



Details of visit

Service address:	The Surgery, Hexton Road, Barton Le Clay, Bedfordshire, MK45 4AT
Service Provider:	Dr Hughes & Partners
Date and Time:	20th October 2016 10:00-12:30
Authorised Representatives:	Dave Simpson, Nicola King
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.



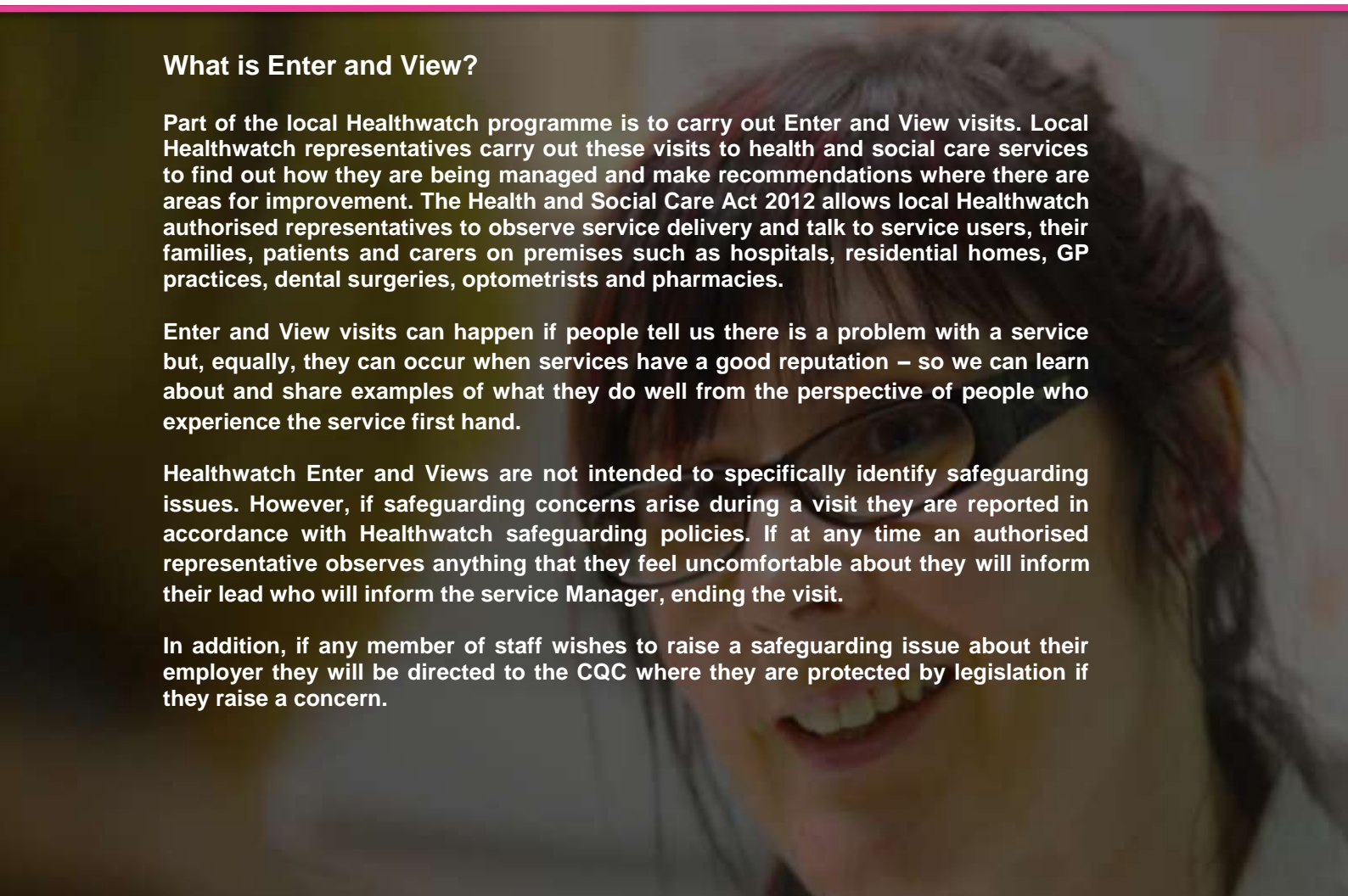
What is Enter and View?

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 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 Dr Hughes & Partners, The Surgery, Hexton Road, Barton Le Clay.

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 fill in, 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 has included this procedure in all future visits.

On the day of the visit, the Practice Manager arranged 'booked slots' for HWCB representatives to talk to several GPs and members of their administration and clinical staff. 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

The Practice, which is a Training Practice, operates from a single storey purpose-built premises at the end of a quiet lane on the outskirts of Barton Le Clay. The premises are owned and maintained by the partners. The overall impression gained was of a well-run, patient friendly Practice.

Results of visit

Staff

The Practice has the following members of staff:

- Six GP Partners, two male and four female;
- One Practice Manager;
- Four Practice Nurses;
- One Minor Illness Nurse;
- Five Healthcare Assistants (HCAs);
- Eleven Reception staff (including one Reception Manager);
- 18 other staff.

Specialist Services provided

- Asthma, COPD and Diabetes Clinic
- Cervical Smears
- Child Health Clinics
- Childhood Immunisation Clinic
- Enhanced Services
- Family Planning
- Flu & Pneumococcal Vaccination
- Health Promotion Programme
- Maternity
- Minor Illness Clinic
- Minor Surgery
- Travel Health
- Yellow Fever Centre (by appointments only)

Surgery Hours

Monday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Tuesday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Wednesday	8:00 am to 12:30 pm
Thursday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Friday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed



Environment

The premises are wheelchair accessible. The entrance lobby opens in to a light and airy reception and waiting area. Contained within the waiting area is a pre-school age children's play area which was donated by a local Social Club.

The waiting areas contains a self-monitoring blood pressure machine and scales and as these are open to public view this could deter patients from using them due to the lack of privacy. Hand sanitisers are also available

The reception counter is open and welcoming, with clear noticeboard signs advising patients how to book in. A few members of staff commented on the interior door into the reception/waiting area. Comments about the entrance included the following; *'it is difficult to navigate with a double-buggy'*, and *'it is not good for the less able – with sticks etc'*.

Other observations included:

- Fire exits well signposted;
- Toilets in the foyer clean and in good condition;
- Hearing loop available;
- Comments box on display;
- GPs names are displayed on plaques outside the entrance;
- Easily accessible reception desk, however this means a lack of privacy at reception;
- Tidy gardens surrounding the surgery.

Car Parking

The surgery has several spaces immediately adjacent to the building at the front, some designated for disabled parking, with staff parking around the side. However, the surgery enjoys the availability of a large car park which lies between the surgery and the Village Hall, affording patients plenty of parking spaces.

Patient Information

A good range of literature is displayed in the foyer and in the waiting room/reception area. There are several noticeboards with current information displayed. The practice website is an easy to navigate, clear comprehensive website which includes links to many other useful websites, although, disappointingly HWCB representatives did not see a link to Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire's website.

Registration at the Practice(s)

New patients who live within the Practice's catchment area (defined on the website) may register in person at the surgery. New patients will be asked to provide proof of ID and address, to complete two forms GMS1 and a personal medical history form, and will be asked to attend a registration clinic with the Practice Nurse. The Practice has a policy of registering complete households only.

Temporary residents and visitors will be seen in the normal way, there is no formal policy for this.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Practice has a very active PPG named BARGOOSE which is a combination of the names of the Practice's two surgeries; BARTon and GOOSEberry Hill. Formed in 2002 the PPG's aims stated in its constitution are: *'to assist in the improvement of the services provided by the Practice and to promote better understanding and communication between Patients and Practice'*.

The group meets every six weeks and meetings are attended by at least one GP and the Practice Manager. The group's age range is from 17 to 90 years, younger members include students from a nearby Upper School who may be considering the NHS as a career choice.

The group regularly organise 'Drop-in Health Evenings' at a nearby church hall. Outside speakers may be invited, healthcare organisations have display stands and the Partners and Practice Manager form a Q&A panel. These events usually attract 50+ patient visitors.

The PPG has its own noticeboard in the Practice and a page on their website. The PPG publishes a newsletter, usually quarterly, and has assisted the Practice in consultation regarding the telephone system and other surveys.

The Practice also has a virtual group of 100+ patients who are used to respond to email surveys once or twice per year.

Patient Consultation

Patients are consulted via the Friends and Family response box, the suggestions box and via the PPG and virtual PPG. Results are posted on the website and are printed in the Practice Newsletter.

Appointments System

Patients can request appointments in person, online (SystemOne) or by telephone. There is a choice of five different types of appointment offered:

- Routine appointment; with the GP of your choice, up to five weeks in advance;
- Release in a Week appointments; for non-urgent but needing prompt care;
- Same Day appointments; released at 08:30 and 13:30 daily;
- Telephone Consultation appointments; a limited number available for when a physical examination may be unnecessary;
- Medication Review appointments.

Patients are called in for their appointment by a 'buzzer and disk' system which generates a mixed reaction from patients, with one commenting '*I don't rate the system; I don't think it's effective*'.

Out of Hours Care

The Practice Manager informed representatives that out of hours care is provided by CareUK, and that the service seems to be satisfactory.

The contact details for this service are displayed on the front door to the surgery, on the answerphone when the surgery is closed, in the Practice leaflet and on the website which also contains details of alternative care including the NHS 111 service.

Medication & Prescriptions

Medication reviews with patients are carried out sometimes on an 'ad hoc' basis but at least six-monthly as a matter of course.

Patients can request repeat prescriptions online via SystemOne, in person at the surgery, or in writing by letter or fax. Prescriptions are normally ready in 48 hours (2 working days).

There is a dispensary at the practice, which can dispense to patients from the catchment area, excluding residents of Barton itself in keeping with current NHS policy.

Patient Questionnaire Results

A total of 68 patient questionnaires were completed 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? – 23 responded 'Yes', 7 said 'No' while 37 couldn't remember. One respondent did not answer this question.
2. Did you find it easy to register at the Practice? – 50 replied 'Yes', 16 couldn't remember and two did not answer this question.
3. Do you know if the surgery has a Patient Participation Group (PPG)? – 31 respondents said 'Yes' while 36 said 'No'. One person skipped this question.
4. Are you a member of the PPG? – Ten respondents were, 55 were not and three skipped the question.
5. How do you book appointments at the surgery? (tick all that apply) – Most respondents used one or more methods of booking; 93% used the telephone, 35% booked in person while only 12% booked online.
6. Are there appointments available in unsociable hours? (e.g. before 8am or after 6:30 pm) – 13 replied 'Yes', 16 said 'No' while 39 did not know.
7. Can you get an appointment when you need one? – 62 patients answered this question, 46 said 'Yes' 14 said 'No' and two were 'Don't knows'.
8. Do you receive a reminder text message about your appointment on your mobile? – 72% said 'No' and 28% said they hadn't given the Practice their mobile number. However, the Practice does not offer this service due to possible confidentiality breaches.
9. When booking an appointment are you given a choice of Health Professional? – Of the 66 responses to this question, 62% said 'Yes' while 38% said 'No'.
10. What choice of Health Professional are you offered? – 59 replies were made to this question, most were offered more than one choice, and the percentages were: GP 85%, MI Nurse 58% and HCA 24%.
11. Do you know what the surgery opening times are? – 66 responded, 54 said 'Yes' nine said 'No' and three made other comments – '*Sort of*', '*Not long enough or enough days*' and '*I could find out on the web*'.
12. What do you do if you need out of hours care? – 54 patients replied to this question, 26 would either ring the surgery's answerphone or check the website for instructions, six would go to A&E, five would attend a walk-in clinic, five would call 111, six were unsure or would wait until the surgery re-opened and eight said they had never needed this service.
13. Do you feel you have enough time with the GP, Nurse or Healthcare Assistant to discuss your issues? – Of the 66 responses, 88% said 'Yes', 3% said 'No' and 9% were unsure.
14. Do you feel the GP, Nurse or Healthcare Assistant listens to you and considers your opinion? – 85% said 'Yes', 3% said 'No' and 12% were unsure.
15. Are staff (Reception /Practice Manager) at your surgery helpful and understanding? – 85% said 'Yes', 9% said 'No' and 6% were unsure.
16. Would you recommend your surgery to other people? – 84% said 'Yes', 9% said 'No' and 7% were unsure.
17. Do you know how to make a complaint about the surgery? – 28 replied 'Yes', 39 said 'No' and one did not answer.

Some other comments from the questionnaires were:

- '*With most work now 24/7, 365 days a year why are surgeries still so archaic e.g. Monday to Friday 9-5 (ours closes Weds too!!!) Should open weekend and evenings*'.
- '*Wouldn't need to make a complaint so don't need to know how to make a complaint*'
- '*Only some reception staff are rude and think they are entitled to ask inappropriate questions or are condescending when they reply*'



- *'Family have been in Barton for twelve years, services from the surgery has always been excellent'*
- *'The practice is working flat out to meet our needs in very difficult times and they remain pleasant and cheerful in spite of all. When done to them all'*
- *'Dr XXXXXX is an amazing doctor!'*
- *'Over populated village for the size of the surgery'*
- *'I know this is a sleepy village but this place needs to evolve. Half day Wednesday and closed Saturday and Sunday is great for the retired community but not for the commuters. There are always long waits and no apologies or notifications. But if you are as much as one minute late you are chastised by Reception'*
- *'Apologies for the scribble, my one year old got the pen. Great service all round!'*
- *'Staff always do their best to accommodate. I never wait too long'*
- *'Never get to see the same doctor to build a relationship'*
- *'I would prefer to have a named GP that I could access without a long wait. I recently have to wait over 2 weeks to see a lady GP. If everybody had a named GP they saw it would be much better. It is not good having to book an appointment with a doctor I do not know.'*
- *'Very happy with care received at this surgery. Staff always do their best to accommodate.'*
- *'Reception staff are sometimes rude!!'*

Interaction between Patients and Staff

HWCB representatives observed interactions between patients and staff, both administrative and clinical. All interactions witnessed were carried out in a courteous, professional and friendly manner.

Clinical and non-clinical staff

The Practice Manager had allocated time slots for HWCB representatives to speak to members of the Practice staff, including GPs, administration and clinical staff.

All staff spoken to enjoyed working at the Practice, and said that they felt well supported by the Partners and the Practice Manager. They also all confirmed that they received all opportunities for training and career advancement.

All members of Practice staff believe that the Practice is a happy environment which is working hard in the best interests of its patients. One GP remarked to representatives *'I have worked in five surgeries - this is a beautifully run Practice'*. Another staff member commented *'I believe the old fashioned model works well for the patients, this is a happy practice'*.

When asked what changes they would like to make or see in the practice, a common recurring answer was *'more appointments available for patients'*.

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

The Practice scored two out of five on HWCB's Mystery Shopper report 'Investigating the Complaints Process – General Practice' earlier this year, and representatives are pleased to report that remedial action was taken and that the Practice now scores five out of five.

All members of staff spoken to displayed a good knowledge of the complaints policy and procedure.



Recommendations

In the section 'Emergency Calls (Out of hours)' in the Practice leaflet given to HWCB representatives, there is a reference to NHS Direct on 0845 46 47. This service is no longer available. HWCB therefore recommends that this reference is removed from the leaflet as soon as possible.

In light of some of the comments from patients regarding waiting times to see a particular GP, and bearing in mind the comprehensive explanation of the appointments system on the website, HWCB would recommend that:

- a) The PPG is engaged to survey patients to ascertain how many actually use the Practice website, and
- b) An explanation of the appointments system is made available for those patients who are not IT literate or are 'off-line'.

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

The Provider responded that they were happy with the report and would implement the recommendations.

March 2016

