



Details of visit

Service address:	28-34 Church Street, Dunstable, LU5 4RU
Service Provider:	Eastgate Surgery
Date and Time:	23 rd May 2018
Authorised Representatives:	Dee Dillistone, Michael Hyde, Leanne Fitzsimons
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.



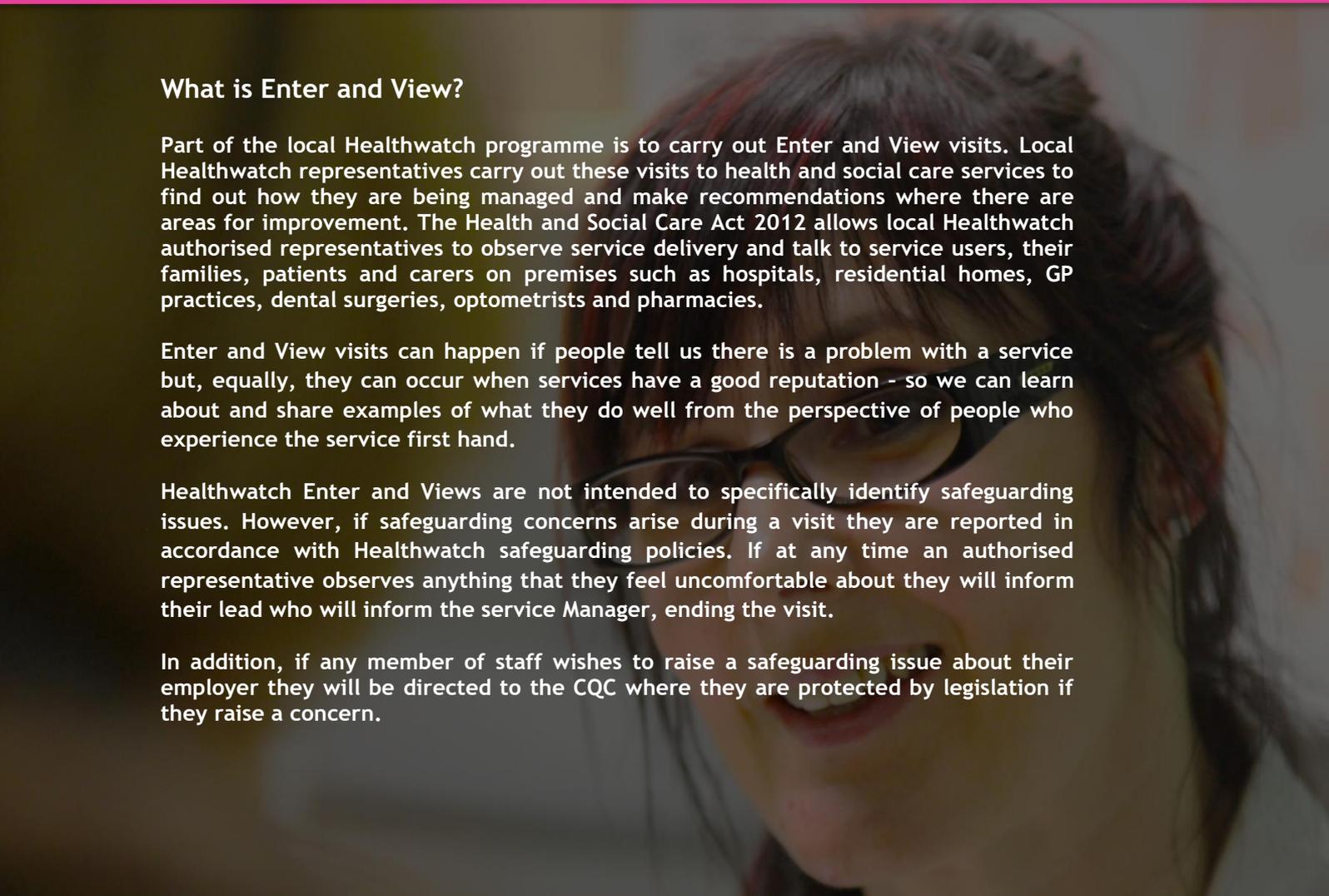
What is Enter and View?

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 Eastgate Surgery in Dunstable, Bedfordshire.

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, HWCB representatives spoke to members of the administration and clinical staff 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 is housed in a two-storey building, maintained by the Partners, off the main road out of Dunstable towards the west and The Downs. Waiting area and consulting rooms for patients are located on the ground floor; the first floor is used for occasional clinics and practice meetings.

On entering the building, HWCB representatives noted that HWCB posters announcing our visit were on display. The patient questionnaires and box were in a prominent position in the waiting room.

On arrival at the Practice, reception staff were welcoming and supplied pre-prepared information about the surgery. Staff were made aware that a colleague would be required to use the rear entrance to gain entry to the surgery due to their wheelchair and responded promptly to the request. All staff were aware of the planned visit and welcomed to the team.

Results of visit

Staff - The Practice has the following members of staff:

- 3 GPs - 2 males and 1 females
- 2 GPs are Partners, 1 is a Locum
- 2 Practice Nurses
- 0 Nurse Prescribers

- 0 Minor Illness Nurses
- 1 Healthcare Assistant (HCA)
- 4 Receptionists
- 2 Other Staff Members

Specialist Services provided:

- Cervical Smears
- Childhood Immunisation
- Chronic Long Term Conditions
- Family Planning
- ECGs
- Flu Clinic

- Maternity Services
- Ante-natal Clinic
- Phlebotomy
- Stop Smoking
- End Of Life
- Travel & Vaccination Clinic

Surgery hours:

Monday	8:30 am to 6:30 pm	
Tuesday	8:30 am to 6:30 pm	**6:30 pm to 7:15 pm
Wednesday	8:30 am to 5:30 pm	Closed 12:00 to 3:30 Wednesdays only
Thursday	8:30 am to 6:30 pm	**6:30 pm to 7:15 pm
Friday	8:00 am to 6:30 pm	
Saturday	Closed	
Sunday	Closed	

**Extended hours

Environment

The entrance into the practice is clearly signposted and opens up into a large open waiting area. There is a clear pathway to the reception desk and space for those with prams and small standard wheelchairs.

The general ambience is warm and inviting with tidy information boards and a dedicated play area for children to use.

Other observations included:

The entrance for wheelchair users and parents and carers with prams is at the rear of the building, which is accessed through a buzzer, reception staff were seen to be prompt in response and supportive to those entering.

The rear entrance has a steep incline to the doorway. There is a seating area for those who enter this way and it is close to disabled toilet facilities which are in good order.



There is not clear signposting for toilets in the waiting room. Visitors need to ask at reception to gain access.

Car Parking

The Surgery does not have its own parking area. Visitors either walk or use the Church Close public car park, where there are dedicated disabled and parent and child parking bays. A minimum charge of £0.70 is in place for up to an hour of parking.

Patient Information

The waiting area includes noticeboards and leaflet holders with a wealth of patient information about the surgery, specific conditions and general wellbeing. The Practice website is fairly basic and the Practice leaflet, although brief, also contains good information for patients.

Registration at the Practice

Patients may register in person at the Practice by collecting a registration form and returning to the Practice. All registrations are managed by the Practice Manager. If applicants are not in the catchment area staff actively signpost to the appropriate local service.

Non-registered patients may receive emergency treatment and will then be taken through registration. There is a temporary resident policy in place; this is often used by students who are living in the area during term time.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

The Practice PPG is one of the most well established in the locality. The group consists of a diverse group of patients who all meet on a regular basis. Both the Practice Manager and the Principal GP support the work of the PPG. However, neither the waiting room nor the Practise website makes reference to the PPG or its work.

Patient Consultation

Feedback from patients is gathered through the NHS Friends & Family Test. Patient surveys regarding individual practitioners are also conducted at regular intervals.



Appointments System

On the day appointments may be booked by telephone from 08:30. Appointments may also be booked online in person at the surgery.

Out of Hours Care

Out of hours care is provided by the NHS 111 telephone service. This is advertised to patients on the website, in the Practice leaflet, on noticeboards and on the Practice's answerphone.

Medication & Prescriptions

Patient's medication reviews are undertaken annually or more frequently if appropriate and are booked and arranged by trained receptionists and are carried out by a clinician with the patient.

Patients may order repeat prescriptions in person, online or by post. Prescriptions are always available within 48 hours, sometimes sooner.

Patient Questionnaire Results

Of the questionnaires delivered prior to the visit by HWCB representatives, unfortunately only a small number were completed by patients; total of **6**. The results of the questionnaires completed at the Practice are shown at **Appendix A**.

In summary, of the patients at the Practice who completed the questionnaire:

- a) All found it easy to register at the Practice, although a high percentage did not remember receiving a copy of the practice leaflet. As some of the patients had been with the surgery over 20 years this would have been difficult to recall.
- b) A good percentage of those who answered the question about patient surveys indicated they had completed a survey within the last year.
- c) A very high percentage said they did not have to wait too long on arrival at the surgery and they clearly found the staff very easy to interact with.
- d) The majority of patients felt that they could discuss their needs and concerns with their GP and felt that the GP listens and considers their opinions as well as feeling involved in decisions about their care and treatment.
- e) The majority who completed the questionnaire said they *were* able to choose to see a male or female GP, but worryingly, one of the patients said that there were practitioners they would rather not see.
- f) All respondents stated the reception staff / Practice Manager is accessible and sensitive to their needs.
- g) Results of the overall quality, care and treatment at the surgery is scored in question 23 of the Appendix and was rated very high overall.
- h) One patient was a member of the PPG.
- i) When asked about making improvements one patient said - *"You can't improve on excellence"*.

In addition, representatives spoke to several patients during the visit, further comments received as follows:

*'We've had incredible support from the surgery.'
'They are brilliant, no criticism at all.'*

Interaction between Patients and Staff

Representatives observed patients entering the premises, approaching the receptionist and being attended to in a courteous, speedy and expeditious manner.



Patients were seen to interact with reception staff using first names and were confident communicating their needs. Staff were keen to support patients with time, and clinician appropriate appointments, and there was a good rapport with all visitors. Patients did not appear to be occupying the waiting room for unduly long periods before being called for their appointments.

Clinical and non-clinical staff

During the visit, HWCB's representatives were able to speak to several members of the clinical staff (GP and nurses) and the administrative staff, and secretaries.

All staff felt that the surgery was a good place to work and that the smaller surgery offered a good team environment.

Concerns/Complaints Procedure

The Practice has a robust 'Concerns and Complaints Policy'; the policy is on display at Reception, as is the latest Care Quality Commission report. Staff have a clear understanding of the process and are able to refer to managers for support. Patients who gave their feedback were aware of the policy, but many reflected - *"I know I'd never need to use it"*.

Recommendations

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire recommends that the surgery review their promotion of the PPG to consider posters in the waiting room and information on the website.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire is not referred to on the Practice website or in the Practise leaflet and would recommend that a link to HWCB's website be at least included in the appropriate place on the Practice website.

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

Despite reminders, no provider response was received from the Surgery.

