



Enter & View

Padstow GP surgery

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1 Introduction

1.1 Details of visit

Service provider: Petroc Group Practice, Padstow Medical Centre

Service Address: Boyd Avenue, Padstow, PL28 8ER

Date: 27th July 2026

Authorised representative: Nigel Oakes

1.2 Purpose of visit

The purpose of this Enter and View visit was to observe how patients experienced the practice, hear directly from patients, carers and staff, identify examples of good practice and highlight any opportunities to improve access and patient experience

1.3 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cornwall would like to thank patients and staff who took the time to share their experiences during this visit.

1.4 Disclaimer

This report relates to findings observed on the specific date above and is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of patients, carers and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time of the visit. Findings should be interpreted as a snapshot of observations on the day of the visit and not a judgement of clinical effectiveness.

1.5 About Healthwatch Cornwall

Healthwatch Cornwall is an independent organisation committed to amplifying the voices of Cornwall's residents in the planning and delivery of health and social care services. Through public engagement, we gather their views and experiences with these services. We ensure these perspectives are represented in decision-making processes both locally and nationally, driven by the belief that community feedback is vital to improving standards of care.

1.6 What is Enter and View?

As a local Healthwatch we are authorised to "Enter and View" health and social care services through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Local Authorities Regulations 2013 (part 4). These services can include hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies.

Enter and View visits are an opportunity to see services in action, listen to and understand the experiences of individuals who use them, and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The visits are organised based on feedback received about individual services or in response to themes identified in our research.

2 Visit Summary

Conversations with staff

Healthwatch Cornwall spoke with the practice manager and 3 administrative and clinical support staff during the visit

Conversations with patients

Twenty patients and carers were asked about their experience of the practice

Observation of facilities

Observations were made throughout the visit, focussing on the condition of the facilities, administrative procedures and patient experience.

Overall, observations on the day and feedback from patients were largely positive and noted good practice alongside areas for improvement. Most patients and carers we spoke with described the care they received in positive terms.

3 Service overview

Padstow Medical Centre is part of the Petroc group practice and is based in a large purpose-built building with an on-site dispensary on the outskirts of the town. The practice has approximately 17,000 registered patients from a large catchment area, including nearby urban centres of population and large rural areas, which include a significant number of farming communities. The practice was rated as overall 'Good' when inspected by CQC in 2022. The practice has 5 GP partners and 7 salaried GPs supported by a team of advanced practitioners, paramedics, practice nurses, healthcare assistants, clinical pharmacists and social prescribers. The practice operates on a total triage basis, with all new clinical requests coming through an electronic triage and booking system.

4 Observations

There is a large car park to the front of the building with disabled parking bays available. On arrival our identification was checked, and we were asked to sign the visitors book. There is an automated check in screen located in the reception area. One patient was seen to have difficulty using this during the visit, as the screen appeared to freeze, but other patients were seen using this without apparent problems.

The waiting room contained some seating suitable for bariatric patients and some raised seating suitable for patients with reduced mobility. A maximum of five patients were seen using the waiting room at any one time during our visit.

There was an automated blood pressure measurement machine in a separate area of the waiting room which allowed for patient privacy.

There were a number of notices displayed around the waiting room, with information on topics including vaccination, mental health, pharmacy first services and safeguarding. All notices were neatly displayed and in date,

Unisex toilets, with disabled facilities were available adjacent to the waiting room, these appeared clean and well stocked with sanitary products.

The reception desk was staffed throughout the visit. Staff were observed communicating clearly with patients and assisting with queries. Staff calling patients from the waiting area greeted patients and offered assistance where required, allowing adequate time for safe mobilisation.

There was a large display screen in the waiting room with rolling presentations on topics such as volunteer groups, social prescribing and seasonal healthcare information.

No safeguarding concerns were identified or raised with Healthwatch representatives during the visit.

5 Patient feedback

Digital access

Patients described mixed preferences for accessing appointments, with some valuing the convenience of online triage and booking while others preferred telephone contact. Patients described having a choice between online and telephone access. Those unable or preferring not to use the online system reported receiving support from the practice. Five patients told us that they preferred to not use any on-line service to make an appointment. One said, 'I don't like the system, it asks too many questions', whilst another told us, 'It's just too confusing for me, I never know what to put in'.

Ten patients/carers spoke in positive terms about the on-line triage system. One told us, 'I didn't like it at first, but when the receptionist went through it with me, I started to use it and now I'm happy to use it rather than have to queue up outside or hold on the phone'. A carer for an elderly relative said, 'It's fine, I was really happy this morning as I went on and said what was wrong and got an appointment almost straight away, you can't complain about that'.

Standard of care

Nineteen patients and carers described their experience of care positively. Common themes included staff being described as kind, supportive and responsive to individual needs.

One told us they had experienced a problem with a particular doctor, who they described as 'Too matter of fact'. They went on to say, 'I saw someone different the next time and they were kindness itself, so that made up for it'. Twelve described the staff as kind and caring.

A patient who was attending for an appointment with a paramedic told us, 'I have to come every few months for a procedure and always see the same paramedic, who is simply wonderful, he is so kind and gentle and extremely skilful'.

A temporary resident on holiday in the area spoke to us about their experience of the practice and said, 'I can't fault them at all, the receptionist was amazing and so kind, she let me register and really took the time to listen and understand what I needed'. They added, 'I never thought I'd be this lucky as I don't live here, but the care I've received is first rate'.

A patient who had been referred to the social prescribing team told us, 'They are a fantastic bunch, they really helped me get better and were so supportive and caring'.

Availability of appointments

Three patients told us that they thought they had waited too long for a routine appointment and three others commented on long wait times for phlebotomy. One told us, 'The doctor said I needed bloods done to check how I'm doing but they can't do them for over three weeks, which worries me as I want to know that I'm OK'. A carer said, 'My partner has to have regular bloods, but I seem to have a battle getting the appointment each and every time'.

A patient waiting for a minor procedure told us, 'I was told they would be in touch with a date but after waiting for a while I filled in an online form asking for an update but all I got was an appointment for weeks away with another doctor to assess my suitability, despite being already told I needed it'.

One patient told us they had asked to see a female doctor regarding a gynaecological condition, they said, 'They made me an appointment very quickly and I saw a lovely lady doctor who really understood what I needed, they have said I can see her each time I come now and I'm very happy about that'.

Complaint handling

Two patients told us they had made a complaint in the past year, both reported a satisfactory outcome. One told us, 'I wasn't happy with the way I was messed about getting an appointment, but after I complained they put it right and now, I have a contact in the surgery to ask for them to arrange the procedure I need and it works really well, so I'm happy with the outcome'.

6 Staff feedback

Management explained the triage and booking systems in place at the practice. We were shown a copy of the welcome booklet, produced in conjunction with the patient participation group and made available to all new patients registering with the practice. They acknowledged that some patients experienced barriers to accessing digital services and described planned changes to reception and telephone systems. We were shown evidence of how waiting lists are monitored and managed. Management also described a quality improvement project focused on reducing 'did not attend' rates

Management described how waiting lists are monitored and managed and shared examples of information used by the practice to support this process.

Management shared examples of recent meetings, audits and improvement activity which they described as supporting patient experience and service improvement. Examples were also provided of social prescribing initiatives, complaint handling and patient feedback processes.

The practice manager reported that the practice has two new GP's starting the following month, that they had two new HCAs start in the past couple of weeks and a Nurse assistant starting in the next week.

7 Recommendations

Healthwatch Cornwall have offered some recommendations based on observations and feedback from both patients and staff to improve experiences in the practice.

1) Routine and phlebotomy appointment access

The practice should review the concerns raised by patients regarding waits for routine and phlebotomy appointments to identify whether there are recurring barriers to timely access and consider what further action could improve appointment availability and communication about expected waiting times.

2) Digital and supported access

The practice should continue to ensure that non-digital and supported access routes remain readily available for patients who cannot, or prefer not to, use digital systems, including appropriate support with electronic check-in and online triage.

3) Communication around minor procedures

The practice should review how patients awaiting minor procedures are kept informed about the next steps in their care, including where further assessment is required before a procedure can be scheduled, to help ensure that patients understand the process and expected timescales.

8 Provider feedback

Provider Response to Healthwatch Cornwall Enter and View Report

We would like to thank Healthwatch Cornwall for taking the time to visit Padstow Medical Centre and to speak with our patients, carers and staff. We are pleased that the report highlighted the positive experiences of many patients, particularly the kindness, professionalism and responsiveness of our team, and we welcome the opportunity to reflect on the recommendations made.

Recommendation 1: Routine and Phlebotomy Appointment Access

We acknowledge the concerns raised regarding access to routine and blood test appointments at the time of the visit. During this period, the practice was experiencing reduced capacity within our Healthcare Assistant team following the departure of two members of staff, which impacted the availability of phlebotomy appointments.

Since the visit, we have successfully recruited two new Healthcare Assistants and a Nurse Associate. As these new team members complete their induction and training programmes, we expect capacity for blood tests and other routine appointments to improve significantly. We will continue to monitor demand and waiting times to ensure patients can access appointments as promptly as possible.

We also recognise the importance of keeping patients informed about expected waiting times and will continue to review our communication processes so that patients have a clear understanding of when appointments are likely to be available.

Recommendation 2: Digital and Supported Access

We remain committed to ensuring that all patients can access our services in a way that suits their needs and abilities. While many patients value the convenience of our online triage system, we recognise that some patients may be unable or unwilling to use digital services.

Our reception team is available to support patients with accessing care through the Klinik triage system. This support can be provided either in person at reception or over the

telephone, where staff can complete the form on a patient's behalf. Where possible, we encourage patients to complete the form themselves, as this often provides more detailed information and allows them to do so at a time that is convenient for them. However, support will always remain available for those who require it.

Patients who prefer not to use the self-check-in screen can continue to check in directly with our reception team. We would encourage patients to arrive in good time for their appointments, as there may occasionally be a short wait at the reception desk during busy periods.

Recommendation 3: Communication Around Minor Procedures

We acknowledge the feedback regarding communication and waiting times for minor procedures. At Padstow Medical Centre, minor procedures primarily include joint injections and coil/IUD fittings. Not all clinicians perform these procedures, and some clinicians specialise in treating particular conditions or joints.

In some cases, an assessment appointment is required prior to the procedure itself. This allows the clinician who will undertake the procedure to provide advice, confirm suitability and ensure the procedure can be carried out safely and effectively. Depending on the procedure, this pre-assessment may take place one to three weeks before treatment.

Following the Healthwatch visit, we have reiterated to our clinical teams the importance of ensuring patients understand the next steps in their care, including any assessment requirements, expected waiting times and the reasons for any additional appointments. We are also reinforcing internal communication processes so that clinicians and administrative staff remain informed of current waiting times and can provide patients with the most accurate and up-to-date information.

Closing Statement

We value feedback from our patients and from organisations such as Healthwatch Cornwall, as it helps us continually review and improve the services we provide. We are encouraged that the overall findings of the report were positive and recognise that there are always opportunities to further enhance patient experience. We remain committed to providing safe, accessible and compassionate care to all patients registered with the practice.

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