedback and look into means of staff reward.	To be added to staff meeting agenda.	June 2024	
Look into the possibility of inviting bereavement services into the Practice to work alongside staff and patients.	Section added to the website and information leaflet. Information displayed in waiting room and on TV screens about bereavement services.	April 2024	We unfortunately do not have the room space to accommodate other services but we do promote local support groups by displaying information.
Consult staff about the frequency of team meetings to allow opportunities to provide feedback and share ideas.	Added to next full staff meeting. 2023 saw the return of the Practice Protected Learning Time. This had been taken away several years ago and has been sorely missed. This enables us to close the doors for an	March 2024	It is a difficult balance to ensure adequate time for team meetings and not effect patient care provision. There is already daily huddles,

	<p>afternoon and sit down as a whole team. The next protected learning time is in March.</p>		<p>regular team meetings, quarterly full staff meetings and weekly clinical meetings.</p>
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Did you learn anything new about residents’ views and experiences, or anything else, as a result of the Enter and View undertaken by Healthwatch Lancashire?

We found the Healthwatch visit to be helpful, when you work here day in and day out you can miss what is obvious to others. It was lovely to hear that patients found the reception team friendly and helpful. Being a Tennant in the building, this feedback also adds weight to our request for the building to be dementia friendly.

Any other comments?

We are currently engaging with GPIIP, General Practice Improvement Programme and will be looking at access and capacity and avoidable appointments data. The feedback from patients received via Healthwatch regarding how they book appointments will be fed back during this project.



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Lancashire

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