



Details of visit

Service address:	Salisbury House Surgery Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU7 1RS
Service Provider:	
Date and Time:	13th October 2015 10:00 – 12:30
Authorised Representatives:	Dave Simpson, Linda Harrison, Susan George Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire Capability House, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HR Tel: 0300 303 8554
Contact details:	



Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire would like to thank the service provider, patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical), for their contribution to the Enter and 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 patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical), only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

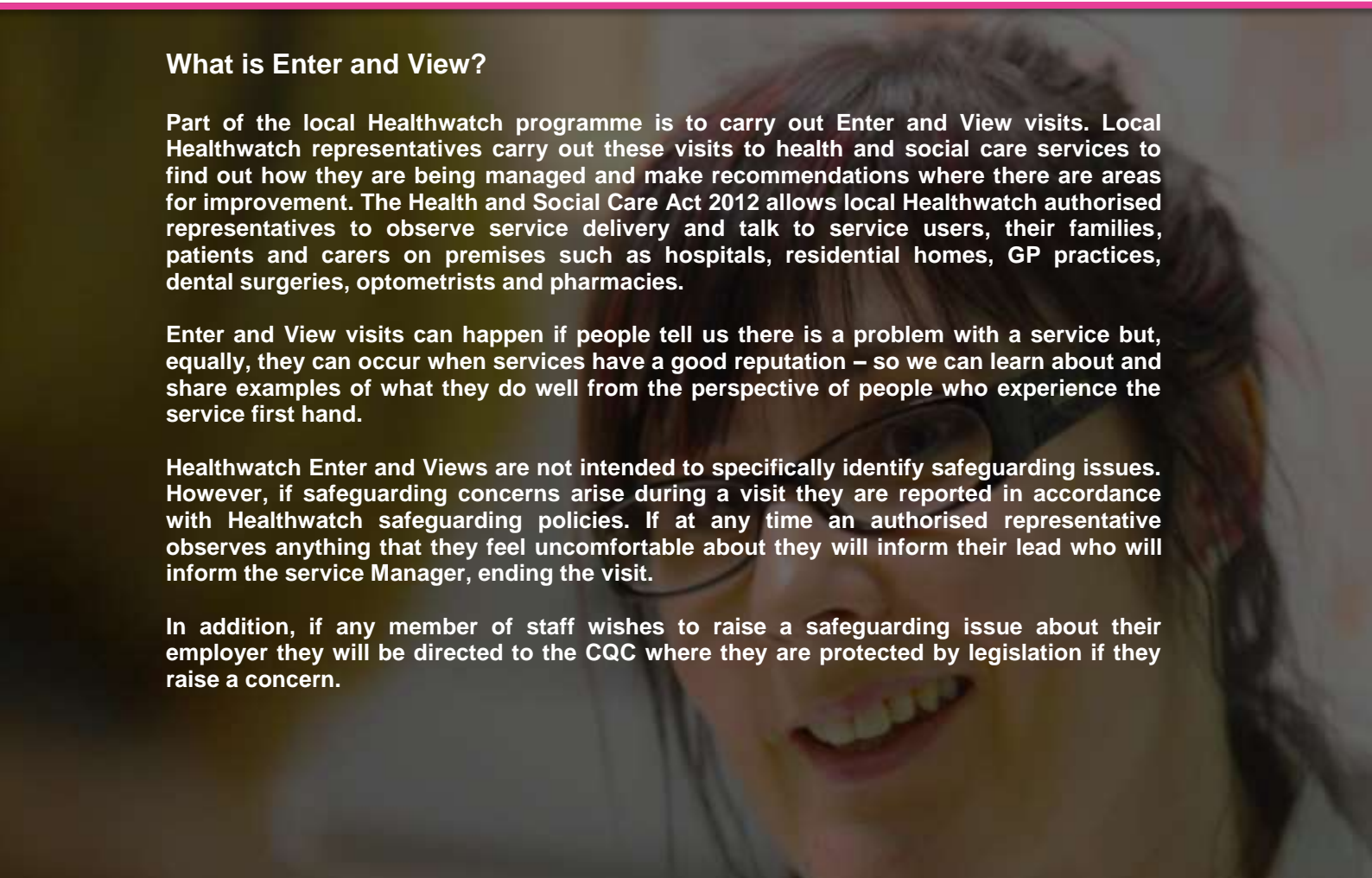
What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being managed and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, patients and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies.

Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they will inform their lead who will inform the service Manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.





Purpose of the visit

- To engage with patients of GP Practices and understand how dignity is being respected;
- Identify examples of good working practice;
- Observe patients engaging with staff (clinical and non-clinical), and their surroundings.

Strategic drivers

- Care Quality Commission dignity and wellbeing strategy.
- GP Surgeries are a Local Healthwatch priority.

Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View Visit carried out at Salisbury House Surgery.

A letter and posters announcing Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's (HWCB) visit were previously sent to the Practice. A questionnaire was also sent to the Practice Manager to complete prior to the visit.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire delivered copies of a questionnaire for patients to complete, together with a 'response box', to post their completed questionnaires prior to HWCB's visit. The purpose was to minimise disruption and inconvenience to patients during the visit. As an example of good practice HWCB includes this procedure in all our visits.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire representatives met with the Practice Manager who informed them about the Practice, how it was managed, its staff, catchment area and patients. This was in addition to speaking to patients in the waiting area. Representatives also undertook a tour of the premises to observe accessibility, including disabled access, the availability of patient information and condition of the building.



Summary of findings

Salisbury House Surgery is situated on Lake Street close to the centre of Leighton Buzzard. It is a three-storey building which was opened in 1986 and is part-owned by three of the partners, and part sub-let. Entry is gained through push-assisted automatic doors, which are wheelchair accessible.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's representatives were made very welcome by the Practice Manager, her Deputy and all of their staff, who assisted the team as much as possible throughout the visit. The overall impression gained is of a well-run Practice with the interests of its patients very much to the fore.

HWCB representatives were also impressed by the very large number of HWCB Patient Questionnaires which were completed and would like to thank the reception staff at the Practice for encouraging patients to fill in the questionnaire.



Results of visit

Staff

The Practice has the following members of staff:

- Six GPs (four are Partners) including one long-term locum GP
- Four male GPs and two Female GPs;
- Six Practice Nurses;
- Two Healthcare Assistants (HCA);
- One Practice Manager and one deputy Practice Manager;
- Ten reception staff;

Specialist Services provided:

- Phlebotomy
- Diabetes
- Anti-Coagulation
- Antenatal
- Baby Clinic
- Child immunisation
- Flu Immunisation
- Heart Conditions
- Long Term Conditions
- Respiratory
- Well Person Checks
- Travel Clinic
- Sexual Health

The Surgery also hosts the locality MSK and Dermatology Hubs.

Surgery Hours

Monday	08:00 – 18:30
Tuesday	08:00 – 18:30
Wednesday	08:00 – 18:30
Thursday	08:00 – 18:30* (extended to 20:00 3 times per month)
Friday	07:00 – 18:30*
Saturday	08:30 – 12:30 *on the 3 rd Saturday of the month.
Sunday	Closed

Extended hours* are for pre-bookable appointments



Environment

Other observations included:

- The surgery is wheelchair and pushchair accessible;
- Fire exits are well signed;
- Some of the interior paintwork, including the entrance door 'push plate' appears grubby.
- A hearing loop was not available/visible;
- Opening times are not clearly displayed;
- Complaints information is displayed and available;
- Due to the limited size of the reception/waiting area, confidentiality and privacy cannot be assured;
- There is a good range of information available for patients, including information about the PPG (this is also available on the website);
- A 'SystemOne' electronic booking-in terminal is available;
- The waiting room is light, warm and airy, but would be rather cramped at a busy time;
- Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire posters were prominently displayed.
- Hand sanitisers were available throughout;
- Unisex disabled toilets with baby changing facilities are available on the first and second floors.
- HWCBC representatives felt that none of the waiting rooms was particularly 'child-friendly';
- A lift is available for access to the second floor. However, the lift is kept locked and patients have to ask at reception for it to be unlocked.

Car Parking

The premises are situated in a busy street near to Leighton Buzzard town centre, with spaces allocated for a 20 minute stay. There are also plenty of 'Pay and Display' (50p for two hours) car parking spaces adjacent and close by, including five dedicated disabled spaces. There is also a 'Pay and Display' car park at the rear of the surgery.

Patient Information

A varied selection of leaflets is available for patients displayed in racks in the waiting area. The surgery website also has a wealth of information available.

Registration at the Practice

HWCBC representatives were advised by the Practice Manager that patients can register at the surgery with proof of address and ID; current exceptions are travellers and the homeless. A 'New Patient Pack' can be downloaded from the website or collected from reception. Part of the registration process is that all new patients will be offered a 'New Patient Healthcheck' with the nurse.

The Practice has a policy in place for people to make an appointment prior to registration; however, the Practice Manager informed representatives that *'anyone who needs to be seen will be seen.'* This includes temporary residents who may be visiting from abroad, whose family live here and also short-term residents staying in the area up to three weeks or, if longer, up to three months.

A Practice leaflet is made available to patients on registration.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Practice PPG meets every six weeks and has eight regular attendees. The ages of all members are 'over 60'. The PPG is advertised within the Practice on the PPG noticeboard, on the website, on Facebook and in Newsletters. The Practice has also undertaken a 'text' recruitment drive, but with little or no take-up.



Patient Consultation

The Practice previously carried out a survey of patients in 2014. The questions were in relation to 'Appointments' and the 'Out of Hours' Service and was conducted in November 2014. The results were discussed with the PPG and an action plan formulated. This was disseminated and published on the Practice website.

Patients are also asked to complete the 'Friends and Family Test' questionnaire after each visit to the surgery. Feedback can also be provided by patients on the Practice website.

Appointments System

The Practice Manager confirmed that patients can book appointments in person, on the telephone or on line. Early morning appointments are available each week on a Friday morning. Late evening appointments are available on three Thursdays of each month. Patients are called in for their appointments by Practice staff who come into the waiting area to collect them.

The Practice also operates a walk-in 'sit and wait' service for patients on the day.

Out of Hours Care

Out of hours care for Salisbury House patients is provided by Care UK. Patients are directed to this service and/or the 111 telephone service by the Practice's answerphone message, the Practice Website and the Practice Leaflet.

Medication & Prescriptions

Patients can request repeat prescriptions online or by personally delivering a repeat prescription slip at the reception desk. Housebound patients may also telephone their requests into the Practice. Prescriptions are made available in 48 hours.

A pharmacy is sited next door to the Practice; an adjoining door opens into the reception area of the Practice. There are also several other pharmacies in the nearby vicinity.

Patient Questionnaire Results

The Practice currently has 10,929 patients registered. A total of 82 survey questionnaires were completed during the two weeks prior to the visit.

Results of the questionnaires completed at the Practice were as follows:

1. ***When registering at the Practice did you receive a Practice leaflet/handbook?*** - 22% said Yes, 19% said No and 59% couldn't remember. Additional comments included: *'Registered many years ago, so no handbook; I registered with Dr Briggs 49 years ago'; and 'I registered over twenty years ago so questions 1 and 2 are not really relevant.'*
2. ***Did you find it easy to register at the Practice?*** - 79% said yes while 21% could not remember.
3. ***Do you know if the surgery has a PPG?*** - 34% did know, but 66% did not.
4. ***Are you a member of the PPG?*** - Two of the respondents were members of the PPG.
5. ***How do you book appointments at the surgery?*** - 57% booked direct by phone, 30% booked in person and 13% booked online.



6. **Are there appointments available in unsociable hours?** - 27 respondents replied Yes, 12 thought there were not and 43 did not know. An additional comment received was *'If you ring early enough!'*
7. **Can you get an appointment when you need one?** - 47 positive replies were received and 17 were negative. One particular respondent stated; *'Pre booked appointments are harder to get, but the walk-in clinic is available in the mornings.'* Additional comments included: *'Most of the time but not always;'* *'Can be either very short notice or very far away;'* *'Sometimes difficult for very early or late appointments;'* *'Only after being persistent;'* and *'Most of the time but not always.'*
8. **Do you receive a reminder text message about your appointment on your mobile?** – 54 respondents replied Yes, 18 said no and 10 said they either did not have a mobile or had not given the surgery their mobile number. One comment received was *'Reminders for my children would be great too!'*
9. **When booking an appointment, are you given a choice of Health Professional?** – 52% said Yes, 45% said No and 3% did not answer. One respondent stated *'No, I normally just ask.'*
10. **What choice of Health Professional are you offered?** – 51% replied GP, 20% Minor Illness Nurse, 7% HCA and 22% did not respond to the question.
11. **Do you know what the Surgery opening times are?** – 53 respondents said Yes, 19 said No and 10 did not answer this question. Additional comments were; *'I check the website;'* *'The opening times are on the door of the surgery if needed'* and *'I can look online if necessary.'*
12. **What do you do if you need out of hours care?** – In total, 71 patients responded to this question. Of this number, 30 indicated they would ring the surgery for the out of hours number, 18 indicated they would dial 111, 6 indicated they would call for the Paramedics, 4 indicated they would go to A & E and 5 stated they would go to a walk-in centre and 8 respondents said they have never needed out of hours care. Additional comments included were: *'Ring emergency doctor or 111 - on one occasion subsequent hospitalisation;'* *'PANIC;'* *'Despair!'* *'Try getting help on weekends!'* and *'phone 111 and doctor phones back, usually attend surgery in Dunstable.'*
13. **Do you feel you have enough time with the GP, Nurse or HCA to discuss your issues?** – 72% said they did, 11% said they did not and 17% were unsure.
14. **Do you feel the GP, Nurse or HCA listens to you and considers your opinion?** – 67 respondents said Yes, one said No and 14 were unsure.
15. **Are staff (Reception/Practice Manager) at your surgery helpful and understanding?** – 72 respondents said Yes, one said No and nine were unsure. One comment received stated *'Yes, lovely!'*
16. **Would you recommend your surgery to other people?** – 83% said Yes, 4% said No and 13% were unsure or did not answer.
17. **Do you know how to make a complaint about the surgery?** – 38% said Yes, but 62% said No. Comments included; *'Never needed to make a complaint;'* and *'No, would find out how if needed.'*



General comments received from patients included:

- *'Doctors are so kind and caring; would highly recommend friends and family.'*
- *'I feel it is likely that the surgery is understaffed. A month or so ago I called to make an appointment and was told they couldn't schedule anything in advance.'*
- *'Reminders via text for children's appointments please! Thank you.'*
- *'For years I was telling doctors I was ill nobody listened because blood test came back OK - treated as a hypochondriac, staff fantastic though - not doctors!'*
- *'On numerous occasions I felt I was not being listened to. The one outstanding member of staff you have is (name removed for confidentiality) nurse who takes time to listen to you.'*
- *'Would like to have a family doctor rather than having to see any of the doctors. Thank you'*
- *'Reception seems a lot easier and more pleasant than previously.'*
- *'Always waiting at least 20 minutes'* (Respondent didn't say for what!)
- *'Very happy with this surgery although I don't use it very often.'*
- *'I have always found staff helpful. Thank you.'*

Interaction between Patients and Staff

HWCB Representatives observed members of staff both clinical and administrative speaking to patients; all interactions were conducted in a professional and friendly manner.

Clinical and non-clinical staff

All members of staff seen and spoken to during the visit were friendly and helpful to the representatives and to the patients they were observed interacting with. This included both clinical and non-clinical staff. Staff spoken to during the visit explained that they liked working at the Practice and felt the service provided at the medical centre was good. *'I adore my job'* and *'it's a very nice place to work'* were comments made to representatives along with *'we give a very good service to our patients.'*

A few members of staff felt that they were stretched at times however; they were keen to explain that *'we pull together as a team.'* HWCB representatives were also advised that the Practice was having difficulty in recruiting an additional GP.

All staff confirmed they regularly attend various training courses for their role, including in-house training and GP training although one GP said that there were perhaps *'too many courses'*.

When asked if there were any changes they would like to make at the Practice, comments ranged from; *'more pre-bookable appointments'* and *'more confidentiality at the front desk'* to *'make it easier for patients to get an appointment when and with the GP they want.'*

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

The Practice Manager informed representatives that the Practice has a complaints procedure and gave HWCB representatives a copy of the policy. The complaints policy is available at reception and also appears on the Practice website.

A Patient Complaint Form will be given to a patient who has a concern about the service received. The patient would need to either complete the form or write directly to the Practice Manager.

HWCB is pleased to report that whilst the Practice only scored three out of five points in



HWCB's survey 'Investigating the Complaints Process – General Practice' carried out at the beginning of 2015, the Practice has responded positively and now 'ticks all five boxes'.

Additional Findings

A lift is available for access to the second floor. However, the lift is kept locked and patients have to ask at reception to have it unlocked. During the visit, an HWCB representative encountered a patient using crutches coming down the stairs as she was unaware that she could ask for the lift to be unlocked.

The Out of Hours Service is listed on the Practice website in the section 'When the surgery is closed', however the article describes the service as having been put in place by the Bedfordshire Primary Care Trust and directs patients who have a complaint to contact the PCT which is out of date information.

The Practice website is a 'user friendly' entity containing a wealth of information for patients including a 'Patients Charter' and the Annual Newsletter (two editions so far), but some parts of it appear to be out of date.

HWCB would also like to have seen its own website listed under the Useful Websites and Organisations tab.



Recommendations

In light of the incidence witnessed with regard to a patient with crutches using the stairs because she was unaware that she could have asked for the lift to be unlocked, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire would strongly recommend that all staff, mainly reception staff, should proactively advise all patients, particularly those with reduced or impaired mobility, of the availability of the lift. In addition, HWCB would recommend that the Practice review their policy concerning the lift being locked and only available on request.

HWCB also recommends that all references on the Practice website to the 'Bedfordshire Primary Care Trust' be updated to the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group along with the correct contact details and further recommends that the whole website be checked regularly for the validity of information.

HWCB would also recommend a more proactive promotion of the PPG to raise awareness of the existence, and the benefits of, the PPG to attract younger members.

Finally, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire recommends that this report is shared with the patients and staff (clinical and non-clinical) of the Practice and to advise that if they should wish to contribute any additional comments about the report, to contact Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire direct

Service Provider response

We felt it was a fair and balanced report and are happy for it to be published as it stands.

Zadie Hartwig
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