

# Riverside Medical Centre Preston

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Time: 9:30am-11:30am



**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

## Address

Riverside Medical Centre

194 Victoria Road

Walton-Le-Dale

Preston

PR5 4AY

## Registered Manager:

Rehanna Nagib (Manager)

## Date and Time of our Visit:

Monday 19th January 2026

9:30am-11:30am

## Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Emmy Walmsley (Senior Engagement Officer)

Debra Worthington (Healthwatch Lancashire Volunteer)

# 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](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

The report is available to members of the public and can be shared with the Integrated Care Board, 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.

# What did we do?

Healthwatch Lancashire Enter and View Representatives made an announced visit to Riverside Medical centre on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 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 Practice manager

At the beginning of the enter and view visit, Healthwatch Lancashire met with the Practice Manager to discuss The Medical Centre and to view the facilities. The manager spoke to us about how many staff were in that day and what jobs they do before being shown around.

## 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 Centre.

## Observations

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

# Visit Summary

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives made an announced visit to Riverside Medical Centre on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 and spoke with 10 staff members and 11 patients.

Riverside Medical Centre have an approximate patient population of around 10,600 patients from Walton-le-Dale, Lostock Hall, Houghton and surrounding areas.

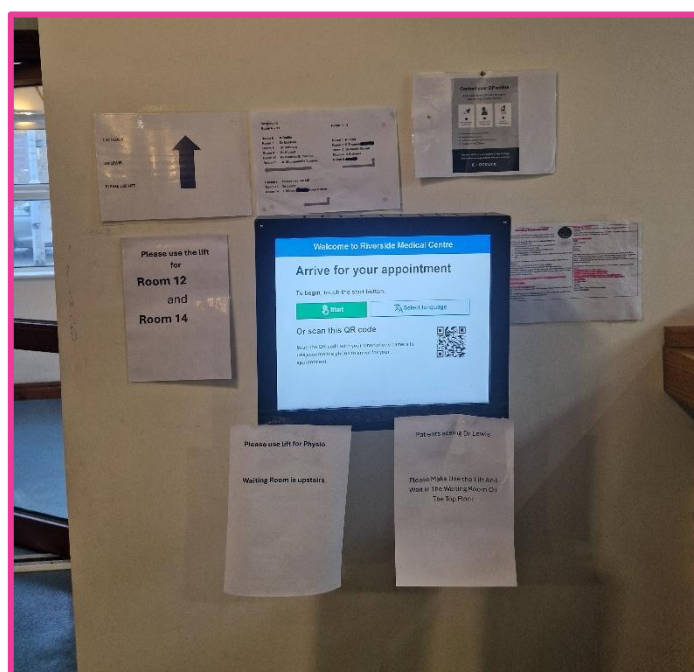
Healthwatch Representatives spoke with a range of staff and patients on the day of the visit and spoke about how they feel about the service at the Medical Centre relating to communication, care and accessibility. We also received surveys from staff online after the initial visit.

Staff were observed to be courteous and friendly to patients when they entered the Medical Practice. They were seen supporting patients with check in, medication enquiries and other medical enquiries. All these were dealt with efficiently and with dignity and respect.

Overall patient feedback was mixed with comments around the appointment booking process, troubles with medication and support. Some patients spoke about how they are happy within the Practice and they don't need to use it often. Recommendations included changing the main area, brighter, better notice boards, more seating and better queuing system.

Staff feedback was motivated by improvements that could be made to help patients have a good experience within the Medical Practice. Recommendations were similar to patients and were around the main entrance and updating that, clearer queuing system, looking into the prescription process and more support on reception.

Due to some comments from patients and staff related to communication, wellbeing and workplace culture. Healthwatch Lancashire have passed this report to the ICB for further comment.



## Surgery Population



Riverside Medical Centre has an approximate population of 10,600 patients. The majority of patients that attend the Medical Centre are young and middle aged with a small elderly population. The practice is situated in purpose-built premises with its own dispensary.

## Appointment Management

Patients can request appointments by phone, in person by coming into the Medical Centre and also via the online app with a few appointments available.

Riverside Medical Centre is also part of Bridgedale Primary Care Network (PCN) which allows patients to be seen at different surgeries that are part of the PCN to allow for out of hours appointments where necessary.



## Services available

Many services are offered at Riverside Medical Centre including:

- Gp appointments
- Nurse Practitioner appointments
- Social prescribers
- Physiotherapy
- Mental health practitioner appointments
- Pharmacist
- Paramedic appointments
- Phlebotomy

# Enter and View observations

## Location and External Environment

Riverside Medical Centre is situated in Walton-Le-Dale, opposite the Capital Centre in Preston. There is car parking for patients at the back of the Medical Centre with a car park to the side of the centre which allows patients to have two hours free parking. There is also one disabled space for patients to use which was clearly marked for patients to see.

The Medical Centre has level access with two automatic doors on entry and a sign on the building which is clear for patients to see.

## Internal Environment and Waiting Area



On entry into the Medical Centre there are two automatic doors. The first door opens into a small entrance area with a notice board containing information about local support services. The second automatic door leads into the main waiting area and reception area. There is a self check in machine to the left when entering. A BMI blood pressure machine is also available in the entrance for patients to use. There was a small selection of seating in the waiting area for patients to use which was all of a similar type and was

opposite reception but more seating would be recommended (Recommendation 1)

To the left of the entrance is the reception desk which was open and enabled patients to speak with staff but the queuing system was confusing and patients weren't able to identify the best place to stand which in turn limited the confidentiality for patients speaking with staff (Recommendation 2) Patients were seen to be either using the self check in machine, going to the main desk and then sitting in the wait area. In the main area are five clinical rooms and down the corridor to the left are six more clinical rooms. In the waiting area was a screen that showed patients name and room to attend when it was their appointment time.



There were posters up around the waiting area showcasing support services and the Medical Centre information, this would benefit from specific support notice boards to make clear to patients what the support is. (Recommendation 3) Patients mentioned that the entrance area to the doctors surgery was quite dark and would benefit from different lighting. There was signage present in the main area

but this wasn't fully clear from the entrance for new patients and would benefit from being larger and clearer for all patients and in different parts of the Medical Practice so all patients are able to see it. (Recommendation 4)

There are also two clinical rooms upstairs which patients are aware of and can use the lift to access these rooms. A separate waiting room has been implemented upstairs for patients using those rooms. There were many leaflet racks up on the walls but many of these were empty and could be refreshed with up to date information for patients to take away with them.



There are two patient bathrooms, one with a single toilet and sink which was clean and tidy at the time of the visit. The second toilet was a disabled access toilet and this was also clean and tidy but no pull chord in for safety. (Recommendation 5)

There was a small sign up 'we appreciate any complaints or compliments' and that forms are available at reception. It would be beneficial for compliment/complaints sheets to be out for patients to easily access and a box on the reception desk to ensure these are anonymous. (Recommendation 6)

## Patient Interactions and involvement



Observations were taken at the time of the visit including some of the patients entering the Medical Centre and speaking with staff members. Patients were seen coming into the Medical Centre and queuing up at the reception which was difficult at times when multiple patients came in as there was no clear queuing system for patients to use. (Recommendation 2) Patients were seen speaking with staff and the staff member on reception was kind, courteous and listened to what the patients needed and provided support to each one in turn.

At times it was difficult for patients as there wasn't a lot of privacy at reception which meant patients were talking about a sample, their health or an appointment with other patients stood directly behind. At one point the member of staff did ask a patient if they would like to speak privately, even though they declined they did thank the member of staff. Patients were also observed to be stood in the waiting area due to the lack of seating provided which became problematic when patients were coming in to speak to staff at reception with nowhere for them stand (recommendation 2)

The phone line was ringing frequently during the visit, and each call was handled with care and attention with staff stating who they were and how they could help. Staff were seen to be kind and courteous throughout the visit and were good at keeping up with the demand on the phones and at reception.

A staff member called a patient's name, prompting a brief exchange about the patient missing their name on the board due to being in the bathroom. The staff member's response was perceived as abrupt and could have been handled with greater sensitivity.

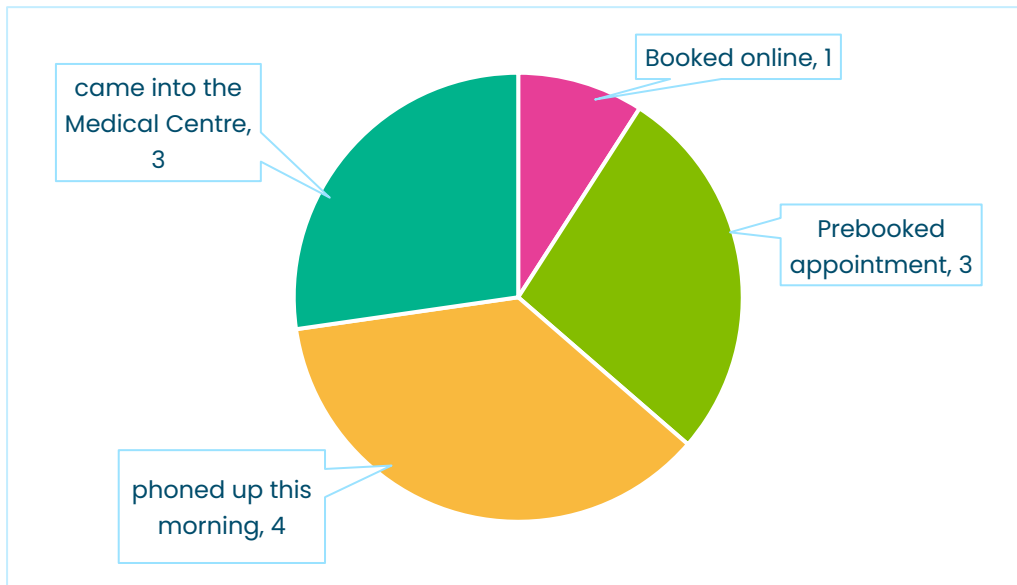
When speaking with the manager they explained that there is currently a patient participation group (PPG) up and running with six patients sitting on this meeting which is virtual and bi monthly. Out of 11 patients spoken with, only one knew what the PPG was and that is because they were part of it. There are no posters or adverts up showing the PPG, what it is or how to join. (Recommendation 7)



# Patient feedback

Healthwatch Representatives spoke with 11 patients at the visit.

## How did you make your appointment today?



When speaking with patients they mentioned that they had made their appointment by various means including ringing, online or had a prebooked appointment. Two patients mentioned they had come into the medical centre as they couldn't get through on the phone.

**“It's hard to get through on the phone, you ring up in the morning, and you are so far behind in the queue, I don't think there's enough staff to cover the phones, so I came into the Medical Practice today.”**

One patient mentioned that it's not always easy to get an appointment and the staff are doing all they can do to help the patients.

**“I don't think it's easy to get an appointment, the staff try their best but there's not enough of them. You ring up in the morning, and you are quite behind in the queue.”**

## What works well at this surgery?

Two patients mentioned how they like certain members of staff and that is who they come to see.

**“Certain members of staff are why I like this Practice.”**

One patient mentioned that the NHS app works well for them when making an appointment.

**“The NHS app works well here.”**

Three patients commented that they feel the Medical Practice is good and would always fit them in when they needed to make appointments.

**“They always fit you in and I have no problems.”**

**“I don’t have any problems at the moment, but I don’t come often.”**

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

Three patients spoke with Representatives about how they feel there has been a decline in the Medical Centre and how there needs to be a lot of changes to help patients.

**“Nothing works for me, I feel a lot of changes need to be made.”**

**“I feel there needs to be changes to the phone line, it’s not the staffs fault they are lovely I just feel there’s not a lot of them and they seem stretched.”**

**“I think this Medical Practice used to be great, but staff seem to be pulled in every direction and they feel subdued. I don’t know what’s happening, but basic patient care isn’t here.”**

Patients spoke to representatives about a few improvements that could be made to the Medical Centre including the entrance area, clearer queuing system, posters and chairs in the waiting area. (recommendations 1,2,3 &4)

**“I think everything needs to be changed, the entrance is dark, there’s posters everywhere, reception queuing isn’t great and there’s not enough seating for patients.”**

One patient spoke about how repeat prescriptions can be difficult and it isn’t always met with support. (recommendation 8)

**“Repeat medication is difficult to obtain, and I think the person on prescriptions can be quite rude and unhelpful.”**

Patients also spoke about how the ringing for an appointment can be hard and how they have changed the process for booking in with certain staff members.

**“The phone lines rammed at 8am and you can’t get through, plus you used to be able to book and see a certain doctor but now your just booked in with anyone.” (recommendation 9)**

Two patients spoke to us about seating, with patients standing waiting for their appointment as there were none available for them.

**“Patients need more chairs there’s nowhere to sit.” (Recommendation 1)**

A patient mentioned that where the television screen is situated can be hard for patients to see if they are sat in a different place.

**“Another screen in the waiting room as you can’t see it from the seating area.”**



## Do you know how to make a complaint if needed?

When speaking with patients about the complaints process nine patients knew how to make a complaint and some mentioned they had previously made a complaint.

**“I made a complaint and got asked to come into the surgery to discuss this but it didn't go anywhere unfortunately. I felt it wasn't productive at all.”**

Two patients said they didn't know how to make a complaint, but one of those patients mentioned they were asking for that today.

**“I am asking today as I want to make a complaint about the service today.”**

## Any other comments

**“I was expecting a telephone consultation recently, but no one called, I rang and they told me someone would call me, but no one rang so I had to ring back the day after.”**

**“There is no continuity of staff and doctors they are always changing.”**

**“I am happy with the service.”**

**“There are ongoing problems with medication and no support in place for carers.”**



# Staff feedback

Healthwatch received feedback from 10 staff members through conversations at the time of the visit and some forms being sent directly to Healthwatch Lancashire.

When speaking with staff members they mentioned that they manage their own workload dependent on their role within the Centre. They mentioned this can be hard at times when awaiting staff positions or staff on leave. Staff mentioned that training is carried out in person and online and there are some opportunities to have protected training time to complete this work. Staff spoke about how this could be improved to allow more time for training.

There was some discrepancy around what support is in place for patients with additional needs and staff were not clear on what is in place and what support is available (Recommendation 10) some recommendations brought forward by staff to improve the patient experience are:

**“A better way of ordering prescriptions as patients are finding this difficult at the moment, a lot of patients don’t have access to the app or online.” (recommendation 8)**

Another recommendation was around staff meetings and staff wellbeing. (recommendation 11)

**“I think implementing staff meetings and access to wellbeing activities would be helpful.”**

**“More support and trust in the workplace would really help us in our roles.”**

A few staff mentioned the entrance area of the medical centre and echoing patients feedback around decoration and seating.

**“The environment could do with changing downstairs, make it lighter, clearer notice boards and more seating for patients.” (recommendations 1,2,3 & 4)**

Staff also mentioned how having more staff on reception would help with the call queue but also the queue of patients in the centre. This would alleviate pressure and help with patient demand and support.

**“More staff on reception would help with the backlog and support patients being seen quicker.” (recommendation 9)**

# Recommendations

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

1. Produce more seating in the waiting area for patients to use and ensure these are different styles to meet different needs. (See appendix)
2. Ensure the queuing area for reception is clear and patients know where they need to queue. This will also help provide confidentiality for patients speaking to staff at the reception desk.
3. Ensure clear information for patients by utilising notice boards to showcase different support services and consider theming these.
4. Ensure signage around the Medical Centre is clear so all patients and visitors can see where they are going. Ensure these are contrasting to the background so these will be easier to see. (See appendix)
5. Install a pull chord in the disabled toilet for the safety of patients using this facility.
6. Ensure a compliments/complaints box is put in the waiting area so patients can freely give feedback anonymously.
7. Put posters up advertising the Patient participation group and how patients can get involved with this.
8. conduct a review of the prescription making process to identify ways the process can be improved for patients.
9. Ensure the phone lines at key times are covered to support the demand of patients calling the surgery and ensure all patients are aware of who they are seeing that day.
10. Review your policy around additional support and disabilities and share with staff so they are aware what is in place to support patients with additional support needs.
11. Implement staff meetings regularly so staff are kept up to date with developments and look into wellbeing support for staff members.

## Appendix

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/areas-of-interest/estates-and-facilities/patient-led-assessments-of-the-care-environment-place>

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

# Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe
Provide more seating in the waiting area for patients to use and ensure these are different styles to meet different needs. (See appendix)	More seats to be added to increase capacity in the waiting room. We will look into providing different types of chairs to give patient more choice depending on their needs	3-6/12
Ensure the queuing area for reception is clear and patients know where they need to queue. This will also help provide confidentiality for patients speaking to staff at the reception desk.	To facilitate this we are going to add markings for queuing and provide a gap for the patient in front, by moving the seating this will also allow privacy and space in front of the main desk instead of the entrance	3-6/12
Ensure clear information for patients by utilising notice boards to showcase different support services and consider theming these.	Notice Boards will be updated monthly and PCN services advertised with all the clinicians available as well as local service providers and signposting info	3-6/12
Ensure signage around the Medical Centre is clear so all patients and visitors can see where they are going. Ensure these are contrasting to the background so these will be easier to see. (See appendix)	Signage to be updated with room numbers and clinician roles  Signs to be contrasted appropriately for clear visibility	3-6/12
Install a pull chord in the disabled toilet for the safety of patients using this facility.	To be installed	3-6/12
Ensure a compliments/complaints box is put in the waiting area so patients can freely give feedback anonymously.	We use FFT every day and feedback is collected which again in anonymous, but a box will be installed in the waiting area where everyone	3-6/12

	can see and will be marked clearly	
Put posters up advertising the Patient participation group and how patients can get involved with this.	Posters to be displayed about PPG and contact details given	3-6/12
conduct a review of the prescription making process to identify ways the process can be improved for patients.	Prescription policy to be discussed with staff, patients will be educated over time about the policy via dispensary and reception. Similar info will be provided over the phone opportunistically.	3-6/12
Ensure the phone lines at key times are covered to support the demand of patients calling the surgery and ensure all patients are aware of who they are seeing that day.	Phones lines are always manned; staff have been instructed to inform the patient of the clinician they are going to see.  Recent recruitment of more staff has enabled us to carry out this more efficiently	3-6/12
Review your policy around additional support and disabilities and share with staff so they are aware what is in place to support patients with additional support needs.	Annual mandatory training on learning disabilities, staff aware of disability access, availability of a wheelchair and additional support to be discussed in next PETs meeting	3-6/12
Implement staff meetings regularly so staff are kept up to date with developments and look into wellbeing support for staff members.	The practice takes wellbeing of all staff seriously and we have offered support and signposting when needed. A staff newsletter will be introduced to provide updates on a regular basis ensuring the whole team is updated. We will arrange regular meetings for individual teams and collective meeting during PETs session.	3-6/12



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