



Details of visit

Service address: 57 Oliver Street, Ampthill, MK45 2SB
Service Provider: Oliver Street Practice
Date and Time: 28th January 2016, 10:00 – 12:30
Authorised Representatives: Dave Simpson, Susan George, Brian Scott
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.

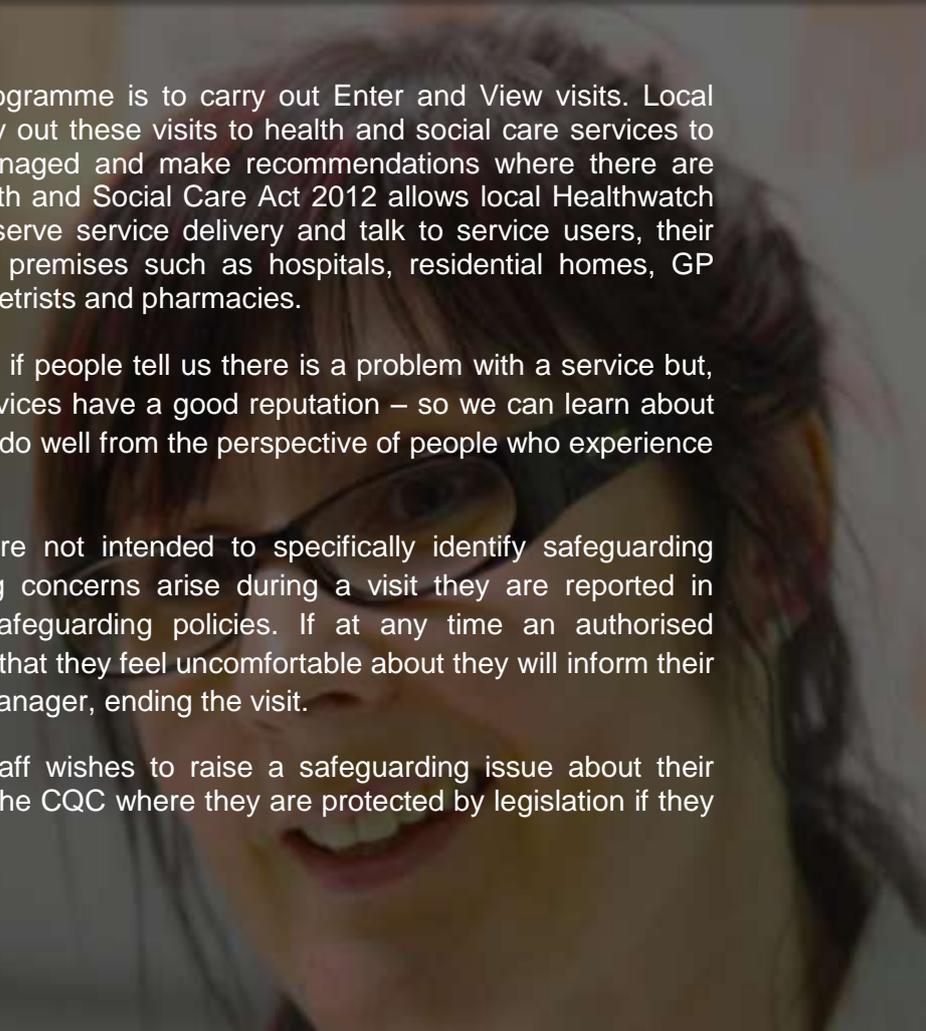
What is Enter and View?

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 The Oliver Street Surgery in Amphill, the premises are owned by NHS Property Services.

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

On the day of the visit, the Practice Manager had 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 Surgery is based at the Health Centre, 57 Oliver Street, Ampthill, and also operates a branch Surgery at Wilstead Methodist Church, on Tuesday mornings. The surgery at Wilstead is both Nurse and GP led, for pre-booked appointments only.

Access is gained through a common entrance and lobby which is shared with an adjacent Practice (Greensand Surgery), and the overall impression gained from the interviews and the patient questionnaires is of a well-run friendly practice which cares for the wellbeing of its patients.

Results of visit

Staff

The Practice has the following members of staff:

- Three GPs, two are partners and one is a locum;
- There are two male GPs and one female GP;
- One Practice Manager;
- Two Practice Nurses;
- Five reception staff;
- One Phlebotomist.

Specialist Services provided:

- Minor surgery;
- Sexual Health;
- Phlebotomy;
- Cryotherapy;
- Travel Clinics;
- Long Term Conditions;

Surgery Hours

Monday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm * (8:00 pm alternate Mondays)
Tuesday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Wednesday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm * (8:00 pm alternate Wednesdays)
Thursday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Friday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

* Late evening pre-booked appointments are available on alternate Mondays & Wednesdays

Out of Hours Care

Out of hours care (daily from 18:30 and at weekends) is provided by Care UK. Patients are directed to this service by the answerphone message on the surgery telephone. A section for all out of hour's services is prominently displayed on the Practice website.



Environment

The surgery is well signposted from the outside; however, first time visitors to the practice could be confused by the entrance lobby layout, as the access is shared by two Practices and Community Services, and signage inside the lobby is not very clear or prominent.

The waiting area is clean light and airy, with a low suspended ceiling. There are several rows of chairs for patients, however they all face away from the Fire Exit, and some of the chairs seem to partially obstruct passage to it.

Other observations included:

- Premises are wheelchair accessible;
- A wheelchair is available in the lobby area;
- Toilets, including a disabled toilet, are clean and tidy;
- Staff restroom/kitchen well appointed, is also used as an office by one of the admin staff;
- A hearing loop, drinking water and tissues are available at reception;
- A pre-booked chaperone service is available;
- The surgery is breastfeeding friendly;
- A private room can be available for confidential discussions.

Car Parking

Owing to the close proximity of two other surgeries, the Ambulance Station, a Nursery School and Community Nurses base, parking can be a challenge. There is one disabled parking bay near the entrance although the practice does not benefit from 'dedicated' parking for any of the surgeries. Issues with parking at the surgeries and surrounding area was highlighted to the local MP and to Central Bedfordshire Council, however it remains an ongoing issue. HWCB understands that patients are continually frustrated with parking issues at the surgery.

Patient Information

The Practice has several good displays of patient information leaflets available in the waiting areas and notice boards, and information is also displayed on the LED screen above the reception desk.

Registration at the Practice

The Practice Manager informed HWCB representatives that patients can register online, over the phone or in person. Registration forms are also available at the Post Office in Wilstead. No proof of ID is required and new patients can arrive 10-15 minutes before an appointment to register.

Patients are asked to fill out a medical questionnaire (GMS1) and a New Patient Questionnaire. An online version of the questionnaire is available which can be completed and sent to the surgery. For any children under the age of six an additional form will need to be completed. Patients are also offered a 'New Patient Appointment' with the Nurse.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG) meets quarterly. The PPG has eight active members with a further eight on the distribution list. Efforts are continually being made by the Practice Manager and her staff to attract more participants, but in common with all Practices across Central Bedfordshire, this can be challenging.

The Practice uses the PPG to gain feedback from the patient population (currently 3,901 patients registered) and conducts surveys.

Patient Consultation

Patients are consulted in several ways, as outlined by the Practice Manager, including the Friends & Families test plus feedback from the patients via the reception and clinical staff.

Actions and results from these methods are fed back to the PPG at meetings and published on the Practice website.

Appointments System

Appointments can be made at the Practice in person, over the telephone or online via SystmOne. The Practice operates a policy which states *“for your convenience we have a full appointments' system for all doctors' and nurses' surgeries. This means that whether you need an appointment today, tomorrow, next week, or in five weeks' time you can make an appointment to suit your needs.”*

Urgent appointments will be seen the same day, and emergencies will be seen immediately.

The normal appointment duration is 10 minutes however these times can vary depending on the type of appointment and the clinician being seen.

Medication & Prescriptions

The Practice Manager advised HWCB representatives that Repeat Prescriptions may be requested in person, by fax or post, and online via SystmOne. Housebound patients may telephone repeat prescription requests. Prescriptions are normally ready in 48 hours.

Regular medication reviews are undertaken; the intervals are dependent upon the patient's condition and the medication being prescribed.

Patient Questionnaire Results

Results of the 30 questionnaires completed at the Practice were as follows:

1. **When registering at the Practice, did you receive a Practice Leaflet/Handbook?** – 21 replied 'Yes', four said 'No' and five couldn't remember.
2. **Did you find it easy to register at the Practice?** - 28 replied 'Yes' and only two said 'No'.
3. **Do you know if the surgery has a Patient Participation Group (PPG)?** – 21 respondents were aware of the PPG, nine were not.
4. **Are you a member of the PPG?** – Only two of the replies were from PPG members.
5. **How do you book appointments at the surgery?** (patients could tick whichever options they used) – Thirteen of the respondents booked solely on the telephone, two 'On line' and only one booked in person at the surgery. Eight people booked via telephone or in person, one patient booked via the telephone or online and five used a combination of all three methods.
6. **Are there appointments available in unsociable hours?** (e.g. before 8:00 am or after 6:30 pm) – 24 respondents knew there are such appointments, two said there were not and four did not know.
7. **Can you get an appointment when you need one?** – 29 replied 'Yes' and the other one replied that they had *'Just moved to this area'*.
8. **Do you receive a reminder text message about your appointment on your mobile?** – 22 replied 'Yes' four said 'No' and the remaining four had not given the surgery a mobile phone number.
9. **When booking an appointment with your GP are you given a choice of Health Professional?** – 28 patients replied to this question, with twelve saying they were only offered an appointment with a GP, ten were offered a Nurse or GP, two were offered only a nurse, one was offered a Nurse or HCA and three were offered all three options.

10. **Do you know what the surgery opening times are?** – 28 replied ‘Yes’, one said ‘No’ and one did not answer.
11. **What do you do if you need to see a doctor out of hours?** – Eight would contact the surgery answerphone or website to get the out of hours number, five would call 111, one would go to A&E, two would go to a walk-in centre, two would wait until the surgery was open and 12 did not answer.
12. **At your appointment, do you feel you have enough time with the GP, nurse or Healthcare Assistant (HCA) to discuss your issues?** – All 30 replied ‘Yes’
13. **At your appointment, do you feel the GP, nurse or Healthcare Assistant listens to you and considers your opinion?** - All 30 replied ‘Yes’
14. **Are staff (Reception/Practice Manager) at your surgery helpful and understanding?** - All 30 replied ‘Yes’
15. **Do you know how to make a complaint about the surgery?** – 20 said that they knew, ten said they did not.

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

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.

All staff spoken to during the visit stated that they liked working at the Practice, comments included, *‘I love working here’*. They also felt that the service provided at the surgery was good. Staff added that they felt fully supported by the GPs and the rest of the Practice team.

Several staff members commented on the fact that 99% of urgent patients are seen on the same day, comments included, *‘we are passionate about accommodating the needs of our patients’* and as a result *‘we don’t get many complaints!’*. One clinician told HWCB representatives that there was *‘a perceived need for longer appointment times, shorter waiting lists for secondary care, and more information for patients on self-care and patients’ responsibilities.’*

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

This Practice scored three 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.

Additional Findings

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire’s representatives gained an overall impression of a surgery operating under less than ideal conditions due to available space, shared entrance, and lack of parking spaces. However the practice was more than meeting its’ ambitions regarding patient satisfaction.

General comments received from patients included:

- *A good Practice.*
- *The staff at the surgery are very friendly and helpful.*
- *Always helpful and friendly. Reception staff are fantastic.*
- *Availability of appointments is excellent! Admin staff all excellent. Dr Hussain was excellent, but I have found Dr Haque's approach a little abrupt at times and almost dismissive. Michelle (nurse) really excellent and supportive. Overall very satisfied with service and the Practice. One of the best I've been registered with.*
- *I have always been very happy with the Practice, particularly the ability to make GP appointments at short notice when necessary.*

- *Unsociable hours not before 8:00 but there is after 6:30pm.*
- *Very happy with the Drs, reception staff are very helpful.*
- *I've just moved to Ampthill, so difficult to comment, but so far so good.*
- *I'm very well looked after. It's the best Practice I've been registered with. Very helpful and they always try to be accommodating to my needs. Thank you.*
- *If I needed to complain I would be able to, but this surgery is so much better than my last one. We are very happy here - Dr Donaldson was missed though. PS - My daughter loves it here too.*
- *I would recommend surgery to my friends and family.*



Recommendations

The Practice Booklet and website both contain references to Bedfordshire NHS Primary Care Trust. HWCB recommends that these are updated to show the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. Furthermore, HWCB would recommend that both the website and Practice Booklet be reviewed and updated to ensure that all information accessed by patients is current and correct.

HWCB representatives were concerned about the limited access to the Emergency exit in the waiting area, and recommend that consideration be given to re-arranging the seating to give much clearer access to this exit.

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



Thank you for the report; no amendments required.

Caroline Cook
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www.oliverstreetsurgery.co.uk

