

Enter and View Report: Carden Surgery

Service address:	County Oak Medical Centre, Carden Hill, Brighton BN1 8DD
Service Provider:	Contracted to Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group
Date and Time:	27 th March 2015, 9am - 12 Midday
Authorised Representatives:	Tim Sayers and Nick Goslett
Contact details:	Healthwatch Brighton and Hove, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove would like to thank the service provider, patients, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove supports local children, young people, adults and their communities to influence the design, delivery and improvement of their local health and social care services, now and for the future. We enable people to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing by assisting them when they have concerns or complaints about these services.

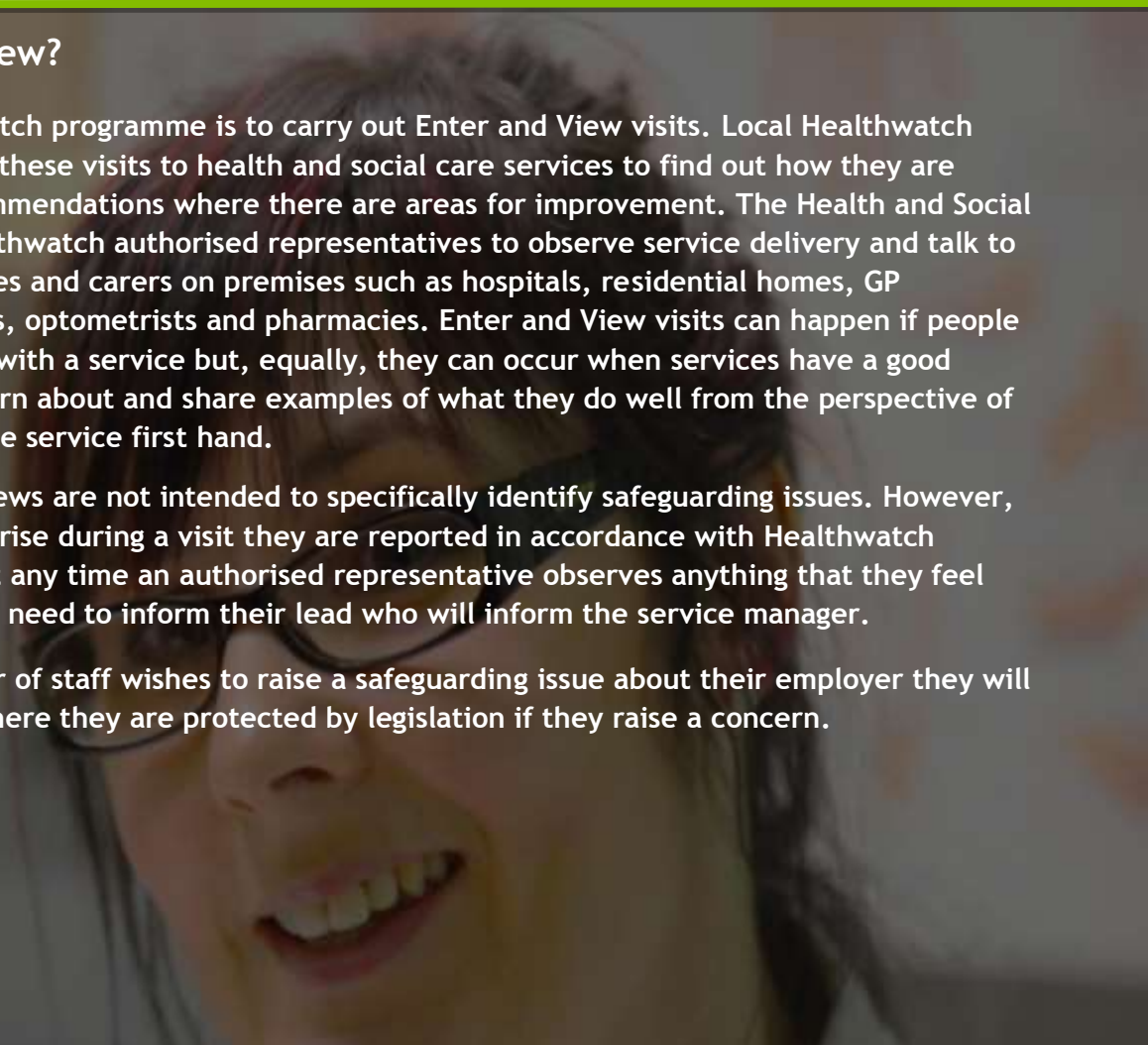
Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is a part of the Healthwatch national network, established by the Government under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to ensure local patients and users have a greater input to shaping and designing local services. There are 152 local Healthwatch organisations across England.

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 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.

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.





Why is Healthwatch Visiting GP Practices?

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is undertaking a programme of visits to GP Practices across the city during 2015. In total we will visit 15 GP practices, including 3 pilot visits in March 2015. This report is based on one of our pilot visits.

During our time in each service, volunteer representatives will be talking to patients about their experiences of care and accessing services, and recording what they see in the waiting rooms.

At a time when GP practices are going through a significant change both locally and nationally¹, Healthwatch wants to understand how patients feel services in Brighton and Hove are performing, and make recommendations about improving patient experience.

We want to highlight what good care looks like to patients, and to look at how patients can be empowered to have more of a say in how their practices are run. The Clinical Commissioning Group² and Brighton and Hove City Council are currently working with GPs in the city to transform primary care and pilot a range of extended services. Known as 'EPIC'³, this programme is bringing multi-disciplinary teams into surgeries together with extra services such as 'Community Navigators'⁴.

Healthwatch chose the pilot visits based on a range of criteria:

- Those practices about which we had received calls via our helpline.
- Those not recently visited by the Care Quality Commission⁵.
- A cross city representation of the 6 GP clusters⁶ in the city.
- Feedback from NHS choices
- Patient populations
- Soft intelligence from partners and community engagement

¹ [Important Changes to Healthcare in the Community](#), Department of Health

² [Clinical Commissioning Group](#) NHS organisations set up by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to organise the delivery of NHS services in England.

³ [EPIC](#) Stands for Extended Primary Integrated Care

⁴ [Community Navigators](#) provide community service signposting to individuals

⁵ [The Care Quality Commission](#) monitor, inspect and regulate services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety

⁶ [Developing Enhanced Health and Wellbeing Activities](#), Health and Wellbeing Board, March 2015



Methodology

Two Authorised Volunteer Representatives for Healthwatch Brighton and Hove visited Carden Surgery on 24th March 2014. It was one of three pilot visits to GP Practices, which were put in place to calibrate our survey and method for future visits. Both representatives were fully trained and supported by the Healthwatch office. They have also both completed a full Disclosure and Barring Service check prior to the visit.

The representatives **talked with 17 patients** on the day of the visit, as well as some members of staff. The details of the visit were shared with the practice manager in advance of the session, however staff were not informed about what time or day the representatives would arrive, only the week of the visit was disclosed.

Patients completed a set of questions with the representatives (see appendix 1), who were located in the waiting room of the practice. If any surveys were not completed at the end of the session, they were left at reception with freepost envelopes for patients to complete and return separately. Alongside talking to patients, the volunteers also conducted an observation (see appendix 2) in the waiting room. The representatives had a checklist to encourage them to note down observations for a variety of key information.

What does n= mean?

In the results section of this report, you may notice that we use the term 'n='. This is a way to show how many people responded to each an individual question. It is a way of being more honest and transparent about our findings. If we say that 100% of people agree with a statement, but next to this there is an (n=2), you will know that whilst 100% sounds impressive, only two people actually responded to that particular question!



Results of Visit

Appointments & Referrals

As with the majority of GP practices, at Carden Surgery it is possible to book appointments with nurses and doctors over the phone, in person and via the internet. Of these options, patient found it easiest to book in person (80%, n=15), followed by booking via the telephone (60%, n=12). Only two patients we spoke to had used the online appointment booking service at the practice. When talking with staff, our representatives found that the people at reception were not particularly aware of online booking procedures themselves.

86% (n=6) of patients who spoke to a nurse on the telephone found it easy or very easy to access the service. However, just 50% (n=5) of patients who spoke with a doctor on the phone found gaining access to this service easy or very easy.

85% (n=17) of patients we spoke to said they were able to get the appointment they needed within 3 days. Only one person (5%) said that they had waited longer than a week for an appointment. Patients reflected that the waiting time is variable depending on how urgent the health matter is, and whether a particular doctor or nurse is requested.

“ I work full time, it is frowned upon to have an appointment any time after 9am or before 5.30pm ”
- A patient at Carden Surgery

Sometimes if face to face appointments are not available, GP practices will offer telephone appointments with doctors as an alternative. 56% (n=9) of those asked thought that a telephone appointment was not as good as attending a face to face appointment. Of the patients we have spoken to, 31% (n=5) said they had received this service, despite reception staff informing our representatives that this is not currently a service that is formally offered.

Of those patients who had experienced referrals to hospital care, 82% (n=14) felt that the process went well. Of those who experienced problems, patients told us stories about issues with the hospital booking systems and long waiting times to get referred to a specialist.

Generally these issues seemed to be rooted with the local hospital and not with Carden Surgery itself.

Quality of service

85% (n=17) of people we asked said that the reception staff were helpful or very helpful. Our representatives observed reception staff talking in an attentive and friendly way to patients during the visit. Those who had not had a positive experience told our representatives that at times they were concerned about levels of discretion with sensitive information. Some patients also told us in the comments section that they felt their issues were dismissed by reception staff.

When calling to receive test results, 76% (n=13) of patients found it easy or very easy to access their test results. Those who had more difficulty felt unclear about the system of receiving results.

 **We are told to ring for results and then receptionists say they are not qualified to give results over phone** 
- A patient at Carden Surgery

100% (n=19) of people who have had appointments at the practice felt that they were given enough time to explain their issues properly to the doctors and nurses on duty, which is commendable.

Environment

The representatives felt that the waiting room was clean and tidy, and that the practice was in a clean and modern building. They observed some children's play equipment, and magazines in the waiting room. The representatives felt that if patients were waiting any longer than 30 minutes in the chairs in the waiting room, they could start to feel quite uncomfortable.

Antibacterial gel was provided in the waiting room; however the representatives did not observe information about how to use the sanitizer, or why this is important.

Providing Information

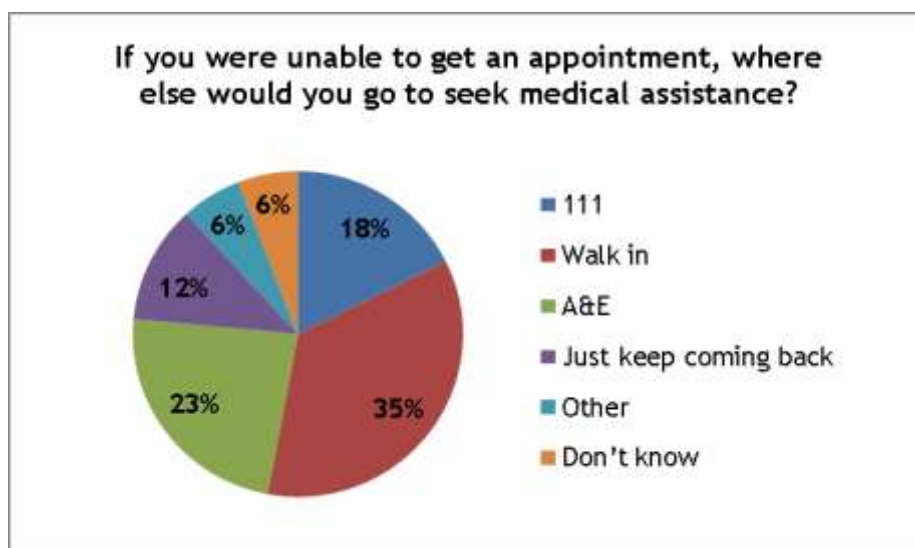
The representatives felt that the noticeboard was clearly laid out and largely up to date. They observed a large notice asking patients to review a programme named 'I want great care', and Friends and Family Test information. Our representatives did not observe any information on alternatives to A&E when seeking medical assistance out of hours, or information on registering for online services.

The waiting room displayed a clear complaints procedure and a complaint form was available. Despite this, 60% (n=12) of the people we spoke to said that they did not know anything at all about how to make a complaint at the practice if they needed to.

Carden Surgery does not currently have a Patient Participation Group, or PPG⁷. This is reflected in the fact that 89% (n=8) of patients did not know what a Patient Participation Group (PPG) was. Regarding alternative ways to shape the practice's development, 85% (n=17) felt they did not know what the national patient survey⁸ was, and 70% (n=14) did not feel they knew what a practice manager does.

Out of Hours

We asked patients where they would go if the practice was closed and they needed medical assistance. The detail in the chart below shows that whilst 53% (n=9) would approach places like the Brighton Station Health Centre and NHS111, 23% (n=4) would go straight to A&E. Of those in the 'other' category, one person said they would ask their daughter to contact an out of hours service.



Summing up and looking forward

Carden Surgery is generally well regarded by its patients across a range of areas. We asked patients to rank the practice from 0-10 (with 0 being the very worst, and 10 being the very best). Of the 9 patients that ranked the practice, the average score was a positive 8 out of 10. The lowest score we

⁷ [Patient Participation Groups](https://www.patient.co.uk/patient-participation-groups), Patient.co.uk

⁸ [National Patient's Survey](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/national-patient-survey), Frequently Asked Questions

received was 2, and the highest 10.

Our representatives asked patients what improvements they would like to see at the practice. Two key themes came through in the answers that were given. The most prominent theme was around opening times. Patients would like the practice to be open for longer, including opening at the weekend and suspending early closure on a Thursday, to allow for better access. Secondly, patients would like to see an improvement around the current telephone booking system. Some patients would also see improvements in discretion amongst reception staff; particularly with regard to personal information. They suggested a more discrete room for reception staff to talk to people about their medical issues, or extra sensitivity when dealing with people's issues face to face at the reception desk.

Additional findings

Alongside telling us about their experiences of Carden Surgery, patients also told us about issues outside of the surgery. Patients at this practice shared concerns they had about the closure of some Learning Disability services, the need for a children's walk-in centre, and experiences of the Brighton Station Health Centre. These stories will be used as future intelligence for Healthwatch Brighton and Hove.



Our Recommendations & Responses

1. Brief staff, provide materials and promote the use of online appointment booking. This could alleviate patient concerns regarding telephone appointment booking, and help to fulfil this function as stated on NHS choices.

Provider Response: We have recently provided training to our reception staff on online services, including giving them access to a dummy account so that they are familiar with the process. However I am aware that more training needs to be given. We do advertise the online services however we are not promoting this fully as we are in the process of changing clinical systems and all patients already registered will need to re-register under the EMIS online services and will promote this further when we have a finalised date. There are also problems with the Vision online services which we do not have control over, Vision have opened up a support centre to deal with these issues and the link to this is on the online services pages.

2. Discuss ways in which to improve potential sensitivities when discussing personal information including consideration of a separate room for private conversations.

Provider Response: There is a private room that is available for patients to use for sensitive and private issues. I thought there was a poster advertising this but I was wrong I will make sure a poster goes up offering this.

3. Clarify the process around receiving test results with patients via an appropriate medium, such as a newsletter, poster in the practice, or information when having tests done.

Provider Response: We will look into this in our next staff meeting to work out the best way to manage this process.

4. Promote and explain why it is important to sanitize your hands when entering the surgery.

Provider Response: A poster will go up next to the hand sanitizer in reception.

5. Develop a Patient Participation Group and seek support and best practice guidance on how to do this through other surgeries with well-established groups.

Provider Response: We are currently recruiting a PPG we have had some applications of interest and the CCG are providing support to help set this up.

6. Consider other ways to promote the patient voice within the organisation such as promoting the patient survey, and what a practice manager does. Include within this consideration of promote and explain the complaints process.



Provider Response: There is a poster in reception explaining how to get the complaints procedure and who to write to with a complaint. All leaflets are held behind reception. All of this information is also on our website.

7. Consider introducing one or two chairs that are softer or have arm rests to make older people or those with long term conditions more comfortable when waiting in the waiting room.

Provider Response: We are looking at redecorating our waiting room and are awaiting some quotes.

8. Include the Clinical Commissioning Group's 'Great Choices Make Heroes' campaign material on out of hours services in your general materials and noticeboards.

Provider Response: The 'Great Choices Make Heroes' campaign leaflets are displayed in our waiting room. I have checked today and can confirm that they are there.

9. Finally, consider the out of hours appointment issues raised in this report and creative ways to respond to them. It may be beneficial to engage with the EPIC project⁹ locally

Provider Response: We recently engaged with the EPIC Wave 2 project but unfortunately the bid was rejected. We cannot join the first wave at this time as they are not accepting new practices.



Next Steps

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will use this pilot visit to inform our visits to GP practices throughout the year. This includes making changes to the questions asked. We will also share our recommendations with the Practice directly, as well as the CCG and other stakeholders. We welcome any feedback about this visit, the process used and questions asked so please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We will publish outcomes from this visit together with information about what has happened with the recommendations on our website¹⁰.

⁹ [EPIC](#) Stands for Extended Primary Integrated Care

¹⁰ [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove](#), 'What We've Done'

Appendices

Appendix one: The questions we asked

- 1. How have you found to do the following:** Book an appointment in person, book an appointment by phone, book an appointment online, speak to a Doctor on the phone, speak to a Nurse on the phone, get your test results back.
- 2. How long do you usually wait between booking an appointment and attending it?** The same day, up to 3 days, up to a week longer than a week, I have not booked an appointment
- 3. Have you ever been offered a telephone consultation if appointments at the practice have not been available?** Yes, it's as good as a face-to-face appointment, yes, it's not as good as a face-to-face appointment, no, but I would be interested in receiving this service, no, but I would not be interested in this service,
- 4. If you were unable to get an appointment here, where else would you go to seek medical assistance?** (if none, please leave blank)
- 5. Do the doctors and nurses give you enough time to explain your condition and issues during your appointment?** Yes, no, I have not had an appointment
- 6. How helpful do you find the reception staff?** very helpful, helpful, unhelpful, very unhelpful, unsure
- 7. What is your experience of being referred to a specialist?** My referral went well, my referral was lost, my referral was delayed, I haven't needed a referral.
- 8. How much do you feel you know about the following services at your practice:** How to make a complaint, what a PPG is, how to get involved in your PPG, what the patient survey is, what the practice manager does
- 9. Overall, how would you rate your GP practice out of 10? (10 being excellent, 1 being very poor):** 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
- 10. What changes would you like to see to make your GP practice better?**
- 11. Is there anything you would like to tell Healthwatch about other NHS or social care services in Brighton and Hove?**

Appendix two: The Observation Checklist

- 1. Noticeboard:** Is it cluttered, does it have up to date information, is the information easy to read?
- 2. Waiting area:** Is it clean and tidy, are the seats soft, are there any magazines and children's toys?
- 3. Hygiene:** Is hand gel available in the practice waiting room, and information about stopping bugs from spreading?
- 4. Communication:** How are receptionists and other staff interacting with patients? What is their tone of voice, and how helpful are they being?
- 5. Information:** Is there any information available about: Alternative options to A&E, the Friends and Family Test, how to make a complaint?
- 6. Feedback:** Is there any information about patient participation groups, or feedback boxes and forms available?
- 7. Healthwatch Promotion:** Is there a Healthwatch poster on display? If not please provide reception with one when leaving
- 8. Additional observations**

