

Enter and View report

The James Cochrane Practice – Maude Street Surgery,
Kendal

Address: Maude Street, Kendal LA9 4QE

Telephone number: 01539 760760

Website: [Homepage - The James Cochrane Practice](#)

The practice's **I want great care page** is [here](#)

The practice's **CQC page** is [here](#)

Registered managers

Debra Jones (Business)

Emma Turner (Operations)

Date and time of visit

Date: Monday 23rd March, 2026

Time: 10.30am-12.30pm

Healthwatch Westmorland and Furness authorised representatives:

Kelsey Warren, Engagement Officer

Kate Rees, Assistant Head of Service

Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Westmorland and Furness (HWW&F) is to gather people's views and experiences, especially those of communities which are under-represented, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service.

The aim of an Enter and View visit is to gather views and experiences of patients or residents, carer, relatives and staff of a service and observe the environment to consider the quality of the service. This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representative who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced.

HWW&F is an independent organisation, therefore 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 manager for their opportunity to respond before being published on our website at [www.healthwatchWestmorland and Furness.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchWestmorlandandFurness.co.uk).

Where appropriate, we may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is available to the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Healthwatch England and Lancashire South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (LSC ICB).

Acknowledgements

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

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 and patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

General information

Patient population

The practice serves a mixed population broadly representative of the local area. Key characteristics include a largely rural population with pockets of urban deprivation, a higher than average proportion of older adults with complex long-term conditions, growing numbers of families in newer housing developments, a small minority ethnic population, and patients facing health inequalities due to rural isolation, transport barriers, and socioeconomic challenges.

Appointments

Patients can book by phone from 8am, online via the practice website and NHS App, or in person at reception. Consultations are offered face to face, by telephone, and by video.

Home visits are available for housebound or mobility-impaired patients. The practice also holds appointments at a local hospice and care home.

The James Cochrane Practice has a second site in Kendal, at Helme Chase. The practice runs South Lakes ENT Service and South Lakes Dermatology Service from there. They are an active part of Kendal Integrated Care Community (KICC), and work collaboratively with other practices, including supporting patients who have had gender reassignment.

What the practice is proud of

They highlighted their stable multidisciplinary team, proactive management of long-term conditions and frailty, commitment to providing care that exceeds expectations, and quality improvement, an active Patient Participation Group, and positive patient feedback about the warm approach of staff.

Methodology

During an Enter and View visit, HWW&F authorised representative obtain the views and experiences of patients or residents, carer and relatives, and staff. Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help consider the quality of services. The team also record their own observations on the environment and staff-member interactions.

After an Enter and View visit, the HWW&F team collate feedback gathered and observations made to compile a report. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement.

Our Enter and View representatives received feedback from 11 patients and spoke with 5 staff. We were also provided with information in our pre-visit questionnaire, which was completed by the Operations Manager, and a member of the clinical team. Names, pronouns and identifiable details have been removed from quotes to maintain confidentiality.

Demographic information

Key summary figures

- 11 patients spoken to, average age 74, age range 42–86
- Gender split (7 women, 4 men)
- Employment status — overwhelmingly retired (9 out of 11)
- 55% had a long-term condition; 45% had a disability; 18 % had unpaid caring duties.

Enter and View observations

General environment and accessibility

The practice website is easy to use and informative. The practice is conveniently located close to public transport, with a bus stop directly opposite the road. There is clear signage throughout the building, with rooms clearly labelled and a sign indicating which clinical staff are present each day.

The building is clean and well maintained throughout. Parking is available, though space is limited. However, there are designated disabled parking spaces. The main entrance is step-free, as is the ground floor, providing good disabled access to the facility.

The hand gel dispenser near the door was empty during our visit, though there was a bottle at reception.

Reception and booking-in

The practice has an effective booking-in system, with both a manned reception and an electronic patient check-in system. This provides flexibility for patients with different preferences and needs.

Staff were observed to be professional and courteous to service users. We observed several patients booking in at the electronic check-in system and saw reception staff checking patients in and arranging new appointments, offering a range of dates and

times. Communication between staff and patients was good, as was communication between care navigators.

There is the option for service users to talk privately to reception staff if required. The smaller waiting area is quiet, but there is also access to a private room if needed for confidential conversations.

Waiting area and patient information

There is adequate seating for patients, with several different types of seats in the waiting room offering a range of heights to accommodate different needs. The waiting room is spacious and clean, with a central reception area opposite the main entrance and two separate seating areas.

A notice board is present in the waiting area. Information about the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is displayed, and the PPG is very active. Patients are called for their appointments via a TV screen in the waiting areas, providing visual notification.

Adaptations for specific needs

Accessible toilet

The accessible toilet does not currently have adaptations for those with dementia or who are sight impaired. There was adequate soap available in the bathroom.

Communication support

British Sign Language (BSL) support is available through a practice tablet and MS Teams. Translation services are also available through the practice tablet and MS Teams. There is a hearing loop available, although we could not see a sign for it during our visit. (The Operations Manager looked for the sign on the same day as our visit and reinstated it.)

Dementia-friendly features

There was no clock in the waiting room during our visit. A dementia-friendly clock clearly shows the time, day, and date. According to Alzheimer's Society guidance, this helps those experiencing progressive memory loss keep track of the day, date, and time whilst promoting greater independence.

Quiet space

We were informed that the smaller waiting area, to the left of the door, is often used by people who need a quiet space. Additionally, a lockable, private room is available for

patients with hyper-sensory needs, such as those with learning disabilities, autism, or social anxiety.

Patient feedback

We spoke with nine patients during our visit. The following themes emerged from their feedback:

Appointments

Overall satisfaction

Many patients reported positive experiences when making appointments. Several patients mentioned being able to get same-day appointments when phoning in the morning, with one patient stating: "I rang this morning and got an appointment for today."

Booking methods and appointment waiting times

Patients use various methods to book appointments, including phone, in-person visits, and the NHS app. One patient appreciated that they received a text message reminder when their health check was due. Another said: "I like to make appointments face to face. I always come in person. The girls on reception are fantastic."

Some patients mentioned challenges with the appointment system. One patient told us: "It can be hard getting through to reception when everyone is phoning at the same time. But I rang this morning and got an appointment for today. The reception staff are really helpful and will do what they can to get you in."

Another highlighted difficulties for those unable to call at 8am: "It's not always easy getting an emergency appointment. Especially if you can't phone at 8am."

Choice was an issue for one patient: "I phoned at 8am and got an appointment. I wanted to go to Helm Chase but they said all the appointments had gone. This is hard to believe at 8am."

Wait times for non-urgent appointments were mentioned by one patient: "The wait time for an appointment is three to four weeks currently, unless it's urgent!"

Reception staff

Reception staff received consistently positive feedback. Comments included: "The reception staff are really helpful and will do what they can to get you in", "The reception staff are 10 out of 10", and "Reception staff are lovely. I am very pleased with the care I receive."

Communication

Digital communication

Many patients praised the digital communication methods available. One patient commented: "I use the app. The people are easy to talk to. I have 2 children and always get an appointment for them when they need to be seen."

One said: "There is good information given. The app has regular updates. I can see my records, medication and things. The staff are really friendly and helpful."

Text messages are used for appointment reminders and for requesting feedback after appointments. The messaging service was mentioned positively: "I use the messaging service and they reply quickly."

Test results and updates

Patients reported receiving timely communication about test results. One patient said: "I get sent test results quickly," and another mentioned: "I get results from tests. I am offered vaccines. I use the surgery regularly for bloods. I get app updates."

Staff interactions

Staff were described as "helpful, friendly and approachable." One patient noted feeling "involved in decision making." However, one patient commented: "I think the nurses communicate better than the doctors. They seem to know more and have more time for you."

Care and treatment

All patients who responded to this question confirmed that they receive care and treatment that meets their needs. Comments included: "Yes," "Yes, great practice," and "When you see a doctor or nurse, their care is very good."

One patient's only caveat related to the appointment system rather than the quality of care: "Yes other than having to phone at 8am to make an appointment."

Several patients mentioned using additional services provided by the practice. Comments included: "I attend routine health checks MOT more so when I used to be on blood thinners. The appointments are good the nurses are like friends" and "I have regular blood tests. It's useful to have that here".

Premises

All patients were satisfied with the premises, describing them as well-maintained, accessible, and clean. Specific comments included: "Beautiful building, no issues with access," "Clean and tidy. No issues. There are no access issues," and "The floors are all on the ground floor which makes them easy to get to. The building is always clean and tidy."

Feedback and complaints

There was varied awareness about how to provide feedback or make complaints. Several patients mentioned receiving text messages after appointments requesting feedback. One patient noted: "I have been asked over the phone sometimes."

One told us: "I don't have a smart phone, so I don't know."

Some patients were uncertain about the formal process to make a complaint. Comments included: "I'm not sure. But if I had any issues I am happy to come and speak to a receptionist," "I'm not sure," and "No Idea."

Patients we spoke to did not know that the paper forms and box for feedback at reception was for compliments and complaints. (During our visit, we pointed out the forms and a suggestion box at reception to one patient who did not have a smartphone.)

Other comments

Overall, patients expressed high levels of satisfaction with the practice. Comments included: "No, everything is good. Nothing to complain about," "No everything is really good," and "The reception staff are lovely. I am very pleased with the care I receive."

One patient raised an important issue about transport access: "I got a taxi down from home. It cost £4. It's difficult to get a taxi early morning and between 2pm and 5pm because of schools use them. I sometimes go to Helme Chase Surgery, but if there's not bus it's easy to get stuck. The timing of the [one per hour] bus doesn't always work with a GP appointment."

Conclusion

The James Cochrane Practice's Maude Street Surgery is a well-regarded and valued service within its community. Patients consistently praised the warmth and professionalism of staff at all levels, with strengths including the responsiveness of reception, the availability of same-day appointments, and a multi-channel communication approach that accommodates a range of patient needs and digital capabilities. This is noteworthy given the challenges of serving a population with higher than average rates of long-term conditions, frailty, and rural isolation, where the practice functions as an essential healthcare resource.

The physical environment is clean, accessible, and well maintained, and the practice demonstrates commendable inclusivity through the provision of BSL and translation services, a hearing loop, and a quiet space.

A small number of areas for improvement were identified, primarily relating to dementia-friendly adaptations and awareness of the formal complaints process.

Recommendations

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

1. Install dementia-friendly clocks in both parts of the waiting room The waiting room currently has no clock on display. A dementia-friendly clock, which clearly shows the time, day, and date, would benefit patients with dementia and progressive memory loss by supporting their orientation and promoting greater independence. Given that the waiting area is split into two sections, a clock visible from each would ensure all patients benefit equally. This is a low-cost change with meaningful impact for a vulnerable patient group.

2. Replace the toilet seat and grab bar with contrasting colours The accessible toilet currently has a white toilet seat and grab bar that do not contrast sufficiently with the surrounding surfaces. Replacing these with fittings in a contrasting colour, such as dark blue or red, would support independent toilet use for patients with dementia and visual impairments, in line with established dementia-friendly design guidance. This is a small and relatively inexpensive adjustment that could make a significant difference to patient dignity and safety.

3. Improve visibility of the complaints and feedback process Several patients were unsure how to raise concerns or make a formal complaint. Displaying clear, simple information in the waiting area about the complaints process – including signposting to external support services such as HWW&F and the NHS Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – would address this gap. This would help to ensure that all patients, including those who may be less confident in raising concerns directly with staff, are aware of the options available to them.

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe	Comments
1. Install dementia-friendly clocks in both parts of the waiting room.	we recognise the value of clear, easy-to-read clocks in supporting patients with dementia and memory difficulties to remain oriented and independent. We will implement this recommendation by installing two dementia-friendly calendar clocks – one in each section of the waiting room at Maude Street – to ensure visibility for all patients.	These clocks will be purchased and installed by 30 June 2026.	We are proposing to use the <i>Large Square Calendar Clock (red)</i> supplied by the Alzheimer's Society, as it meets recognised dementia-friendly design principles. We have added a digital clock to the TV screens as an interim measure until we purchase a clock.
2. Replace the toilet seat and grab bar with contrasting colours.	We recognise the importance of dementia-friendly design in promoting patient safety, independence, and dignity. As a practice, we are committed to implementing this improvement. Both patient toilets have very recently had new toilet seats installed. Replacing these immediately would not be environmentally responsible, particularly of	We anticipate completing these changes within the next 24 months as part of our ongoing commitment to improving accessibility	We will therefore incorporate this recommendation into our planned maintenance schedule. When the toilet seats next require replacement, we will ensure that contrasting colours are selected in line

	the need to minimise unnecessary waste. At the same time, we will review and, where appropriate, replace the grab rails to achieve suitable contrast.	and patient experience.	with best practice guidance.
3. Improve visibility of the complaints and feedback process.	We have QR codes to encourage feedback through I Want Great Care throughout the waiting areas. The information on how to raise a complaint of feedback is available on our website. We have a laminated 'patient complaints and feedback' in each waiting room at HC, and on the notice board as you walk in at MS. This was in situ when Healthwatch visited. There are plans to display this in each clinic room, this is being done as part of an update to all clinic room notice boards. We will include a slide on the TV screens with information on how to raise feedback/complaints.	Timeframe for notice boards 30th Aug 2026. Timeframe – TV slides 30th June 2026	