

Enter and View Report



Palfrey Health Centre

Announced Visit - 25th October 2023



Engaging
Communities
Solutions

healthwatch
Walsall

Enter and View

Part of Healthwatch Walsall remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Walsall Authorised Representatives carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how service users access, use and understand what the overall service user experiences are, highlighting findings and potentially making recommendations that may lead to areas of improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows 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 that we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first-hand.

Healthwatch Walsall Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Walsall Safeguarding Policy, the service manager will be informed, and the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding Team will also be informed.

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Acknowledgments

Healthwatch Walsall would like to thank the Practice Manager and all the patients who took part for their co-operation during our visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visit made on the 25th October. The report does not claim to represent the views of all service users, only those who contributed during the visit.

Authorised Representatives

Tom Collins – HwW staff, Authorised representative

Lynne Fenton – HwW staff, Authorised representative

Adrienne Mullings – Volunteer, Authorised representative

Who we share the report with?

This report and its findings will be shared with the GP Practice (provider), members of the public, Black Country Integrated Care Board (Walsall Place), Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Walsall website and can be available as a paper copy if requested. Call 0800 470 1660.

Provider details

Name of Service: Palfrey Health Centre

Address: 151 Wednesbury Road, Walsall, WS1 4JQ

Tel: 01922 627788

Website: <https://www.palfreyhealthcentre.co.uk/>

Service type: e.g. GP practice and medical services

Most recent Care Quality Commission (C.Q.C.) inspection, Latest inspection: 27/03/2019 and report published: 23 May 2019.

Rated as Good across all 5 categories.

Link to CQC report: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-547457755>

Healthwatch Principles

Healthwatch Walsall's Enter and View programme is linked to the eight principles of Healthwatch, and questions are asked around each one.

1. **A healthy environment:** Right to live in an environment that promotes positive health and wellbeing.
2. **Essential Services:** Right to a set of preventative, treatment and care services provided to a high standard to prevent patients reaching crisis.
3. **Access:** Right to access services on an equal basis with others without fear of discrimination or harassment, when I need them in a way that works for me and my family.
4. **A safe, dignified and quality services:** Right to high quality, safe, confidential services that treat me with dignity, compassion and respect.
5. **Information and education:** Right to clear and accurate information that I can use to make decisions about health and care treatment. I want the right to education about how to take care of myself and about what I am entitled to in the health and social care system.
6. **Choice:** Right to choose from a range of high-quality services, products and providers within health and social care.
7. **Being listened to:** Right to have my concerns and views listened to and acted upon. I want the right to be supported in taking action if I am not satisfied with the service I have received.
8. **Being involved:** To be treated as an equal partner in determining my own health and wellbeing. I want the right to be involved in decisions that affect my life and those affecting services in my local community.

Purpose of the visit

This was an announced visit. We sought to gather patient experiences of accessing and using the GP, nursing and provided medical services offered at the practice.

What we did

We arrived at the building at 9.10am. Patients had a choice as to whether they wished to participate. We used a pre-set list of questions/prompts and noted patient and staff responses.

In total we spoke to 6 patients (1 patient did not complete the survey) the Practice Manager and another staff member, a total of 8 people.

Environment

External

The practice is situated in Palfrey just off the main Walsall to Wednesbury Road. There is a small car park at the front but a much larger capacity of up to 40 parking spaces to the rear of the surgery accessed via a one-way road system.

There is a pharmacy and another GP service sharing the same building footprint but clearly individually signed.

Access is via an automated door, no steps to the main reception area to the right.

Internal

We entered at 9.10 a.m. and we were asked to sign in as visitors and to wear a surgical mask as a precaution.

The reception desk, clearly marked with one receptionist greeting patients and there were other staff answering phones and working on computers.

- Main reception was clearly marked
- An operating hand sanitising unit was available for use upon entering
- There is a self-book in electronic screen in reception
- The patient reception/seating area was clean and tidy
- Seating for approximately 18 patients
- There is a toilet/baby changing room in the waiting area for patient use, but the light was not working at the time of the visit
- We located a Hearing Loop for patients in the initial reception area which had signage to indicate to patients that it is available for use
- One wall mounted TV downstairs and another smaller one in another waiting room on an upper floor. Both were on and displaying information
- CCTV cameras are in place

Information was displayed in the reception area and both waiting areas. There was a wide range of information such as, Extra GP Appointments, Patient Participation Group (PPG), patient survey results, many medical condition based information posters.

We did note out of date information posters i.e. a poster for Walsall Carers which was displayed but we are aware that the delivery of that service has changed to a new organisation. This was pointed out to the Practice Manager who said they would remove/update the information.

In the main patient waiting area, there was a range of patients in the surgery from various communities and different age groups.

Practice Services

From the practice website taken 26th October 2023.

- Antenatal
- Cervical Smear Clinic
- Child Health & Immunisation
- Chronic Disease Management
- Diabetes Clinic
- Flu Vaccination
- Mental Health Nurse
- Ultrasound and Audiology Service (Led by medical specialists from Mediscan Services Limited) and CuRx Health Ltd.

We were told that:

- The practice has just over 5,000 patients registered from a diverse local community, supported by a number of GP, Nursing and admin staff with the ability to communicate in various languages
- There are 6 part time GPs with additional use of Locums whom have worked with practice over a number of years, as and when needed
- There are Practice Nurses, prescribers and additional support from, Pharmacists, First contact Physio, Paramedics etc. and a Social Prescriber

Access

Access to the services can be by telephone, walk -in person, using the practice online system and by calling NHS 111.

Should patients need an interpreter attempts to book are made and patients are given double appointments. Though on occasions family members are asked to attend with the patient.

There is room for wheelchair/pushchair/mobility access, although this could be quite tight if a number of patients attend with such needs at the same time.

There are ground floor consulting/treatment rooms with access to upper level consulting/treatment rooms via a lift. It was noted that there was not a handle on the inside of the door when you enter the lift to pull the lift door to close to operate it easily. We were told there is a 'knack' to close it.

Patient information available

There was patient information in the reception area, on the reception window and along the corridor to the ground floor patient waiting area.

In the main patient waiting area there are a number of patient information leaflets and posters relating to healthy living styles, a carers board and general notice board.

Displayed on one of the notice boards were the practice opening hours, the procedure/process for patients to raise a concern or a complaint.

There was additional information around condition support and general NHS information.

Patient interviews & responses

We spoke to and collated 6 patient experiences and views during the visit. 2 patients did not complete the questions fully.

We asked 6 Patients how often they sought to make contact with the practice?

The responses were:

- When they needed to seek medical help
- 1 patient quite often, for children and parent

We asked them how they currently communicate with practice? This was a multi choice selection

The responses were mixed with no preferred method:

All 6 use the telephone and 2 occasionally walk- in also

- 1 used the NHS 111 app
- 1 also went online (Accurx)

We asked if patients are given alternative routes of care if appointments are not available?

The responses were:

- 4 patients answered Yes there were offered alternative routes of care
- 1 patient could not remember
- 1 patient was asked to use NHS 111 online but they do not use technology so chose not do so

It appears that a number of patients are offered alternative care pathways, this may include: NHS111 or A&E.

We asked if the patient(s) knew of Extra GP appointments?

Note: Extra GP appointments may also be known as 'out of hours' or 'WALDOC'.

The responses were:

- 2 patients did have knowledge
- 4 patients did not have knowledge

We asked if patients feel they are listened to around their health needs?

The responses were:

- 5 patients answered Yes, 1 further saying they were able to ask questions, another said sometimes
- 1 patient felt that they were not listened to by GP

We asked what barriers do they face at the practice?

The responses were:

- 2 patients did not identify any barriers
- 2 identified getting through on the telephone
- 1 said getting appointments

Patients' comments around positive and negative points to do with the practice

Positive(s) highlighted by patients:



"Good doctors"

"The use of the online form consultation"

"Last 6 months appointments have increased, no issues getting appointments"

"When you get to see them (Doctor) works really well"

"Good service"

"Good, get appointments same day"

Negative(s) highlighted by patients:

2 patients could not give a negative about the service. 4 others did



"Telephone issues, getting through sometimes"

"Not able to see a Dr when needed, waiting time"

"Waiting times, better communication for waiting times on seeing the GP"

"Up to 3 weeks wait for an appointment"

We asked how the patients are notified of any changes by the practice?

- 4 patients said they receive text messages, 1 also said they receive an Email
- 2 said it was not applicable

We asked if they had choice of hospital if they are referred?

The responses were:

- 2 patients answered Yes
- 1 patient said sometimes
- 1 patient said they had not been offered a choice
- 2 patients did not answer

We asked if the patients understood the information given and if they are able to ask questions or ask for explanations?

The responses were:

- 4 patients answered Yes
- 2 patients did not complete the survey question nor did they take part in further questions

As mentioned there are staff that speak various languages and the staff have access to an Interpreter service when needed.

We asked if the patient knew how to raise a concern or make a complaint?

The responses were:

3 participating patients said Yes they knew how to make a complaint.
1 said No but they would send a message about the service

We noted the process on how to make a complaint is on the patient notice board clearly marked for patients to see

We asked if the patient could change/improve anything what would it be?

The responses were:

- Better access, more for the older generations, difficult for elders to operate and use online services
- Telephone access, more appointments on the day
- More communication as alternative to app

Staff interviews

We spoke firstly to a front facing member of staff based in the reception area. Later we spoke to the Practice Manager.

We asked if there was a Patient Patient/Reference Group (P.P/R.G.)?

We were told yes. It comprised of about 15 patients who meet approximately every 3 months. A 'P.P/R.G.' notice board contained last meeting notes.

We asked what alternative services are offered to patients and how?

We were told: Patient notice board, referred to NHS 111, text messages to patients, information shared when patients walk in and information shared with pharmacy next door.

We asked the staff to highlight one positive and one negative about working at the practice.

Positive:

- Helping patients

Negative:

- Occasional problematic patients

We asked how patients are given choice?

- When using Accurx system
- Also choices on telephone system
- Staff can speak multiple languages
- There is a hearing loop in place for hard of hearing
- Use of interpreter services which includes British Sign Language (BSL)
- Can also talk to patient on phone/interpreter

We asked if the staff/practice encounter anti-social behaviour from patients/relatives and how they deal with it?

- Staff have training in this
- There are policies in place and to follow
- Ultimately patients can be asked to leave and the Police called
- There are panic alarms throughout the practice to alert everyone

We asked how many telephone lines they have?

We were told that they have 7 lines, with staff answering calls.

We asked how do staff educate/ inform patients about the person person/professional to see to meet their care needs?

See what problems occur and direct patient to appropriate person to meet the need.

We asked how does the practice update patients of any changes

- Via Accurx Messaging system
- Practice website
- Patient noticeboards

We asked a staff member if they could change one thing about the practice what would it be?

We were told *“I wouldn’t change much really, staff room downstairs”*

We asked how do they meet the language needs of patients?

- Staff speak a number of languages in-house
- Access interpreting services
- A family member may come and speak with permission on behalf of the patient

Practice Manager (PM) interview

We asked if there was a PPG/PRG and we were informed there is but there is a need to recruit more patients to it, due to COVID affecting the meet up opportunities.

We asked what are patient alternatives to access medical care if the surgery cannot provide it? Staff can signpost patients to: A&E, the Urgent Care Centre, Social Prescribers. Reception triage patients daily and book for Doctors or direct to Accurx triage. Staff also signpost patients to the ‘Ournet Extended Access service’.

The PM felt there is a strong team approach at the surgery. There are opportunities to develop due to the diversity of the patient cohort. It is an educational site for medical students and potentially in the future for pharmacy students.

A considerable barrier at the surgery is space. The building is shared with another practice and a pharmacy. There a number of floors to access rooms by stairs and an internal lift.

Patients are given choices by:

- Option to see male or female GP
- Use of Accurx and supporting choices within that system
- Choice of languages and interpreters
- Referral to specific hospitals by patient choice/availability

When asked if staff experience anti-social behaviour we were told that yes but they work under various inhouse policies, they operate to a 'Zero Tolerance' policy, they also have a male staff member working on reception at times, an alarm system is in place and the surgery has a good relationship with the local Police.

In most cases staff seek to de-escalate any patient escalated situation, by trying to calm them, inform them of the complaints process and the surgery seeks to respond to them. But generally any patient escalated situation happens 2 or 3 times a year.

The complaints procedure is displayed on the patient information board.

We were told that there are 7 incoming/outgoing telephone lines to the surgery, which are operated by frontline reception/admin staff who can speak various languages.

Patients can become more informed on who is the best person to see in the surgery at the initial triage stage, be that a Doctor, Nurse, or Pharmacist. Patients can use the online/website patient contact, reception staff can initially pick up the patient need and signpost to the best clinical person.

Information and updates are available to patients to inform them if there are any changes at the surgery. This can be by: text messaging, website updates, patient information boards, verbally by staff or on the internal TV screen in the patient waiting area.

When asked if they change one thing, the PM said that the funding from NHS estates could be increased to meet more needs of patients and staff.

We also had a general chat with the Practice Manager who highlighted the densely populated area of Walsall of around 24,000 people who live in multi occupancy housing and that the general population in this area is young rather than elderly (proportionally).

Findings

1. Lighting in patient toilet/baby changing area was not working at the time of our visit
2. Patient information posters whilst extensive could be rationalised for easier locating/access for groups and conditions
3. A handle on the interior of the lift would be useful to close and open the lift door
4. Some of the patient information displayed on walls and on the waiting area TV screen was out of date the details of which were shared with the Practice Manager in order they could update the information

Recommendations

1. Consider a rationalisation of patient information posters, which may be split into 'Men's' Health', 'Women's Health', 'Children Health' and condition specific information such as Diabetes, Flu and Vaccinations etc. this would could make it more easily identifiable for patients.
2. Repair lighting in downstairs patient toilet/baby changing room ASAP
3. Update out of date posters
4. Update TV messaging in patient waiting area
5. Investigate need for handle to inside of lift door to enable a more easier closing process for users

Provider feedback

The provider response to our initial visit is highlighted in yellow, in italics and underlined below. Also later in 'Provider response to recommendations'.

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There is a toilet/baby changing room in the waiting area for patient use, but the light was not working at the time of the visit – *This has been raised with the estates manager for resolution by 20.12.23.*

We did note out of date information posters i.e. a poster for Walsall Carers which was displayed but we are aware that the delivery of that service has changed to a new organisation. This was pointed out to the Practice Manager who said they would remove/update the information. – *The poster has been changed (date: 8.11.23)*

There are ground floor consulting/treatment rooms with access to upper level consulting/treatment rooms via a lift. It was noted that there was not a handle on the inside of the door when you enter the lift to pull the lift door to close to operate it easily. We were told there is a 'knack' to close it. *This has been raised with the estates manager to investigate as well as ensure current maintenance is up to date.*

Provider response to recommendations

1. Consider a rationalisation of patient information posters, which may be split into 'Men's' Health', 'Women's Health', 'Children Health' and condition specific information such as Diabetes, Flu and Vaccinations etc. this would could make it more easily identifiable for patients. *This will be reviewed with the PPG.*
2. Repair lighting in downstairs patient toilet/baby changing room ASAP: *This has been raised with the estates manager for resolution by 20.12.23.*
3. Update out of date posters *Poster changes made: 8.11.23*
4. Update TV messaging in patient waiting area *Messaging changes made: 28.11.23*
5. Investigate need for handle to inside of lift door to enable a more easier closing process for users. *This has been raised with the estates manager to investigate as well as ensure current maintenance is up to date.*

Share your health or care services experiences.

What you say can help us plan our Enter and View visits



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