



Details of visit

Service address:	The Shefford Health Centre Robert Lucas Drive, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5FS
Service Provider:	Dr Cakebread & Partners
Date and Time:	8th July 2015 - 10:00 – 12:00
Authorised Representatives:	Diana Blackmun, Dave Simpson, Margaret Roberts
Contact details:	Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire Capability House, Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire, MK45 4HR Tel: 0300 303 8554

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 run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act 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 need to 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

- CQC Dignity and Wellbeing strategy.
- GP Surgeries are a Local Healthwatch priority.



Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View Visit carried out at Dr Cakebread & Partners Practice based at Shefford Health Centre, Bedfordshire.

A letter and posters announcing Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's visit were previously sent to the practice. A 'Response Box' and 30 Patient Questionnaires were also delivered to the Practice for patients to complete prior to the visit; to capture the patient experience and minimise disruption to patients and staff during the visit. A questionnaire was also sent to the Practice Manager to complete prior to the visit.

HWCB representatives spoke with members of staff (clinical and non-clinical), and engaged with patients in the waiting room.



Summary of findings

Dr Cakebread and Partners is sited at The Shefford Health Centre in Bedfordshire. The building was built approximately four years ago to replace the previous medical centre which was rapidly becoming unfit for purpose. The new, modern building was designed specifically for the Health Centre to provide a range of services for local residents. The Practice Manager stated that all staff and patients were very impressed with the new health centre and it is a vast improvement on their previous facilities.

Results of Visit

Staff

The Practice currently employs the following members of clinical and non-clinical staff:

- Eight GPs (seven are partners); five male and three female GPs;
- Three Practice Nurses;
- Three Prescribing Nurse Practitioners;
- Two Health Care Assistants;
- Six reception staff;
- Three secretaries;
- 16 other members of staff.

HWCB representatives were advised that the Practice currently provides the following specialist services and clinics:

- Phlebotomy;
- Pain Clinic;
- COPD;
- Asthma;
- Diabetes;
- INR Star;
- CHD;
- Child Health;
- Travel Immunisation;
- Heart Disease.

HWCB representatives were advised that the Practice does record 'Did Not Attends' (DNA) information and the Practice Manager advised that the DNA rate is currently 4%.

Surgery Hours

The surgery is open to the public Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 18:30.

HWCB representatives were also advised that the Practice provides extended hours for appointments on some days between 07.00 and 08.00 plus 18.30 to 19.30. Patients can book these appointments through the on-line service. However, for specialist clinic appointments with Practice nurses, such as diabetes clinic, these appointments are not available on-line and have to be booked via reception either in person or by phone. The Practice is not open at week-ends; the Practice Manager explained that there was '*no call for it*'.



Environment

Shefford Health Centre is a two-storey building of modern design, set just outside of the main town of Shefford, clearly signposted with ample car parking and disabled parking spaces available for patients.

The design comprises a central hub with five spurs leading off the main reception on ground floor level with three spurs on the first floor level. The consulting rooms and clinics are located on the ground and first floor level. The centre of the hub contains a staircase and lift to the first floor with waiting areas sited around the reception area and on the first floor.

Although the main foyer area was very welcoming, light and airy, HWCB representatives could not determine which reception desk to approach as signs were not clearly visible to indicate main reception for GP patients.

Patients book in on arrival using a 'SystemOne' touch screen which is sited on the right hand side opposite the reception desk. The reception desks are not too close to the waiting areas and therefore afford some degree of privacy for patients.

The Health Centre also incorporates an NHS dentist on the right of entry to the building and a separate pharmacy which is sited to the left of reception through its own entry door which can also be accessed outside of the building. One patient commented that *'it is very useful to have a pharmacy attached to the Practice as when I had to have a home visit, the doctor was very helpful in taking my prescription directly back to the pharmacy for my wife to collect later that day'*

Other observations included:

- Clear signs to rooms, opening hours and toilets with a range of literature available to patients;
- PPG Information displayed on TV screens;
- Equipped with hearing loop and disabled toilet;
- Complaints information clearly displayed;
- Friends & Family Test is on an iPad adjacent to the lift;
- Friendly and approachable reception staff;
- Electronic booking system at suitable height for patients;
- Call system for patients via sound and screen in waiting area;
- Names and photographs of GP's clearly displayed;
- The HWCB poster was displayed at the entrance and on a noticeboard in the waiting room area.

Car Parking

The Shefford Health Centre, being a relatively new building, is in the fortunate position of having ample car parking at present, with several disabled parking bays sited closest to the main entrance.

Patient Information

The surgery has a good and varied selection of leaflets available for patients and also displays a selection of information on the TV screens. Representatives were advised by the Practice Manager that there is a move to display more information on the screens and less in paper format to assist with infection control.

Registration at the Practice(s)

HWCB representatives were advised that local residents can register as a patient at the surgery with proof of address and ID; current exceptions are travellers and the homeless. New patients can download the Patient Questionnaire and NHS Form GMS1 from the website, or collect hard copies from reception, to complete.

Representatives were informed that new registrations were currently averaging 50 per week, mainly as a result of several new housing developments in the area.

The Practice operates a policy whereby people can be seen prior to registration to address any queries they may have as a new patient and also operates a temporary resident's policy for people who may be working in the area.

A Practice booklet is made available to patients on registration.

Patient Participation Group (PPG's)

The Practice Manager confirmed that the Practice does have a Patient Participation Group and HWCB representatives were advised that GP's at the Practice attend the PPG meetings; however this is not on a regular basis due to workload and commitments. The senior partner advised representatives that he receives the minutes of the meetings.

Meetings are held every 2-3 months and average attendance at the meetings is 8 - 10 patients, mostly from the older generation. The Practice Manager stated that the PPG is widely advertised however *'there is not a lot of interest from patients'*. Members of the group have previously been involved in promoting the diabetic clinic and flu jabs.

Patient Consultation

A survey of 600 patients was carried out on behalf of the Primary Care Trust over two weeks in 2014 to identify how patients were travelling to the surgery from the surrounding villages.

The results were published on the Practice website and were used to inform the review of healthcare facilities for Shefford and the surrounding area.

The monthly results of the 'Friends and Family' questionnaires are displayed on the TV screens.

Appointments System

The Practice Manager confirmed that patients can book appointments in person, on the telephone or on line, Monday to Friday. Early morning (7:00 - 8:00 am) and late evening (6:30 - 7:30 pm) appointments are available three days per week. The Practice does not offer weekend appointments, however, flu clinics are held on Saturday mornings.

For emergency appointments a duty doctor is available every day and the Practice also has an emergency clinic in the afternoons, however the receptionist will always ask patients if the Minor Illness Nurse can assist to alleviate GP time.

The Practice operates a text reminder service for appointments 24 hours prior to appointment time. Home visits are mostly for housebound patients and palliative care patients; the duty doctor will decide whether a home visit is required.

HWCB representatives were advised that appointments times are allocated for 10 minutes although patients can request longer. One GP commented that *'10 minutes is not really long enough'*.

Comments from patients' relating to booking appointments include the following:

'Sometimes I have to wait for half an hour to get an answer on the telephone.'

'Always get offered something if urgent.'

'You always have to wait a long time to get through, line is always busy.'

Out of Hours Care

Out of hours care in Shefford is provided by M-Doc based at Biggleswade Hospital. The Practice relay information about this service to patients via the practice leaflet and on their website.

Medication & Prescriptions

The Pharmacy (an independent service) is sited at the Health Centre; opening hours are Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 6:00 pm and is available for all patients, including those who live outside of Shefford and Clifton. Dispensing medications depends on individual circumstances and patients can order repeat prescriptions on-line or in person.

Patient Questionnaire Results

The Practice currently has 17,134 patients registered. A total of 30 survey questionnaires were completed.

Results of the questionnaires were as follows:

1. Half of the patients surveyed recalled receiving a practice leaflet when registering at the surgery - 40% couldn't remember and only 10% said that they had not received a leaflet;
2. A high percentage of patients said they found it easy to register at the Practice;
3. 53% of patients who completed the questionnaire confirmed they were aware the Practice had a PPG and 47% answered that they did not know if the Practice had a PPG;
4. Two of the patients who completed the questionnaire were members of the PPG;
5. How patients book appointments was fairly evenly distributed between the telephone (40%), in person (35%) and on-line (25%);
6. The majority of patients were aware that late appointments were available for booking;
7. Almost three quarters of patients who completed the questionnaire felt they could access an appointment when they needed one, however 27% felt they could not get the appointment they needed;
8. Almost three quarters of the patients who completed the questionnaire confirmed they received a text reminder about their appointment with a very small percentage indicating they did not have a mobile phone;
9. All patients spoken to and who completed the questionnaire confirmed they were given a choice of health professional when booking the appointment;
10. 90% of patients who completed the questionnaire were aware of the Practice opening times;
11. A range of responses was given to the question regarding what to do if 'out of hours' care is needed. The most popular response given was to ring the surgery to get the out of hour's number; a small percentage would call 111, call for Paramedics or go to A & E. Only a small percentage knew about the M-Doc service;
12. The majority of patients answered positively to the question whether they feel they have enough time with the GP to discuss their issues;
13. 97% of patients felt that the GP listened to their concerns and considered their opinion, one respondent however, said '*Depends on which doctor, some come across as not caring, not looking up from their PCs*'.
14. Over 80% of patients found the staff at the Practice helpful and understanding;
15. 93% of patients would recommend the Practice to other people; a very small percentage said they would not and 4% were 'unsure'
16. Only 67% of patients were aware the Practice has a complaints policy and knew how to complain; 33% did not know about the complaints policy.

Interaction between Patients and Staff

HWCB representatives spoke with patients in the waiting room area. The majority of patients spoken to stated that they felt the surgery at Shefford provided 'a good service' and some patients stated the care was 'excellent' and 'a good surgery'.

Representatives observed staff engaging with patients in the waiting area; the receptionists appeared relaxed and accommodating when talking to the patients showing courtesy and respect. Other comments from patients include: 'Very supportive and caring – the service is second to none!'

Clinical and non-clinical staff

All 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 Health Centre was good. Some comments made by staff were; 'I love it!' and 'The best job I've ever had.'

The majority of staff also felt supported in their work and indicated there was adequate clinical staff available although one staff member felt there was insufficient cover for administration staff during periods of sickness and holidays.

All staff confirmed they regularly attend various training courses for their role, including in-house training, GP training, Minor Injury course, stroke and heart failure courses. This includes on-line courses. Clinical staff also previously sourced their own courses if they feel there is a need, such as Asthma course.

When HWCB representatives asked staff members if there were any changes they would like to see implemented at the Practice to improve the patient experience, staff said that they felt the Practice offered a good service but there was always room for improvement adding that if a new situation arose that adversely affected service provision they would all work together to resolve it.

A general comment made by a staff member was that, since the move into the new building, everyone was extremely happy with the environment.

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

The Practice Manager informed representatives that the Practice has a complaints procedure which is available to patients in a Complaints/Compliments leaflet at reception, or on their website. The Practice Manager confirmed that they take steps to ensure they learn from their complaints and services are improved as a result. Clinical complaints received within the last year were very low (single figures). The Practice also has a policy for managing aggressive or abusive patients. The Practice Manager confirmed that they do advise patients who have complained, by letter, that if they are not happy with the outcome of their complaint to contact the Health Ombudsman.

Clinical staff appeared less well informed about the Practice(s) complaints process/policy and most stated that they would try to resolve the matter informally at first. Others were unclear about the procedure and would simply tell the patient to put their complaint in writing, speak to the receptionist/Practice Manager or direct them to the Practice website. One staff member had heard of the PALs service and would recommend to a patient if they felt it was appropriate.

Additional Findings

The Practice Manager confirmed that they had resolved the one area highlighted in Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's Mystery Shopper report 'Investigating the Complaints

Process in General Practice' which was about the lack of complaints information displayed in the practice waiting room.

General comments received from patients included:

'Very pleased with all aspects of the surgery – thank you.'

'Been here for three months and seen far too much of you all, but everyone has been lovely and we feel lucky to be in your practice. Thank you.'

'Reception always helpful. All departments good on follow-ups.'

'My transition from my old Doctors' surgery was smooth. Every time I have rung or gone online I have been able to get an appointment.'

'I have found all staff and doctors extremely helpful at all times. Staff are always under pressure, often due to the lack of doctors available. Excellent surgery, very caring'

'Wouldn't move out of the area because I would not like to register at another surgery.'

'I would rate the overall quality, care, treatment and service from this surgery as second to none'

Recommendations

HWCB recommends that the Practice consider placing clear signs on each reception desk, on entry to the building, to ensure all patients and visitors are aware which area to approach, dependent on their reason for the visit.

HWCB also recommends that all staff, clinical and administrative, undergo awareness training of their Practice Complaints Policy/Procedure.

HWCB further recommends that the section in the Practice Handbook on Complaints be amended to remove reference to the Primary Care Trust and replace it with Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group.

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 on 0300 303 8554.



Service Provider response

If a patient rings the surgery during Out of Hours their call is connected directly to the Out of Hours service, they are not given another number to ring.

There are only two reception desks in the Practice not four? I assume that you mean 4 receptionists? We do have Dr Cakebread and Partners on the wall behind our reception desk quite clearly and SEPT have their name behind theirs.

It would be difficult to signpost any more than we already do and staff are available to point people in the right direction if required.

It was a pleasure to meet you, Dave and Margaret. Thank you for your feedback we have added patient complaints on to the agenda for our next staff meeting in September so that clinical staff are as aware of the procedure as well as the admin team.

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