

ENTER AND VIEW

REPORT



DR SINHA, DR VERMA, DR MANOHAR
& DR ANAND
BRACE STREET HEALTH CENTRE
22ND SEPTEMBER 2025

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Abbreviations that may appear

HwW = Healthwatch Walsall

AR = Authorised Representative

Accurx = Online appointment booking system

PM = Practice Manager

Q = Question

A = Answer

2 Introduction

2.1 Details of visit

The practice is located in Walsall and delivers services to over 3,000+ patients to a diverse local community.

Name of GP service	Dr Sinha, Dr Verma, Dr Manohar & Dr Anand
Service provider details	Brace St. Health Centre, 63 Brace Street, Caldmore, Walsall, WS1 3PS Telephone: 01922 624 605 Website: https://www.bracestreethealthcentre.co.uk/
Opening hours	Monday 8am to 6.30pm Tuesday 8am to 6.30pm Wednesday 8am to 6.30pm Thursday 8am to 6.30pm Friday 8am to 6.30pm
Evening and Weekend Appointment	The appointments will be between 6.30pm and 8.00pm Monday to Friday, and between 9.00am and 5.00pm on Saturdays.
Date of visit	22nd September 2025
Authorised representative (ARs)	Richard Jolly (AR Volunteer Lead) Salma Aftab (Volunteer) Ellie Lilly (HwW staff member)

Care Quality Commission (CQC) - Rating Good

Link to report: <https://tinyurl.com/mtjsyybk>

Latest inspection 20th June 2023, published 4th August 2023.

2.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Walsall would like to thank the service provider, staff, service users and their families for contributing to this Enter and View visit, notably for their helpfulness, hospitality, and courtesy.

2.3 How we gathered the data

This report is based on our observations on the day and answers/ experiences shared by patients to a set questionnaire that we use.

Patients were asked if they wished to take part whilst they waited for their appointment. They had choice/ right not to take part.

Responses were collected and the paperwork was later collated to establish what people told us. Staff were interviewed in the same manner albeit a different day.

3 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 if applicable.

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 identify safeguarding issues specifically. 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, ending the visit.

In addition, if any staff member wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission, where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

3.1 Purpose of visit

The rationale for carrying out this visit was that we wanted to understand how this provider delivers a quality service and how this service is received by its' patients. The surrounding area has a rich cultural mixed background. We are currently undertaking a work project around 'Access to Mental Health services via GP services' for members of

the public from Walsall minority/diverse communities. It presented an opportunity to collate experiences towards this project also.

3.2 Strategic drivers

There are almost 60 GP services in Walsall that serve the Walsall public. We strive to visit a number of mixed service types i.e. GP services, Care and Nursing Homes and Pharmacies.

The majority of peoples experiences are based around GP services and GP access. Therefore, our main areas of Enter and View are largely based around GP service.

4 Overall summary

- The premises appeared well maintained and clean.
- There is a small car park but on road parking is available.
- Although we were told that there is a hearing loop there was no signage to indicate that it was available.
- The majority of patients felt that getting an appointment was a positive.
- Patients use various methods for booking appointments such as: telephone, online and walk-in appointments.
- Some patients were not aware of 'Extra GP Appointments'. (The service has been known by other names).
- PPG/PRG meeting notes are not displayed or relatively easy to locate.

5 Methodology

1. This was an announced visit.
2. Demographics: We spoke to a mix of patients form the local diverse community.

The Authorised Representatives arrived at 9:00 AM and actively engaged with waiting patients/relatives between 9:00 AM and 12 noon.

On arrival, the ARs introduced themselves to staff, and the visit details were discussed and agreed. They used a semi-structured questionnaire when talking to patients on a one-to-one basis, mainly in the patient waiting area.

Waiting patients/relatives were approached and asked if they wished to take part in a short questionnaire relating to their experiences of using said GP services. It was made clear to patients that they could withdraw from the conversation at any time especially if called in for their appointment. They could continue to completion if they wished when they had finished their appointment.

6 Summary of findings

6.1 Overview

1. Patients were not all happy with access to appointments.
2. Some would like shorter wait times on the phone when trying to book appointments.
3. They felt that the Doctors were caring and attentive to their needs and would spend the time that they (patient) needed to be listened to.
4. The area was clean and tidy.
5. There were various patient notice boards though not all notices were visible (hidden behind plant pots).
6. There isn't an electronic patient appointment GP/room notification displays.
7. The patient complaints policy/procedure was not visibly available. But there is a link to complaints on the practice website.
8. PPG/PRG meeting minutes are not visible.
9. 1 patient felt that they are not listened to.
10. 6 patients did not know how to make a complaint (this may be because they have needed to) but a process should be readily available and identifiable.
11. There were more positive comments than negative comments.
12. Patients felt the staff are caring and attentive.
13. We noted some comments re: lack of privacy.
14. One patient said that they were receiving text(s) for son.

6.2 Premises

1. The outside of the building is well maintained with external lighting/lamps and CCTV cameras are in operation. The site has a car park for approximately 35 vehicles serving the 3 surgeries in the building.
2. The building appeared to be maintained, and entry is via automated double doors.
3. Main reception was clearly signed.

4. There is an electronic self-check in unit at the practice reception with two receptionists.
5. Seating available for approximately up to 25 patients.
6. CCTV is in operation inside the building (communal areas only).
7. Ground floor access to services with wheelchair/pushchair access for patients and families. We noted that the entrance door opened out making wheelchair access a little awkward
8. There was clear signage for toilets.
9. There are three patient notice boards situated in the waiting area but not fixed to the wall.
10. The internal décor appeared to be in good order and maintained.
11. The furniture in the waiting area appeared clean.
12. The flooring appeared clean and maintained.
13. We noted there is a hearing loop in the reception area.
14. There isn't an electronic display unit in the waiting area and people are called in by the doctors.
15. We noted that there was a complaints procedure/policy.

6.3 Services offered

A list of the services they are offer can be found on their website, use this link:

<https://bracestreethc.co.uk/>

Access to the services and appointments can be made by telephone, e-consult patient access and walk-in. The practice also offers a text message service for sending patient updates and messages. If patients require an interpreter, the practice can provide this.

6.4 Patient interviews

We spoke to 11 patients and collated their service experiences and views during our visit.

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

The responses were:

- 3 patients said once or twice a year
- 3 patients said 3 or 4 times per year
- 4 patients said monthly
- 1 patient answered 2 or 3 times per month

Q. We asked how they currently communicate with practice?

This was a multi answer choice selection. The responses were very clear.

- 11 patients indicated that they call in by telephone

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

The responses were:

- 9 patients indicated that they were given alternative care pathways/providers details.
- 1 patient said No.
- 1 patient said not sure.

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

Note: Extra GP appointments may also be known as 'out of hours', 'Our Net' or 'Waldoc'.

The responses were:

- 7 patients had not heard of Extra GP Appointments.
- 3 patients said that they had.
- 1 patient had heard of but never used.

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

The responses were:

- 9 patients responded Yes, they are listened to overall.
- 1 patient responded No.
- 1 patient responded somewhat.

Q. We asked what barriers do they face at the practice?

The responses were:

- 7 patients indicated that they felt that there were no barriers.
- 1 patient said *"Language, sometimes I don't understand everything"*.
- 1 patient said *"Have to wait weeks to get appointment"*.
- 1 patient said *"No privacy"*.
- 1 patient said *"Only deal with 1 problem at a time"*.

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

- + Positive comments.

"Very helpful and obliging"
"They treat you well"
"Very helpful"
"Friendly"
"Feel listened to"
"Really good doctors"
"Receptionists Extra Nice"
"Takes concerns seriously"
"Good GP"

- Negative Comments

"You won't always get appointments"
"Staff can be rude"
"Can take a long time to see doctors"
"They only handle one problem at one time"
"Still getting texts for son"
"Called to get documents but said won't give me"
"Only 10mins for one issue"

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

The responses were:

- 7 patients said that they receive text messages.
- 4 patients were not sure.

Q. We asked if they were given a choice of hospital if they are referred?

The responses were:

- 5 patients said they are given a choice.
- 1 patient said they had not been given a choice.
- 5 patients said they didn't know they had a choice.

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

The responses were:

- 10 patients responded Yes.
- 1 patient said No.

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

The responses were:

- 5 patients did not.
- 5 patients understood how to make a complaint and follow the complaints procedure
- 1 patient would like to know

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

The responses were:

- 7 patients stated that no changes were needed.
- 1 patient said less time waiting for appointments.
- 1 patient said better listening.
- 1 patient said more privacy in reception.
- Receptionist can be rude. Don't always seem friendly over the phone, abrupt.

6.7 Staff Interviews

Practice Manager

We spoke to the Practice Manager (PM)

Q. We asked how many patients do you have at present?

We were told: 3,139 patients.

Q. We asked how can patients get appointments or get in touch?

We were told:

- Walk in.
- Telephone.
- Online booking.
- Accurx.

Q. We asked how the practice communicates with patients.

We were told there is a hearing loop and had access to Global Interpreters Service.

Q. We asked how they identify vulnerable patients or carers?

We were told that there were coded consultation records on the system and emails from Social Services. Text messages were used to check.

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

We were told that there is a PPG meeting monthly with 7 members. We couldn't find any minutes on the noticeboard.

Q. We asked how do they gather patient feedback?

We were told:

- Internal surveys.
- Text messages.
- Some verbal feedback.
- Hold a Practice meeting every month reviews this feedback.

Q. We asked what the staffing structure was?

We were told:

- 3 GP partners plus 1 partner as cover.
- PCN 2 paramedics.
- 1 practice nurse.
- 1 Health Care Assistant.
- 5 Receptionists incl. 1 from PCN.
- Locums /Agency only used as needed.

Q. We asked if a patient could choose to see a Male or Female GP?

We were told: Yes.

Q. We asked if the Practice any staff vacancies at the time?

We were told No.

Q. We asked what training do they receive?

The training is generally E learning by Blue Stream using modules, but BLS is face to face.

Q. We asked if staff experience aggressive patient behaviour?

We were told that there is a zero tolerance policy. If it happened, call practice manager or a doctor and recorded in register.

Q. We asked if there were any barriers that the practice faces?

We were told: Constant number of changes.

Q. We asked the PM to name a positive and one negative about the practice?

+ Fantastic team.

– Demands of patients.

Q. We asked how they make patients aware of the right to complain and the process to do so?

We were told:

- Web site.
- ICB.
- Leaflets.
- Normally just speak to Practice Manager.

7 Recommendations

1. Improve access for wheelchair users through main entrance door.
2. Speak to receptionists re privacy concerns.
3. Review waiting times on telephone call ins.
4. Tidy up / improve visibility of notice boards.
5. Ensure complaints procedure on notice boards plainly visible to patients.
6. Check to see if information around patient access to 'Extra GP Appointments' could be improved.
7. Display any PPG/PRG meeting notes that are available.
8. Check that patient text(s) are only being sent to the patient that should receive them.

7.1 Examples of Best Practice

The majority of those we asked though that getting an appointment in a reasonable was good. Also, that reception staff were helpful and tried to help.

There is a range of patient information across various walls, some in foreign languages.

8 Service provider response

We received the following response from the provider, below.

The patient complaints policy/procedure was not visibly available the is a link to complaints on the practice website:

There is a poster on the notice board regarding complaints, as there always has been.

We noted some comments re: lack of privacy.

To ensure privacy, if a patient needs to talk in private, we take them to the back room. Unfortunately, all GP surgeries have the same issue with open spaces.

There are three patient notice boards situated in the waiting area but not fixed to the wall.

The notice boards are fixed to the wall.

We noted that there was a complaints procedure/policy.

This is confusing as the complaints are on the same poster as the procedure/policy.

Ensure complaints procedure on notice boards plainly visible to patients.

Patient can see it clearly on the board.

Overall, we are happy with the report. Thank you for the feedback, and we will make some changes.

Share your Walsall Health and Social Care services experiences by getting in touch by using our services review platform "Have Your Say" on our website. Link: <https://tinyurl.com/3778j3ps>

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