

Seven Dials Medical Practice

Service address:	24 Montpelier Crescent, Seven Dials, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 3J.
Service Provider:	Contracted to Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group
Date and Time:	09:00 - 12:00, 30 th September 2015
Authorised Representatives:	Tressa Davey and Paul Wilson
Healthwatch Address:	Healthwatch Brighton and Hove Community Base, 113 Queens Road, 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.

Who are Healthwatch?

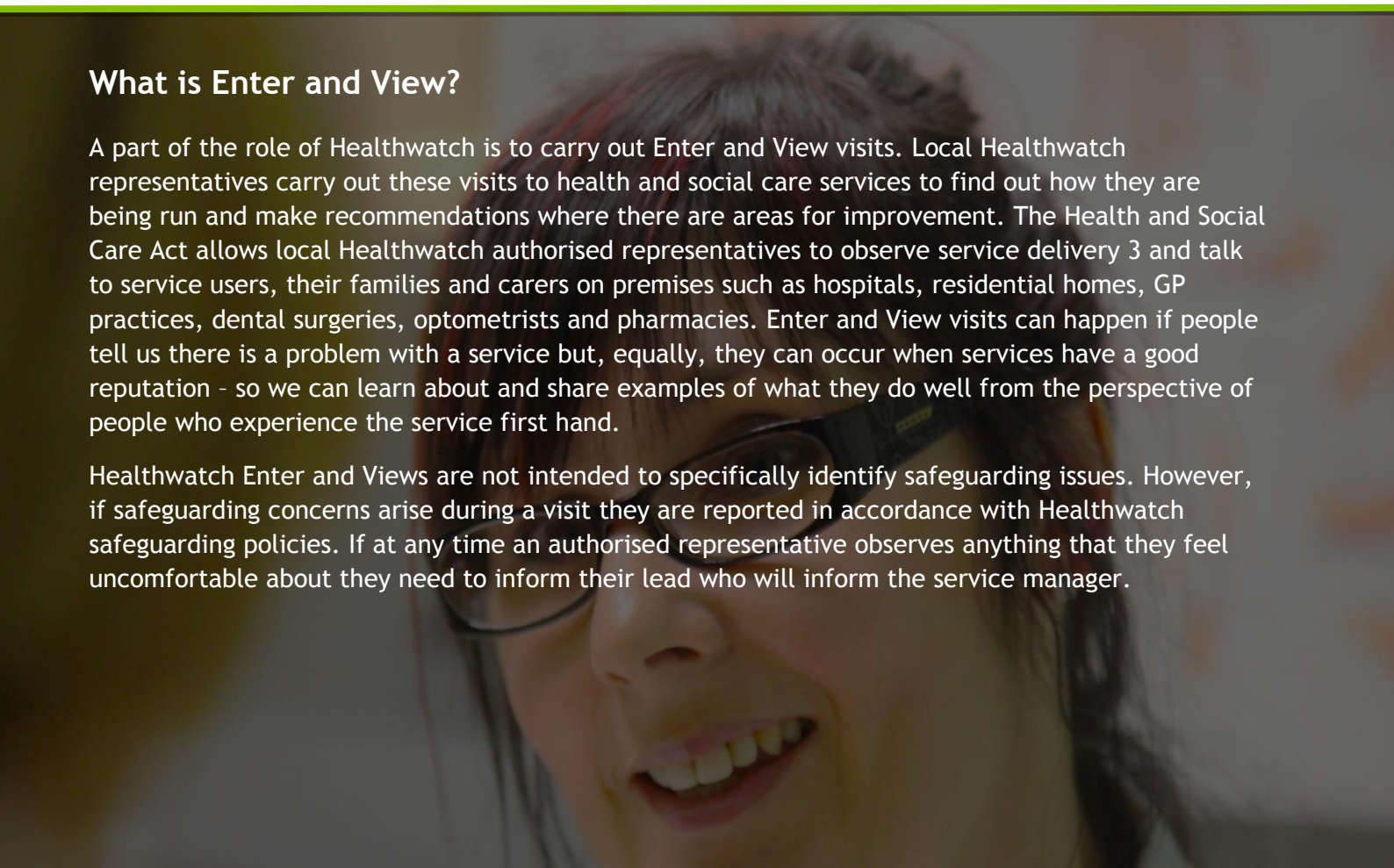
Healthwatch Brighton and Hove supports local children, young people, adults and their communities to influence the design, delivery and improvement of their local health and social care services, now and for the future. We enable people to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing by assisting 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 148 local Healthwatch organisations across England.

What is Enter and View?

A part of the role of Healthwatch 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.





Why is Healthwatch Visiting GP Practices?

Healthwatch Brighton and Hove (HWBH) is undertaking a programme of visits to GP Practices across the city during 2015. In total we will visit 15 GP practices, including three pilot visits in March 2015. As part of this HWBH is undertaking an online survey asking the same questions, to ensure that as many people as possible are able to give feedback on their local practice.

During our time in each service, authorised 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 significant change both locally and nationally¹, Healthwatch wants to understand how patients feel services in Brighton and Hove are performing, and make recommendations to ensure high quality health and wellbeing services.

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 there are many new initiatives in place. These include 'EPIC'³, which is run by BICS⁴ and aims to bring multi-disciplinary teams into surgeries together with extra services such as 'Community Navigators'⁵. Healthwatch does not act as an inspectorate for Health and Social Care; this is the job of the Care Quality Commission.

Healthwatch chose the 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 Commission.
- 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 [BICS](#) stands for Brighton Integrated Care Service

⁵ [Community Navigators](#) provide community service signposting to individuals

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



Methodology

Two Authorised Volunteer Representatives for Healthwatch Brighton and Hove visited The Seven Dials Medical Centre on the 30th September 2015. It was one of a programme of 15 visits to GP Practices which Healthwatch Brighton and Hove chose to undertake in 2015-2016. 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.

We received 32 of completed questionnaires in total, 28 through the visit itself and 4 through an online version of the survey. 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. Healthwatch B&H stresses that the E&V method is intended to be a snapshot of patient opinion, and therefore may not capture the wider concerns of the patient population.

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 on 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. Equalities information was also collected for those who took part, to help us to understand the issues that might face particular groups in the community.

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 for us to be more honest and transparent about our findings. If we say that 100% of people agree with a statement, but next to this is an (n=2), you will know that whilst 100% sounds impressive, only two people actually responded to that particular question!

About the practice

The Seven Dials Medical Centre has around 7800 patients, who are served by four GPs and two practice nurses. The centre is not currently a part of the EPIC project, but does have a Patient Participation Group.



Results of Visit



Appointments & Referrals

As with the majority of GP practices, at the Seven Dials Medical Centre it is possible to book appointments with nurses and doctors over the phone, in person and via the internet. Of those who had used the service, patients found it easiest to book in person; with 95% (n=21) finding it easy or very easy. This was followed closely by booking over the telephone, with 90% (n=28) reporting finding this easy or very easy. The majority of patients (82%, n=18) found it easy or very easy to receive test results via telephone.

Just four patients had tried online booking, and they expressed mixed opinions about ease of use. Of the eight people who ordered repeat prescriptions online five found this service very easy to use. However, there were large numbers of people reporting not having used online services.

Answer Options	Very easy to do	Easy to do	Difficult	Very difficult to do	I have not used this service
Book an appointment in person	13	8	1	0	8
Book an appointment by telephone	17	11	1	2	1
Book an appointment online	1	1	1	1	25
Order repeat prescriptions online	5	1	1	1	21
Get your test results back via telephone	9	9	4	0	8

73% (n=22) of patients we spoke to said they were able to get the non-emergency appointment they needed within 3 days. 24% (n=7) waited up to a week, and one person reported waiting longer than a week. Patients commented that their experiences were variable and that the phone line was sometimes quite busy.

 **Sometimes you can get an appointment on the same day, then others you can wait up to a week** 

Sometimes if face to face appointments are not available, GP practices will offer telephone appointments with doctors as an alternative. At Seven Dials, 53% (n=16) of those asked thought that a telephone appointment was not as good as attending a face to face



appointment. Of the patients we spoke to, 40% (n=12) said they had received this service. Patients commented that for more complex issues a telephone appointment might not be appropriate, but that it could be useful for more straightforward issues.



Of those patients who experienced referrals to hospital care, 70% (n=12) felt that the process went smoothly. Of those who experienced delays, two patients felt that the practice kept them up to date with what was happening, and three felt that they were not kept up to date.

Quality of service

Of the people we asked, most said that doctors 96% (n=26), nurses 99% (n=23) and reception staff 96% (n=26) gave them enough time to explain what they needed to. They also felt listened to by doctors 85% (n=23), nurses 83% (n=20) and reception staff 85% (n=23). Doctors (81%, n=22) and nurses 71%, (n=17) were better at making sure people understood the treatment they were providing, but were perceived as doing less to give patients choice in their treatment (doctors 55%, n=15, nurses 54%, n=13).

63% (n=17) of patients felt that when they attended an appointment with the doctor, she/he had all relevant medical information available. Eight patients were unsure, and two felt that this was not the case. Some patients commented that they felt this was only the case when seeing their own GP; whilst others felt that doctors did not refer to their computers at all except for when prescribing.

On the day of the visit Healthwatch representatives observed reception staff being friendly, warm and helpful, both on the telephone and in person. Nurses and doctors were also observed being friendly and helpful as they called patients in to their appointments, although as patients were called from a distance the names were not always clearly heard. There appeared to be an issue regarding privacy, as our authorised representatives reported being able to hear conversations in the health promotion consulting rooms.

 **Very helpful ladies on front desk. So grateful to have such a wonderful practice.** 



We asked people what is important to them as patients when visiting their GP practice. Of the patients who responded, there were themes around the importance of having friendly reception staff, high quality treatment, and having enough time to express issues properly.

Environment

On the day of the visit, the representatives found the waiting rooms to be bright, clean and tidy. The chairs were in good repair, and magazines and children's toys were available for patients. A TV screen with a range of information was available, but was found by the representatives to be difficult to spot. Some patients reported to representatives that they did not know it was there until they heard the representatives asking for it at reception. Our representatives felt that this was because it was small, behind glass and in a different room.

Hand gel was available to patients, and signs were visible with regard to infection control. Toilets were available on both floors, and the lower bathroom was wheelchair accessible. They were found to be clean and tidy. Visible signs reassured patients that children's toys were cleaned regularly.

Providing information

A range of information on cancer and cancer screening was available in the waiting room, in the form of leaflets and posters. 60% (n=18) of the people we talked to were aware of access to cancer screening services through the centre. Information was displayed on the TV screen and through leaflets regarding free NHS health checks. A lower 30% (n=9) of patients said they were aware of the checks, and the same amount were also aware of annual health checks for people with long term conditions. The noticeboard displayed information on smoking cessation services and 70% (n=21) of patients we asked were aware of these. Of all the people we talked to, 17% (n=5) were unaware of all of programmes we asked about.

Information was available for LGBT people, and those with HIV. The check in had multiple languages available to choose from. The noticeboards were observed to be clear and tidy. Leaflets were in racks, and notices were laminated. However, the representatives felt that because there was so much useful information, finding a specific leaflet might sometimes be problematic.



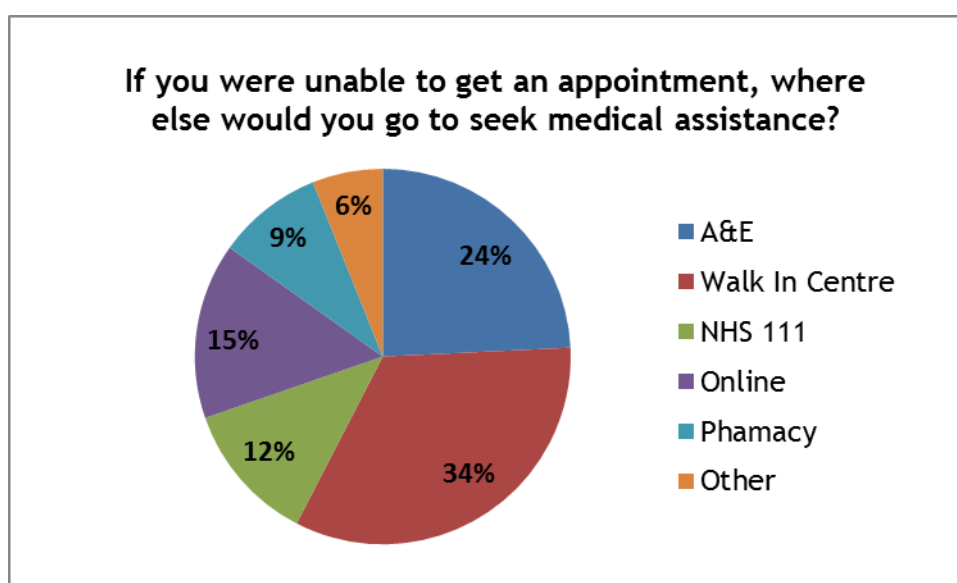
Feeding back to the service

On the day of the visit, information on how to make a complaint about the centre was not visible. When asked if people knew how to complain if they needed to, 45% (n=9) of patients felt they knew what to do. 23% (n=5) were aware of the national 'GP patient survey', and 36% (n=10) felt that they understood what a practice manager's role was.

No information about the centre's PPG was observed on the day of the visit. Of the patients who responded just four knew what a patient participation group was, and two felt they knew how to join their practice's group. Other feedback systems available on the day of the visit included a friends and family test feedback box and poster, and the results from the previous month's friends and family test feedback were on display.

Out of Hours

We asked patients where they would go if the practice was closed and they needed medical assistance. Most people replied with a range of options, and said that their actions would depend on the severity of the issue. In those instances we chose the first answer given as the decisive choice. Of those in the 'other' category, people said they would try to find another doctor, or were unsure because this had not happened to them. It was notable that NHS111 information was available on the day of the visit, but information from the CCG's 'We could be Heroes' campaign was not observed.





Summing up and looking forward

Seven Dials medical Centre is generally well appreciated by the patients we spoke to. Most patients are satisfied with access to appointments, and the quality of service they receive. At the time of writing, the CQC are collating findings from a recent visit, and have yet to release their report⁷. The national ‘GP Patient Survey’ summary⁸ findings confirm our positive results about appointments, and also that the practice could improve in relation to involving patients in decisions about their care.

We asked patients to rank the practice from 0-10 (with 0 being the very worst, and 10 being the very best). Of the 27 patients that ranked the practice, the average score was 8.2. The lowest score we received was 1, and the highest 10.

Our representatives asked patients what improvements they would like to see at the practice. Counterintuitively, key themes emerged related to improving access to appointments. Others mentioned improved communication, and faster test results.

Additional findings

Alongside telling us about their experiences of The Seven Dials Medical Centre, patients also told us about issues outside of the surgery. Patients at this practice shared concerns they had about social services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and local pharmacies.

⁷ [CQC Report](#), Seven Dials Medical Centre, extracted 28th October 2015

⁸ [GP Patient Survey summary](#), Seven Dials medical Centre, extracted 28th October 2015



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: All staff are trained to give this information to patients when they register, they also advise patients at every ok opportunity, this information is also on both of our websites.

2. Patients perceived that doctors and nurses did not routinely encourage them to be involved in choices about treatment. It is recommended that this issue is explored further in staff meetings and/or with the Patient Participation Group.

Provider response: Will discuss at the next opportunity

3. Healthwatch representatives reported overhearing patients in consultation spaces. Consider with the PPG what options are possible to reduce the likelihood of this happening.

Provider response: Not sure which consulting rooms they are talking about and on which floors? As patients are not allowed to be within the main GP corridor in LGF & only enter there briefly to access the GP rooms, patients are not allowed in the LGF areas until called either, was it the 1st floor midwife room as the room is joined to the waiting area & muffled sounds can be heard? We will discuss if there is anything that can be done at the next opportunity.

4. Patients and Healthwatch representatives reported that the TV screen with information is in an inconspicuous location and could be easily missed. Consider with the PPG how it could be made more visible.

Provider response: We have looked into this over the years and this is the most appropriate and safe place for it as we do not have the wall space or correct wall available to attach to the walls so it would be visible to all. I am unclear how it allegedly couldn't be seen the glass its sits behind is one of the main focal points for patients in the main waiting area.

5. The volume of information available to patients is a positive contribution to the services on offer at the Surgery. Consider displaying the information in themes, to help ensure



the information is easier for patients to access.

Provider response: Some displays are in themes but as we receive more & more they tend to be put where there is space, this has however been discussed previously with the reception manager who already had this on her to do list, she will organise this & put into themes as much as space will allow.

6. Consider ways to promote the centre's Patient Participation Group further, as patient awareness about this is currently low.

Provider response: There is a notice in the lobby and it is advertised on our website, but we can certainly re-discuss this.

7. Display information about how to make a complaint at the practice in a visible location

Provider response: This information can be found on our websites and in our practice leaflet. Patients can also ask for the complaint procedure at the reception.

8. Health checks are a useful early intervention/prevention tool. However, patients seem to have a low awareness of their right to these checks. Consider how best to address this in conjunction with the practice's patient participation group

Provider response: There are adverts around the surgery for the NHS Health checks, the Nursing Team also run searches & invite patients in via text or letter, they also do the health checks opportunistically as patients come in.



Next Steps

Once the provider has responded to each of the recommendations, we include these responses in the final report, which is published on our website⁹ for the general public to see. The report will also be shared with key organisations in the city including the Care Quality Commission, Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group and others. After the report's release, Healthwatch Brighton and Hove will conduct some planned follow up activity to ascertain whether changes have been made following the visit. The online survey will be available until 30th September 2015. Any surveys collected after this report is completed will be included as an appendix to the report at a later stage.

Once we have visited all 15 practices, we will also compile a larger strategic report which will pull together key themes across this snapshot of primary care provision in the city. This report will also be made available to all practices visited as well as partner agencies. An easy read version will be made available to the public.

⁹ [Healthwatch Brighton and Hove](#), 'What We've Done'

Appendices

Appendix one: The questions we asked

- 1. How has it been for you to:** Book an appointment in person; book an appointment by phone; book an appointment online; order a repeat prescription; get your test results back via telephone
- 2. How long do you usually wait between booking a non-emergency 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 same day telephone consultation instead of a face-to-face appointment?** 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 it wouldn't be as good as a face-to-face appointment; no, but it would be as good as a face-to-face appointment
- 4. If you were unable to get an appointment here, where would you go to get medical help?**
- 5. Please tick or cross below** (grid) Do the Doctors/Nurses/reception staff give you enough time/listen to you/make sure you know about your treatment/give you choices about your treatment
- 6. Are you aware of the following services which are available through the practice?** (please tick if you are aware of them) Free health checks for people between the ages of 40 - 74; cancer screening services; annual health checks; services to help you to quit smoking (smoking cessation); I have not heard of any of these programmes.
- 7. What makes a fantastic GP practice, including the things that are most important to you as a patient?**
- 8. How much do you feel you know about the following services at your practice:** How to make a complaint about your GP practice; what a PPG is; how to get involved in your PPG; what the patient survey is; what the practice manager does
- 9. What is your experience of being referred to a specialist?** My referral went smoothly; my referral was delayed but I was kept up to date; my referral was delayed and I was not kept up to date; I haven't needed a referral.
- 10. Do you think the doctor has all the relevant medical information about you available during your appointments?** Yes; No; Unsure; I haven't had an appointment
- 11. 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

12. What changes would you like to see to make your GP practice better?

13. 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. Hygiene: Is hand gel available in the practice waiting room, and information about stopping bugs from spreading? Is there a bathroom available and is it accessible for people in wheelchairs?

3. Information through leaflets, posters and TV screens: Healthwatch Materials, ICAS Materials, We Could be Heroes Campaign, Free NHS Health Checks, Cancer Screening Programmes, Smoking Cessation, The EPIC Project,

4. Communication: How are receptionists and other staff interacting with patients? What is their tone of voice, and how helpful are they being? Are conversations easily overheard by other patients? Are patients clearly informed/ called in for their appointment?

5. Waiting area: Is there any information about the practice's patient group, feedback boxes, complaints info and forms, or any other type of feedback information available? How is it presented? Is there any information on the Friends and Family Test?

6. Feedback: Is there any information about the practice's patient group, feedback boxes, complaints info and forms, or any other type of feedback information available? How is it presented? Is there any information on the Friends and Family Test?

7. Additional observations

