

Enter and View Report



St. Lukes Surgery

Announced Visit - 22nd February & 15th March 2024



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 22 February 2024 but due to the low number of participants we returned on the 15 March 2024. The report does not claim to represent the views of all patients/service users, only those who were interviewed and contributed during the visit.

Authorised Representatives

Tom Collins – HwW staff, Authorised Representative

Peter Allen – HwW staff, 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 required. To obtain a paper copy please call us on Freephone 0800 470 1660.

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 9.00am. 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.

Provider details

Name of Service: St Lukes Surgery

Address: Pinfold Health Centre Bloxwich, Field Road, Bloxwich,
Walsall,
WS3 3JP

Tel: 01922 775136

Website: <https://stlukesurgerywalsall.co.uk/>

Care Quality Commission (CQC) information

Latest inspection: Latest inspection: 22 Aug 2019. Report published: 26 September 2019

Latest review: 6 July 2023

Rated as 'Good' across all five categories.

Link to CQC report: <https://tinyurl.com/yc722h9r>

Environment

External

The practice is situated just off Field Road Bloxwich. The entrance is well signposted, and the car park is to the side of the building which for approximately 40 vehicles.

The outside of the building is well maintained with clear lighting and CCTV cameras in operation. There is also a ramp and handrail for assistance to enter the Health Centre.

Access to the building is by an automated door. On entering the building there are 3 three surgeries on the left and 3 on the right. This is also a site for one of the four 'Extra GP Appointments' locations in Walsall that also operate out of the same building. Walkways were clear with a large open space, with hand sanitisers located all around the building.

Internal

The practice is situated to the left of the main reception door, along with two other GP services. There are a combined five GP services in on building.

There is a main reception to the Health Centre which was clearly marked with good signage inside directing people to where they need to be.

We noted the following:

- 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 in two areas with seating for approximately 20 patients
- CCTV is in operation inside the building
- Patient notification/calling system for appointments
- There is adequate privacy for individuals
- Plenty of space in communal areas for wheelchair, mobility equipment and pushchairs
- Baby changing room situated in the waiting area
- There was clear signage around the building for toilets

- There are a patient notice boards in the waiting containing information including 'Extra GP Appointments' and the service complaints procedure
- The internal décor is well maintained and welcoming
- There is a hearing loop for patients in the initial reception area
- There are 2 wall mounted TVs in the waiting areas, which notifying people of their appointment time and room.
- We noticed a chair in the initial waiting room which was blocking the possible use of a fire extinguisher. This was reported to the Practice Manager and was promptly removed.
- There was a spillage of liquid outside the storage room. Again this was reported and promptly mopped up with a warning sign put in place.

Access to Services

Access to the services and appointments can be made by telephone, walk-in services and calling NHS 111. There is also a choice of booking via 'Accurx', an online option to 'self book' available appointments. There is also a hearing loop available for patients and the practice also offers a text message service for patients.

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

The practice has just over 5,000 patients registered from the local community, supported by a number of GP, Nursing and administration staff.

There is room for wheelchair and mobility equipment and pushchair access. There is plenty of seating available.

Patient information available

There was a patient information board in the reception area as well as posters displayed containing information about the practice and local information, including services regarding the practice as well as in the local area, such things as a carers board, healthy lifestyles, a general notice board, complaints procedure, Extra GP Appointments.

There is a Patient Participation Group (PPG) board showing information including details of the last meeting

When noted that an information poster for carers was out of date as a new organisation was now supporting carers in Walsall and not Walsall Carers as the poster suggested.

Patient/relative interviews & responses

We spoke to 17 patients and collated almost all 17 patients experiences and views during the visit. 1 patient did not fully complete the questions as they went into their appointment and could not stay after it.

We asked 17 Patients how often they sought to make contact with the practice?

The responses were:

- 9 - as and when medical help needed
- 4 - ranges from once a month to every 6 months
- 1 - every month
- 2 - not very often approx. once a year
- 1 - first time in ages

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

The responses were:

- 16 patients we spoke to said Initially telephone the surgery, online system/walk in
- 1 person said they do so via the surgery website

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

The responses were:

- 11 - yes
- 5 - no
- 1 - never had to

It appears that the majority of patients are always offered alternative care, which may include attending the Urgent and Emergency Care Centre or to contact NHS 111. This information is given to the patient either verbally from staff, text messaging or website.

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:

- 12 patients had heard/were aware of 'Extra GP Appointments'
- 5 patients were not aware of 'Extra GP Appointments' but were aware of WALDOC

We noted that there was a poster in one of the patient's waiting area for 'Extra GP Appointments'.

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

The responses were:

- 14 patients responded yes, they are listened to and overall are happy with the practice and the quality of care
- 2 patients indicated somewhat as 1 of the 2 patients had only recently joined, the other had been seen by a trainee GP so felt was inexperienced on how to listen
- 1 patient said they felt that were not listened to by the GP and felt rushed and not able to express needs.

With patients' comments:

“Very helpful”, “No issues”, “When you get to see the right person you are listened to”

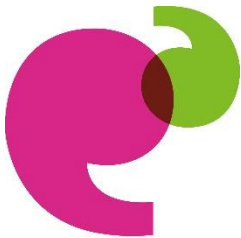
We asked what barriers do they face at the practice?

The responses were:

- 11 - no barriers
- 3 - parking was an issue sometimes
- 2 - length of time waiting/on hold on phone
- 1 - receptionist attitude asking invasive questions.

We asked patients for one positive and one negative about the surgery

Positive(s) highlighted by patients:



“Friendly when seen”

“Get an appointment”

Friendly, they are here to help”

“Everything, great friendly staff”

“Staff always help”

“Try very hard”

“Always helpful”

“2x Local”

“No issues with appointments”

“Always put your needs and support you”

“Can’t do enough for me”

“Quick, professional and friendly staff”

“Always try to get me an appointment”

Negative(s) highlighted by patients:

6 patients highlighted negatives surrounding the practice



"Messaging "

"Sometimes waiting for an appointment"

"Waiting times on phones long time"

"Car parking"

"Hard to access the info"

"Don't answer phone"

"Communication from receptionists' bit like rottweilers"

"Can take a while to get appointments"

6 patients had no negatives comments to share.

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

- 15 patients said that they receive majority by text messages, but some also get a call from the surgery
- 1 patient did not answer
- 1 patient said they need to update their contact details with the surgery

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

The responses were:

- 8 patients said they are given a choice
- 2 patients said they have never been offered a choice or been referred to hospital as not needed to be
- 1 patient felt that they are always referred to the Walsall Manor Hospital
- 5 patients answered no
- 1 patient did not answer

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

- 15 - yes
- 1 - somewhat, ***"Depends who you speak to"***
- 1 - did not complete the rest of questions

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

The responses were:

- 9 - understood how to raise a complaint and follow the complaints procedure
- 5 - did not understand how to raise a complaint
- 2 - would like to know
- 1 - did not complete the rest of questions

We signposted the 5 patients who did not understand how to raise a complaint to the notice board where the complaints procedure is visible.

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

The responses were:



“Would not change anything”

“Easier process than having to ring at 8 o’clock in morning and hoping to get seen”

“Bigger car park”

“Staff to call back patients as no call back service offered”

“Less waiting times”

“More appointments”

“The surgery to be open later”

“Telephone waiting times”

“4 patients stated that no changes were needed”

“Open earlier”

Staff interviews

We spoke to a senior member of staff and also the Practice Manager (PM) during the 2 individual meetings.

We asked if there was a Patient Participation Group/Reference Group (PPG/PRG)?

We were told there was a PPG which comprised of approximately 20 patients who meet approximately every 3 months. A ‘P.P/R.G.’ notice board contained last meeting notes.

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

We were told NHS 111,999, Extra GP appointments, A&E, walk in service at the hospital, patient notice board, website information, text message service to patients, email service for patients, information sharing with the pharmacy within the grounds next door.

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

Positives

- Having a sense of fulfilment of being able to help someone
- Love working part of the team
- Offer a range of services and also help advice with groups around local area

Negatives

- Unfortunately, we cannot get everyone in on the day the patients want appointments as they phone lines are very busy and there are more people than appointments
- Occasionally have problematic patients when they are unhappy
- Not enough car parking spaces

We asked if patients are given choice?

- Some staff can speak multiple languages
- Patients are offered choice if they are referred to hospital
- Hearing loop available for patients that use hearing aids
- Can offer telephone consultations

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

We were told that there is zero tolerance with anti-social behaviour and if staff come across this then patients receive a warning letter. If their behaviour continues patients are taken off the register and sent a final letter explaining this.

There are visible policies and procedures outlining this information on the patient notice board in the waiting area.

We asked how many telephone lines they have?

We were told that they have 3 lines and are currently going through the process of putting in a new telephone system to increase that.

We asked do they support patients who wish to raise and concern or make a complaint.

The Practice Manager also confirmed that they deal with the complaints in line with the complaint procedure accordingly:

- Practice has a complaints procedure / policy this was displayed on the general notice board and is visible
- Any further information to visit practice website for details. Offer to speak to Practice Manager.

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

- When patient triaged
- Practice website

We asked how does the practice update patients of any changes at the surgery or affecting their health care? We were told:

- Text messages
- Letters
- Website
- Emails
- Patient notice board

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

- More appointments for patients
- Better car parking access

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

- Have access to interpreting services
- A family member may come and speak with permission, on behalf of the patient
- There is a hearing loop in place

Practice Manager (PM) interview

We asked if there was a PPG/PRG and we were informed there is and that there are approximately twenty people signed up. Meetings are sort to be held every 3 months and there is a copy of information on patient notice board.

We were informed by the practice manager that there are no staff vacancies at present and that the practice maintains staffing requirements. Staffing below:

- 3 main GP partners
- 2 Advanced Nurse Practitioners
- 3 Pharmacists
- 1 Healthcare Assistant
- 1 Practice Nurse
- 1 Phlebotomist
- 6 ARRS (Physiotherapist, Pharmacists, Social Prescribers, Mental Health Nurse)
- 8 Receptionists and Call Takers
- 2 Administration Support Staff
- 1 Locum GP
- PPG is very active with 20 members. Meetings held quarterly.

We were told that some of the above staff can speak various languages to support patients clinical needs and assist in their treatment and ongoing care. Interpreters are available if available/needed.

We were also informed by the Practice Manager that patient demand for appointments is increasing and that they are currently in the process of changing their telephone system in order to meet patients' needs. This will inform patient where they are in a queue system and offer a call back service to patients.

Staff who work at the practice have a mix of practical (hands on) and online training regularly that includes mandatory training.

If there are is anti-social behaviour, patients are to receive a letter of warning and if the behaviour continues they receive a further letter stating that they have been removed from the patient list due to this.

The complaints procedure is displayed on the patient information board and is visible for patients, staff and also public.

We were told that there are 3 incoming/outgoing telephone lines to the surgery, which are operated by frontline reception/admin staff who can speak various languages and that the surgery is also implementing a new telephone system in which a call back service will be offered.

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 who can initially pick up the patient need and signpost to the best clinical person to meet their need.

Information and updates are available to patients such as any changes at the surgery. This can be by text messaging, website updates, patient information boards as well as emails which are sent out regularly. Staff may also speak to patients and there are the internal TV screens in the patient waiting area that can inform them.

When asked if they change one thing, the PM said that stated she wished for there to be more space in the car parking as this is raised as a patient issue sometimes.

We also had a general chat with the Practice Manager who highlighted that at present they are fully staffed with no vacancies.

Findings

1. Chair placed in front of fire extinguisher and spillage near storage room. Reported to the manager and actioned immediately and risks removed promptly
2. Patients appeared to be aware what was happening at their surgery as they received patient information from the surgery staff
3. Some patients said they had difficulty getting through on the phone and call back multiple times
4. Patients expressed the need for more appointments
5. Some patients felt that the waiting times on the phone in some cases due to the message was long
6. Patients identified that they are offered alternative treatment pathways and are given choice
7. Patients are very positive about how the staff try to meet their needs and feel supported

Recommendations

1. Monitor placement of chairs/equipment so that important safety equipment can be accessed more readily (monitor for any further spillages)
2. Monitor and check patient information boards to continue to ensure information is up to date/valid
3. Monitor the effects of the forthcoming NEW telephone system on patients contact

Provider Feedback

Registrar Doctors

We are a training practice; we have qualified doctors working at the practice as part of their work placements. They are fully qualified Doctors but are training to be a GP.

Waiting Area

We have asked our Receptionists to check the patient waiting area to ensure posters are up to date and have not fallen down. At the same time, they can check the seating and ensure there is no spillages. We believe the water found on the floor may have fallen from a patient's pushchair whilst waiting for a Clinician as it was raining outside.

Parking

We understand that the parking can be an issue at the centre. We have Asda next door to us; patients can use their car park for 2 hours. We also have the leisure centre opposite us, which has a free car park.

We have reported our concerns surrounding the car park to NHS Property Services. We hope that they can address our concerns soon.

New Phone System

On the 19th March 2024, we had a new phone system installed. Callers are now informed which position they are in the queue. They also have the option of a call back function so their phone will ring once they get to position 1 in the queue.

Receptionists

The Receptionists have received training on signposting patients to the most appropriate clinician or service. For them to do this, they need a brief reason for the patients call. Patients do not have to go into detail and they do not have to disclose if the reason is personal however, they may have to wait longer if they request an appointment with a certain clinician.

Share your health or care services experiences.

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



How to contact us

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