

Enter & View Report

Willows Health Evington

November 2025

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Report details

Details of Visit	
Service Address	Willows Health Evington, 1 Evington Lane, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE5 5PQ
Service Provider	Willows Group LTD
Date and Time	Monday 17th November 2025, 10am
Authorised Representatives undertaking the visit	Moraig Yates Riyaadh Mussa (Staff)

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Leicester and 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.

All comments included in this report are written verbatim to capture the tone and authenticity of the experience, therefore no editing of comments has taken place. This report is not representative of the experience of all service users.

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

Purpose of the visit

- To gather patient views of the service provided at Willows Health Evington.
- 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 **108** responses.

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

Summary of the findings

Summary

- The practice was clean, tidy and all patient areas are on the ground floor.
- Fully wheelchair accessible with adequate on-street parking.
- Clear exterior and interior signage, including opening hours.
- There are four consultation rooms and one nurse room. – **4 rooms including nurse room**
- Multiple contact methods: NHS App, practice website (System Connect), telephone and in person.
- Appointments are available up to 48 hours in advance.
- High call volume at 8am, usually easing within 5–15 minutes.
- Urgent same-day appointments available via triage, with emergency slots held until one hour before.
- Reception separate from waiting area, providing good privacy and a confidential space.
- Soft seating and adequate space in the waiting room.
- Clinicians call patients directly from the waiting area.
- Disabled toilet available, though lacking an alarm cord and with a toilet seat not fitting very well.
- Translation services available, including BSL and Wordski, though limited availability for Dari.
- Information displayed on chaperones, carers' support, mental health, cervical cancer, midwifery contact, PPG and data privacy.
- Appointment, out-of-hours, and complaints information clearly displayed, including QR codes.
- There was a notice explaining shared call handling across practice sites.

108 patients responded to the survey

- 29 patients (27%) said that it took them 1-5 minutes to get through to the practice by telephone, however 21 (20%) of patients said that it took them 16-60 minutes to get through to the practice by telephone.
- Comments were made about 'difficulty' with booking appointments and not being able to book appointments.
- Comments were made that telephone calls are answered by a call centre, which some find difficult and expressed a preference to be directed directly to their own GP practice.
- 74 (68%) of patients have said they were offered a same day appointment at the practice with a doctor.
- The last time a patient requested an urgent-same day appointment, 30 (40%) of patients said they were offered a same day appointment at the practice with a doctor, however 21 (28%) of patients said they were asked to call back later or the following day and 8 (11%) were not offered an appointment or any of the alternatives listed.
- 56 (53%) patients have rated the practice opening hours as 'Excellent' or Good'.
- 54 (50%) patients have rated the Reception Service as 'Excellent' or Good'.
- 67 (62%) patients have rated the quality of medical care and treatment as 'Excellent' or Good'
- Comments were made on receiving excellent service.

Results of Visit

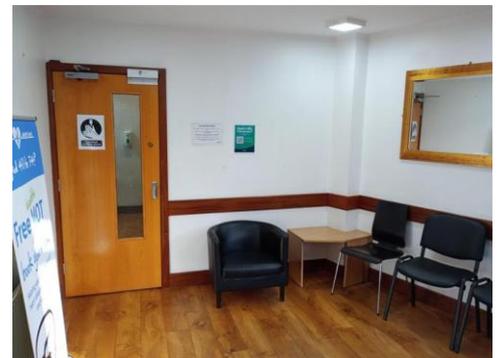
The Practice

The practice has four consultation rooms and one nurse room. The practice was clean and tidy, with all patient areas located on the ground floor, making them easily accessible. There are adequate on-street parking spaces available for patients.

Exterior signage is clearly displayed, including opening days and hours. The interior signage is visible, well-positioned and easy to read.

The practice has cleaning routines supported by a checklist to ensure hygiene standards are maintained.

Access to the building is from the street and is fully accessible for wheelchair users.



Reception and waiting areas

At the time of the visit there were no queues at reception. The reception area is located in a separate room from the waiting area, which provides a good level of privacy and a confidential area is available.

The waiting room had soft seating available. As the practice was quiet during the visit, there was adequate space for patients. Clinicians came out to the waiting area to call patients when ready.

Friends and Family suggestion forms and a feedback box were available, along with hand sanitiser. Reading materials consisted of health-related leaflets and posters, including Integrated Care Board (ICB) posters. The décor was simple and health-focused and there was no background music.

Appointments

Patients can contact the practice through multiple systems, including online booking via the NHS App, the practice website using System Connect, telephone and in person. Appointments can be pre-booked in advance. We were told that there is typically a rush of calls at 8am, which usually eases after 5 to 15 minutes.

Patients can make appointments up to 48 hours in advance. The practice previously trialled one-week pre-bookable appointments but found high levels of people who did not attend (DNAs).

For urgent appointments, patients are advised to ring the practice, as there are emergency slots that are kept free until one hour before the appointment.

Cancelled appointments can be managed online, via the NHS App, or through System Connect on the website, and the practice aims to fill these slots as quickly as possible.

Issues regarding appointments, such as requests for fit notes, sick notes, or medical letters, can be resolved by patients contacting the practice via email or telephone. The practice has dedicated slots specifically for these requests.

Patient choice of clinician is limited, there are 2 regular GP and the rest are locums. Appointments can be either in person or via telephone. There are 2 salaried GPs however one was on sick leave so there were locums.

Medication reviews are managed by a team of 13 pharmacists working across the group practice. Patients complete a questionnaire beforehand, which helps to streamline and guide the review process.

For patients requiring home visits, the practice allocates same-day slots. The GP triages the request and visits the patient on the same day.

Patients with additional needs, such as those with learning disabilities, are managed with extra care; the practice ensures a quiet environment during their visit and allocates approximately one hour per patient –40 minutes with a nurse and 20 minutes with the GP –to help limit sensory overload, we also observed this during the visit.

Patients can view their test results online. We were told that GPs review results daily, and if an appointment is required, patients are immediately sent an invitation to book. They are given three opportunities to book online, after which a letter is sent to ensure they are informed.

Accessibility

Signage throughout the practice was clearly visible and positioned at an appropriate height. The building is accessible from the street and suitable for wheelchair users.

There is a disabled toilet; however, it does not have an alarm cord and the toilet seat does not fit the toilet well. Wheelchairs were not available for patient use. A hearing loop is in place to support patients with hearing impairments.

Information available to patients

There was a good range of notices and leaflets on display, which were up to date and clearly visible, with font sizes that were easy to read.

Translation services are available as needed, including instructions in consultant rooms, access to British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters, and Wordski translation services provided by the ICB. However, the practice faces challenges in providing translations for patients who speak Dari, as interpreters for this language are difficult to source. An information poster on chaperones is displayed.

While there was no information available on social prescribing, information on carers' support was displayed through leaflets and posters. Information posters on mental health support, cervical cancer, maternity poster for patients who may need to contact a midwife and PPG poster.



Appointment and out-of-hours information was clearly available, including notices on the front door. Details of the complaints procedure were on display. There is an information poster displayed indicating that telephone calls being answered by staff from different practice sites to alleviate pressure for the site staff.

Carers' Charter information was available through leaflets and posters. Data privacy and the use of health records were clearly displayed.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) meets quarterly. At the last meeting, 40 patients attended, although we were told that many patients remain hesitant to join.

Biggest Difficulty/ Challenge

We were told that the biggest challenge for the practice is recruitment, particularly of administrative staff. Being part of a group practice helps somewhat, as staff can be shared across sites. However, resources to fully support the practice's needs are limited.

We were told that the top challenge raised by patients is appointments. Although the practice now offers more appointments than before COVID-19, demand has increased, likely due to long hospital treatment waitlists.

Additional Information

The Practice Manager shared, "I love the practice. We all have great pride in it." Staff try to maintain the concept of family doctors; when a patient sees a new GP, the Practice Manager briefs the GP beforehand to share relevant patient details. All telephone calls are answered within 2-5 minutes, and the practice experiences much less demand compared to other Willows Group sites.

Patient feedback

A survey was completed on the visit, where we asked if patients would like to take part in the survey, and we received 108 responses. 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

We recommend that Willows Health Evington:

1	Review patient feedback and themed comments to identify and prioritise improvements in ease of accessing appointments, telephone and call centre service, reception service and continuity of care.
2	Look to install an emergency alarm cord and fit an appropriate toilet seat in the disabled toilet to improve patient safety, accessibility and patient comfort.
3	Review the appointment system to ensure patients can book appointments in advance.
4	Where possible, ensure patients can be redirected from the call centre to practice staff for more direct support.

Service provider response

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

"I would like to respectfully express my reservations about using patient feedback as a benchmarking tool. While patient feedback can offer useful qualitative insights, it is inherently subjective and often influenced by individual expectations, emotions, or isolated experiences. As such, it may not reliably reflect overall performance or quality of service, and in some cases can be disproportionately shaped by dissatisfaction unrelated to measurable care outcomes.

By contrast, objective indicators present a more consistent and verifiable picture of performance. For example, call statistics and other operational data do not support some of the negative conclusions implied by feedback. In addition, the practice performs very favourably against established standards in areas such as required signage, facilities, cleanliness, and the provision of patient information posters. These are tangible, observable measures that demonstrate compliance, organisation, and a positive patient environment.

It is also important to note the significant increase in clinical capacity since Willows took over in 2022. Prior to this, the average number of appointments available on a Monday was approximately 15, compared with a current average of around 55. This represents a substantial improvement in access and service provision that is not reflected in the feedback being used for comparison.

Given these factors, I am concerned that some of the feedback may be influenced by broader negative narratives around general practice, which have been widely amplified in public and media discourse, rather than by the actual performance or standards of the practice itself.

The discrepancy between objective measures and elements of subjective feedback raises concerns about the validity of extrapolating broader performance judgments from feedback alone.

In my view, patient feedback is best used as a supplementary source of information rather than a primary benchmarking metric, and should be interpreted alongside objective, quantitative measures to ensure a balanced and fair assessment."

Distribution

The report is for distribution to the following:

- Willows Health Evington
- LLR Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Leicester City Council (LCC)
- NHS England (Leicestershire and Lincolnshire) Local Area Team
- Healthwatch England and the local Healthwatch Network
- Published on www.healthwatchll.com

Appendix 1: Survey Findings

108 Patients

Q1. When did you last visit your GP practice?

- (52) 48% - In the last 3 months
- (20) 19% - In the last 6 months
- (14) 13% - In the last year
- (15) 14% - 1-2 years ago
- (7) 6% - Over 2 years ago

Q2. How did you book your last appointment?

- (86) 79% - Telephone
- (4) 4% - Online booking services
- (3) 3% - NHS App
- (7) 6% - In person
- (5) 5% - Someone else booked for me (e.g., family, carer)
- (3) 3% - Other (please specify): "Self-booking link sent by practice.", "By text from surgery."

Q3. When you last contacted the practice by phone, how long did it take you to get through?

- (5) 5% - Less than 1 minute
- (29) 27% - 1-5 minutes
- (23) 21% - 6-10 minutes
- (17) 16% - 11-15 minutes
- (21) 20% - 16- 60 minutes
- (7) 6% - Over an hour
- (1) 1% - I used the call-back function
- (4) 4% - Not applicable – I have not contacted the practice by phone
- 1 – Unanswered

Q4. In the last two years, have you attempted to book an appointment where you needed to see a doctor or clinician on the same day?

- (74) 68% - Yes
- (18) 17% - No
- (16) 15% - Can't remember

Q5. The last time you requested an urgent same-day appointment, what was the outcome?

- (30) 40% - I was offered a same day appointment at my GP practice with a doctor
- (3) 4% - I was offered a same day appointment at my GP practice with a different professional
- (2) 3% - I was offered a same day appointment elsewhere (such as at a nearby practice or healthcare hub)
- (5) 7% - I was offered an appointment for another day
- (5) 7% - I was signposted to an alternative service
- (21) 28% - I was asked to call back later or the following day
- (8) 11% - I was not offered an appointment or any of the alternatives listed above
- 34 - Unanswered

Q6. Please rate your most recent experience with the practice on the following aspect: 1 unanswered and not all chose answer choices.

Answer Choices	Excellent	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very poor	Not applicable/ Not used	Response Total
Telephone service to book appointments	18% (19)	22% (24)	19% (20)	11% (12)	28% (30)	2% (2)	107
Practice Opening hours	19% (20)	34% (36)	21% (22)	15% (16)	11% (12)	0% (0)	106
Reception Service	25% (27)	25% (27)	22% (23)	4% (4)	22% (24)	2% (2)	107
Repeat prescription service	31% (33)	27% (29)	14% (15)	4% (4)	7% (8)	17% (18)	107
Quality of medical care and treatment	25% (27)	37% (40)	20% (21)	3% (3)	13% (14)	2% (2)	107
Face to face appointments	31% (33)	37% (40)	12% (13)	5% (5)	12% (13)	3% (3)	107
Online appointments	11% (12)	12% (13)	11% (12)	8% (8)	14% (15)	44% (47)	107
Telephone appointments	18% (19)	28% (30)	19% (20)	9% (10)	15% (16)	11% (12)	107
Ease of accessing information (website, emails, SMS reminders)	23% (25)	32% (34)	19% (20)	7% (7)	10% (11)	9% (10)	107

Q7. Do you have any other feedback about your experience with your GP practice? What do you like most and what could be improved? *Key themes that have emerged: difficulty accessing appointments, telephone service – call centre, reception and lack of continuity of care.*

Likes:

“Great service.”

"Excellent service."

"The staff are amazing - always trying to do their best."

"Five star."

"It's good."

"Everyone at my local doctor's surgery have been amazing. I really appreciate all they do."

"My son, he was very happy with the doctors that saw him at the surgery. My daughters experience at the surgery was very good, she was very happy with the doctor."

"My son was seen by doctor, after seeing my son he has now decided he wants to become a doctor, that's how lovely this doctor was. He was amazing. Very kind and good sense of humour."

Dislikes/improvements:

"Getting appointments to see the GP would be great, when needed."

"Appointment have to be same day, Why not give next day or after to see doctor."

"I have tried to book an appointment and always get told to call at 8 o'clock, when I try at 8 o'clock there are no appointments left. I have to try again the next day. It is not always possible to call the surgery at 8 o'clock for sick people. You should be able to book an appointment with the doctor at any time in the day for the next day or another day, especially for things that are not urgent but are not life threatening for the patient such as speaking to the fertility, eye infections that the pharmacy can't deal with. Accessing the GP should not be a difficult task for people!"

"Repeat prescription always needs chasing."

"Always never any appointments but when I do go to the surgery there's no one sitting in the waiting room and they've cut the opening times of the surgery, doesn't make sense that's why I avoid going to the doctors and it's not very often I do need an appointment but when a working person needs one he/she should be given one."

"Worst reception staff, never give appointments even for babies. Always ask to call back later or next days, even if you call at 8am on the dot, they're always booked somehow. They listen to your entire issue and at the end decide that they don't have any more appointments."

"It's so stressful getting an appointment that it puts me off calling. They don't offer next day or future appointments. You have to call in at 8am for only the same day appointment. But if one's at work at that time it makes it infeasible."

"We can only book an appointment via telephone at 8am on the day of the required appointment regardless of emergency or lack of emergency. Therefore non-emergency appointments are in the same queue as emergency. Online booking via the NHS app stated no appointments available and advises to call the surgery or NHS 111. Yet when we go to the surgery, it's empty. I have no idea if we are being seen by a doctor or an associate. There is no personal relationship with the clinicians or receptionists like we used to have."

"Appointments call centre is appalling, always signpost you to call NHS 111. No duty of care responsibilities towards patients whatsoever, pathetic GP practice. No future appointments can be booked. Their standard answer is always you can call NHS 111 should you wish to. Can't wait to relocate to another GP practice. Nothing good to say about this practice."

"I'm 91 and disabled. Getting to contact the surgery direct and not a call centre would be an improvement. Another would be to see the same doctor."

"Appointments need to be available on airmid to book. Also having a call centre abroad is ridiculous and it is extremely difficult trying to have a conversation with them sometimes."

"Telephone appointment booking system is outsourced to India. Can't have access to actual GP reception on the phone. Have to go through telephone service in India who then say they would log in request for a callback from reception, but nobody calls back. I have to go to physically go to the surgery to speak to reception staff regarding any queries. Don't believe it should be this difficult. Maybe have a separate phone number for reception."

"Sometimes receptionist behaviour are impolite and rude as they scream over the phone when you don't understand something or misunderstood and ask to be repeated."

"It is very difficult to get an appointment for people who work. Reception staff will try and refer you to the local pharmacies who cannot prescribe antibiotics. When I clarified if pharmacist do, I was given false information."

"We should not discuss our problems to receptionists, sometimes when we book appointment, they ask what's the problem and tell clients to ring NHS 111. They could have let the client to book a phone consultation first if we can't get an appointment straight away."

"Have not had a Face-to-Face medication review since Willow took over the practice. My most recent contact

was over a serious bowel issue. A doctor did not visit me a practice nurse came instead. They were professional but they weren't a doctor. I am on apixaban medicine which requires regular blood tests. I always have to chase the surgery for these to be done."

"For an elderly person, mum prefers to see a female GP and someone she's familiar with. There's lack of continuity at the Practice. GP is whomever is available. Unsure whether the ones we encounter are Locums? The junior doctors require a lot of prompting. Often their responses are similar to what I would get online. There are never any slots for blood tests at our Practice. We're always signposted to other Practices. Mum, being elderly does not wish to see unfamiliar clinicians. There NEVER any options to book appointment online. This has been ongoing for months. Only once have I been able to pre-book a GP appointment for mum via telephone. After raising some concerns directly with the Practice recently regarding accuracy of recordings in their online patient record system, things have improved slightly. Since becoming a hub of practices post-CQC failure, I don't think this Practice has improved."

"Willows Health Evington is one of the worst run GP's in Leicester, they do not demonstrate patient centred care and as a person enrolled at the gp, whenever there is an issue with yourself, it always makes you think twice about calling the gp due to difficulties of getting through to them, booking an appointment and also with the gp being picky in who to give an in person appointment. Also I once called in and asked to see a male doctor and I was told that there was no male doctor in and that I would have to call in early morning on a day a male doctor was in, same thing happened to my mother when she asked for a female doctor, and to book and appointment at this gp is a nightmare, you have to call in exactly when they open and you are put in a queue and it could take 45-60 mins for your turn to come and by the time your turn comes all the appointment slots are taken and sometimes whilst your in the queue they just put your call down and end it. It's a terribly run gp and I am thinking of changing to another gp."

"Whenever I called mostly appointment has gone and it's really hard to get an appointment."

"Bring back booking appointments via NHS app."

"Having to see different Doctors most of the time, I don't know if this is detrimental to the service the practice offers."

"The service is very poor. They don't reply, I never get my results back and it's impossible to book an appointment."

"Calling at 8am and being told all appointments for the day are gone is ridiculous. No option to prebook an appointment for the following day and being asked to call back the next day only to be told the same thing the following day that the appointments for the day have gone is absolutely ridiculous."

"I went to reception and asked for full access on the NHS app. Left email address - yet to be done."

"Consultations always feel rushed. At times the GP will reach their diagnosis without really listening to the patient or at times overriding the patients concerns and/ or trivialising them."

"To be able to visit own surgery instead of having to travel."



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