

ENTER AND VIEW REPORT



UMBRELLA MEDICAL
25TH OCTOBER 2024

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About Healthwatch

Your health and social care champion Healthwatch Walsall is your local health and social care champion. Across all the Borough, we make sure National Health Service (NHS) and Social Care leaders and other decision makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care.

Through our community engagement activities, data intelligence systems, enter and view programme and our Healthwatch Champions, we continually monitor service delivery through concerns raised, feedback received, and the Healthwatch Independent Strategic Advisory Board use this intelligence to inform and shape the Healthwatch priorities and activities.

We analyse service user feedback as well as a broad range of data sources to produce evidence and insight reports and information dashboards which can provide trends, statistical and performance analysis of services for use in monitoring and challenging service commissioning and provision.

What is Enter and View?

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/ nursing 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.

Introductions

Disclaimer

Please note that this report is related to findings and observations made during our visit made on the 25 October 2024. 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
Peter Allen – HwW staff, Authorised Representative
Loretta Higgins – HwW staff, Authorised Representative
Richard Jolly – HwW 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 our website and through our social media.

Provider details

Name of Service: Umbrella Medical
Address: Within Hatherton Medical Centre, 1 Hatherton St, Walsall, WS1 1AP
Telephone: 01922 620532
Website: <https://tinyurl.com/43byanst>
Service type: e.g. GP practice and medical services

The practice is located in Walsall and delivers services to twenty two thousand patients at present.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) information

Service registered on 23rd August 2024. New services are assessed to check they are likely to be safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led. An inspection has not yet taken place so no findings or reports are available.

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. 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 service: 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 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.

We approach waiting patients and ask if they wish to take part in a short questionnaire and note their answers. Not all patients completed our chat/questionnaire as they were called in to address their medical need. And did not return to complete the chat.

What we did

We arrived at the building at 9.00am before being introduced to the Walsall Locality Manager who gave us a tour of the patient/communal area in the building. Patients had a choice as to whether they wished to participate in our visit and questions. We used a pre-set list of questions/prompts and noted patient and staff responses.

In total we spoke to thirty seven patients, the Locality Manager and a receptionist staff member.

Environment

External

The practice is based in a shared with another GP service.

The outside of the building is relatively new and well maintained with external lighting/lamps and CCTV cameras in operation. There is a Pharmacy area which is not yet open on the site. The site has a large car park for approximately one hundred and fifty vehicles.

Entry is from two sides, from the car park and from the main pedestrian side opposite Walsall Council buildings. Entry is via automated double doors.

Internal

Once in the main reception foyer, Umbrella Medical is signed and near the car park entrance/exit doors.

We noted:

- Main reception was clearly signed
- There is an electronic self-check in unit at the practice reception with two receptionists
- Patients who have parked on the practice car park are expected to log in here also
- The patient reception/seating area was large and spread across four areas on two floors. The ground (entrance area) and a first floor area
- There is a lift to each floor and there handrails, children handrails on the stair areas
- Seating available for approximately up to one hundred and thirty patients
- CCTV is in operation inside the building (communal areas only)
- Good wheelchair/pushchair access for patients and families
- There was clear signage for toilets
- The internal décor is relatively new and maintained
- The furniture in the waiting area appeared clean and in good repair
- The flooring appeared very clean and maintained
- We noted there is a hearing loop in reception The hearing loop is shared between the two GP reception areas in this part of the building
- There are electronic display units (TVs) in the waiting areas that notified people of their appointment and which room to attend. This also gives patient information

Practice Services

A list of the services they offer can be found on their website, use this link: <https://www.umbrellamedical.co.uk/hatherton-medicalcentre/>

We were told that the practice has approximately twenty two thousand patients registered supported by a number of GPs, Nursing, and administration staff.

Access to services

Access to the services and appointments can be made by: telephone, Accurx (online appointment request system) 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.

Opening Times are:

Monday to Friday – 6.30 am to 9.00 pm and Saturday – 9.00 am to 5.00 pm

We noted from the service website that there is a new telephone system in place from March 2024. which states:

- There will no longer be an engaged tone. All calls will be placed in the queue.
- Call back facility to retain your position in the queue (for non-withheld numbers). There is no charge for the call back.
- Practice is able to put messages on the system immediately, so keeping patients more up to date.
- Call recording to protect our patients and healthcare professionals. We will also occasionally use recordings for staff training and quality control.
- Patients are advised to take time listen to the introductory messages when phoning the practice.

Patient information available

We observed three patient information boards in the waiting area with posters, leaflets and information regarding the practice services, a carers board, healthy choices lifestyles, etc. We could not readily find a copy of the practice complaints policy/procedure or how to access it.

This was a point we raised later, and a new copy was printed and displayed for patients.

Patient responses

We spoke to patients and collated thirty seven patient experiences and views during the visit. Some, patients did not fully complete the questionnaire process as they were called in for their appointment and did not return to us.

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

The responses were:

- 19 patients answered 'Only when needed to'
- 6 patients said about it ranged from monthly to 3 monthly
- 7 patients answered 'not often'
- 2 patients answered 'Quite often'
- 2 patients answered 'First time'
- 1 patient answered every week

We asked how they currently communicate with practice?

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

- 29 patients indicated that they call in by telephone
- 3 patients said online indicated that it was a mix of using the NHS App, NHS III
- 3 patients said that they walk in
- 2 patients said by text

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

The responses were:

- 28 patients indicated that they were given alternative care pathways/providers details
- 6 patients said no
- 1 patient answered that they couldn't remember
- 1 patient said that had not needed as they could get an appointment
- 1 patient did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

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

The responses were:

- 19 patient said that they had not heard of Extra GP Appointments
- 16 patients had heard of Extra GP Appointments
- 2 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

Note: Extra GP appointments may also be known as 'Out Of Hours' or 'Our Net'.

We signposted a small number of patients to the 'Extra GP Appointments' opportunity.

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

The responses were:

- 29 patients responded yes, they are listened to overall
- 4 patients told us 'Somewhat' "Depends on the Dr." Another said, "Back and forth, not much clarity"
- 2 patients responded no
- 2 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

We asked what barriers do they face at the practice?

The responses were:

- 25 patients indicated that they felt that there were no barriers.
- 5 patients said "Calls sometimes cut out", "Can't get through"
- 2 patients said "Waiting time for appointments, one said up to three weeks"
- 1 patient said "Can be hard to explain why I need to see a particular doctor"
- 1 patient said "Touch pad not reliable"
- 3 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

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

+ Positive comments



"Given appointment on same day"
"Staff are lovely"
"Really helpful"
"Every time ring I get an appointment"
"Much nicer environment"
"Ease of access"
"Staff very good"

- Negative Comments



"Not listened to"
"Better parking"
"Receptionists not helpful"
"Can't get through on phone"

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

The responses were:

- 26 patients said that they receive text messages.
- 3 patients said by phone.
- 1 patient said "Family deal with changes"
- 1 patient said by email
- 1 patient said I am not notified
- 5 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

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

The responses were:

- 13 patients said they are given a choice
- 10 patients said they had not been given a choice
- 5 patients said that they had not needed to be referred, not applicable
- 2 patients said they didn't know they had a choice
- 7 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

Patients had mostly attended the Walsall Manor Hospital for a varying range of needs.

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

The responses were:

- 27 patients responded Yes.
- 2 patients said no.
- 1 patient said sometimes
- 7 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

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

The responses were:

- 18 patients understood how to raise a complaint and follow the complaints procedure
- 10 patients did not
- 2 patients didn't and would like to know
- 7 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

A couple of patients said that hadn't needed to complain which may explain the lack of knowledge.

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

The responses were:

- 11 patients stated that no changes were needed
- 5 patients said long wait on phone
- 1 patient said sometimes felt overwhelmed, benefit from a private space
- 2 patients said car park arrangements
- 5 patients said waiting time for appointments (how long i.e. three weeks)
- 2 patients said "being able to see same doctor"
- 1 patient said would benefit from coffee machine and newspapers
- 1 patient said make complaints system easier
- 2 patients said more understanding receptionists
- 7 patients did not complete the questions as they were called in for their appointment

Whilst undertaking the Enter and View visit, on the ground floor patient waiting area, we heard a raised voice which was coming from one of the attending receptionists. We noted that a patient had approached the reception desk and asked about waiting times to see the doctor. They had broken English, they appeared to do this on several occasions, but the receptionist raised their voice and asked the person to sit down and wait. They informed the patient that the doctor was running late and they told the patient that they were early.

The receptionist then told the patient that they would be called when the doctor was available which was next. The exchange could be heard across the whole of patient waiting area.

Staff responses

Staff Member (Receptionist)

We asked how patients can get in touch?

We were told: Walk in, telephone, and online booking.

We asked how patients can get an appointment?

People can walk in, call 08:00 am till 18:30 pm.

We asked how the practice communicates with patients.

We were told: there is a fixed and a portable hearing loop. Also that they have access to various language and BSL interpreters.

We asked how they identify vulnerable patients or carers

Carers normally book over the phone and years of experience help to avoid issues.

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

We were told at present there is a PRG.

We asked if patients could see a male or female doctor?

We were told yes, they could. Might need to rebook or delay appointments as sometimes have only male doctors on duty.

We asked what training do they receive?

The training is generally E learning via Clarity with pop-up email reminders.

We asked if staff experience aggressive patient behaviour?

We were told that there is a zero tolerance policy. If it happened, a statement was made and sent to management for further action.

We asked the staff to highlight any positives about the practice?

+ Positives

- More GP's under one roof
- Larger and purpose built building
- Can offer more appointments

- Negatives

- Booking in machines are not totally reliable

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

We were told that there were leaflets explaining how to complain by email or in writing. Phone calls were referred to emails or writing in.

Deputy Group Practice Manager

There is what is called a 'Deputy Group Practice Manager' who we spoke to regarding the Umbrella Practice based in Hatherton Street. They also oversee the groups Locality Managers who are assigned to each practice across different venues.

There is Group Practice Manager/Managing Partner, for the whole of Umbrella Medical.

We asked how many patients do you have at present?

We were told: Around twenty two thousands patients. This is the combined patient list of the previous/formerly: Lichfield Street Surgery, Sycamore House and The Limes.

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

We were told:

- Walk in.
- Telephone.
- Accurx (online appointment request system)

For patients who are deaf or hard of hearing they have an email system. There is also a hearing loop in the building.

We asked how does the surgery/practice communicates with patients?

We were told: We do have interpreters and can use texts, letters, website, Facebook and paper hard copies to communicate with patients..

How do you identify vulnerable patients or carers?

We were told:

- Our system can identify/flag for Deaf/Blind and venerable patients.
- We have carer champions so that carers are included.
- Carers are sent info pack to help and are prioritized.

We asked if there is an active Patient Participation Group (P.R.G.)

We were told that there is, and it is made up of over twenty patients. They meet very two months.

We asked how do they gather patient feedback?

We were told:

Various surveys. On the day of our visit a member of the PRG was engaging with waiting patients and collating patient feedback. This is an ongoing task through out the year.

We asked what the staffing structure of the practice?

We were told:

- 7 GP partners
- 3 or 4 locums
- 1 Clinical Pharmacist
- 2 Advanced Nurses
- 3 Nurses
- 2 Health Care Assistants
- 1 Phlebotomist
- 3 Reception Managers
- 4 Location Managers
- 15 Receptionists /Call handlers
- 1 duty PM
- 1 group PM

We were told that there are two Receptionists roles at the time of our visit.

We asked if a patient can choose to see a Male or Female GP?

We were told: Yes there are both female and male doctors to see.

We asked what training staff receive?

We were told: Induction, statutory/mandatory online, shadowing on the job, clinical training and specialist are bought were appropriate.

We asked if staff suffer from aggressive patient behaviour?

We were told: The practice has a zero-tolerance policy that it abides by. Staff also receive conflict resolution training. There is CCTV and a panic button available.

We asked how do they make patients aware of how to make a complaint?

Try to resolve the issue on the day and or offer a leaflet that explains.

We could not readily locate a complaints policy/process online.

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

We were told: Educating patients about who may be the most appropriate clinician to deal with their medical need.

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

+ Positive

Facilities allow us to offer a wide range of services such as: ultrasound imaging.

- Negative

Patient expectations. The ongoing number of requests by patients around appointments have and are rising.

We asked if there was any future plans for the practice?

We were told: To fill the building with services for people to meet their needs

There is an extensive online list of support and health related information on the Umbrella website.

Link: <https://www.umbrellamedical.co.uk/health-information/>

Conclusion

From the responses collected, generally patients seem to be very happy with the services they receive. Good access to appointments was highlighted consistently by patients and that GPs were very good. Spending time and showing an interest in their patients' needs.

There were a small number of patients who expressed they had some difficulty getting access and to see or engage with the same GP.

However, as with many services the availability earlier and later in the day for an appointment for early workers was raised by a couple of patients.

This is a new facility and has combined a number of surgery patients under one roof.

Findings

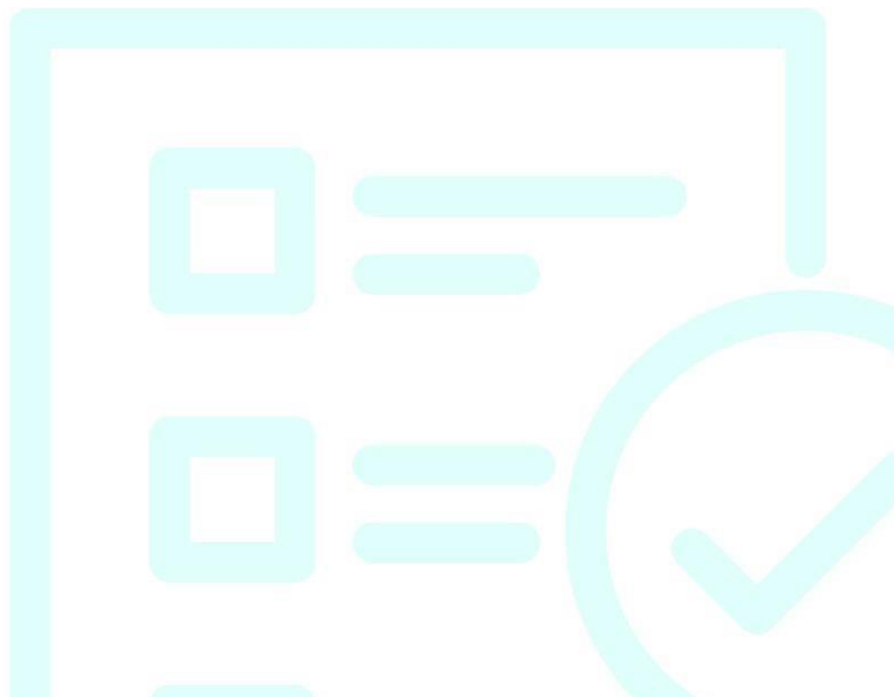
1. All areas were clean and tidy and had adequate seating for patients
2. There were at least three patient information areas, seen by HwW visitors
3. There is a hearing loop in place, signage seen by HwW visitors
4. There is a lift to all floors, working seen by HwW visitors
5. There are several electronic patient appointment GP/room notification displays, working, seen by HwW visitors
6. We were told that there is a patient flagging system in place for carers, deaf or blind and vulnerable patients that is actioned appropriately. i.e. if a blind patient, then staff would verbally tell them the GP was ready to see them and guide patient to appointment
7. Most patients spoken to were very happy with access to appointments
8. Some patients said they would like shorter wait times on the phone to book appointments
9. Patients felt that the Doctors were caring and attentive to their needs and would spend the time that they (patient) needed to be listened to
10. Complaints policy/process not readily identifiable or known by patients for differing reasons including never needed to know
11. The practice offers a range of services to meet patients' needs
12. There is a large patient/visitor car park with electric charging points
13. Patients with cars are required to book/register their car registration in order not to be fined

Recommendations

1. Resolve the booking in machine faults (already organised)
2. Help patients understand when best to ring to maximize access to services. if patients call for various reasons at the same time, not always to meet a medical need, then alternative times to call may be more suitable i.e. for sick notes
3. As there are a number of specialized clinical professionals, that can meet a range of patients conditions or needs. It is important to educate/signpost patients to the best care pathways/professionals to suit their need(s)
4. Assess patient accessibility to complaints policy/process and if necessary, improve. Assessment could be included as part of own patient survey.

Provider Feedback

The provider gave the following comments: Fine with that statement and also findings.



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>

Find us and our reports on our Social Media platforms



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YouTube: Healthwatch Walsall 2020



We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we perform an in depth audit so that we can be certain of this.

How to contact us

Office:
Blakenall Village Centre
79 Thames Road
Blakenall
Walsall
WS3 1LZ

Tel: 0800 470 1660

Email: info@healthwatchwalsall.co.uk

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