

enter
and
view



**South Axholme Practice
Epworth Surgery
November 2015**

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What is Healthwatch North Lincolnshire?

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire is an independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public on health and social care. Healthwatch North Lincolnshire plays a role at both a national and local level, making sure the views of the public and service users are taken into account when reviewing service provision.

What is Enter & View?

The Health and Social Care Act allows representatives of local Healthwatch organisations to enter and view premises and carry out observations for the purpose of local Healthwatch activity. Visits can include hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter & View visits can take place where people tell us there is a problem with a service, but they can also happen when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well.

Disclaimer

This report is based on the perceptions shared by patients, carers and staff at the time of the visit and as such these views are not able to be checked for factual accuracy. Our report relates to a specific visit to the service at a particular point in time, and is not representative of all service users, only those who contributed. A key characteristic of the Healthwatch Enter and View report is that it is based on a lay perspective rather than an expert assessment of the care provided.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire would like to thank the surgery, the staff, patients and carers for their contribution to the Enter & View programme.

Service Details

Name and Address	South Axholme Practice 60-62 High Street Epworth DN9 1EP
Type of Service	General Practice
Practice Manager	Tracey Carter
Latest CQC Report	23 April 2015 – Overall rating ‘requires improvement’

Date of visit 26th November 2015

Authorised Representatives

Healthwatch North Lincolnshire authorised representatives carry out visits to health and social care services to meet patients, staff and carers and hear their views. The following authorised Healthwatch North Lincolnshire Enter and View representatives carried out this visit:

- Amie Carlyle
- Linda Byrne

Purpose of the visit

- To gather feedback from patients about their experience of using Epworth Surgery asking specifically about making an appointment and their overall experience of the service (good and bad).
- To find out if patients have any suggestions for improving the service provided at Epworth Surgery.

Methodology

On arrival, Healthwatch representatives were greeted by a member of practice staff and then spent around 2 hours in the waiting room talking to patients and carers who agreed to be interviewed. Observations were made about the surgery environment including provision of information and physical access to the building.

Findings

The surgery environment

Healthwatch representatives spoke with 8 members of the public during the visit.

The surgery was located on a high street and signage on the building displaying the surgery name was not considered to be prominent enough. The interior of the surgery waiting area appeared in need of refreshment. Although there was one disabled parking space on street, all other surgery parking was for practice staff. There was no provision for electronic sign in for appointments at this surgery.

Privacy was provided if needed and there was a sign at reception informing patients of a private room. However, the small size of the waiting room makes it possible for people to hear private conversations and there was no background noise to mask this such as a radio. There was nothing to indicate that a hearing loop is provided for those with hearing impairment.

There was some written information and advice available, although this was limited and the source and date of the information was not clear. The latest CQC report was displayed.

Awareness of procedure for booking appointments

Three patients felt their experience of booking an appointment at the surgery was 'average' or 'poor'. One person felt it was excellent and the remaining four said it was a 'good' experience. None of those spoken to were aware that you could book appointments online for this practice, although four people said they would prefer this method for booking a routine appointment. All of those spoken to said telephoning was their preferred method for booking an urgent appointment. The majority of those spoken to, 86%, said they would telephone as soon as the surgery opens, and although none of those spoken to said they had to redial the last time they phoned for an appointment, 3 people had waited on the phone between 5 to 10 minutes before they got through.

What happens if you are unable to book a suitable appointment?

Reception staff were thought to be 'extremely helpful' by 57% of those spoken to, whilst an additional 43% said they were 'quite helpful'. If an appointment was not available at a time to suit the patient, 33% said they would call again another day. Two patients would take what was offered, therefore making adjustments to their day.

Online booking

None of the patients spoken to had used online appointment booking at this practice. Five patients did not know this was available and one said they hadn't registered for it.

<i>I prefer to phone.</i>

Opening hours

All of those spoken to were satisfied or very satisfied with the opening hours of the surgery'.

Recommendations

Overall, it is important to share with staff the positive feedback from patients and visitors following this Enter and View visit, and to celebrate the areas of good practice identified in this report. The following recommendations for improvement are based on the findings of the visit on the day:

- To consider ways to further promote the use of the online booking system, through information displayed in the practice and communications with patients and carers. The experiences of those who have been happy with booking online could be shared in a practice newsletter, as could details of how the system works (e.g. how appointment slots are released).
- To consider clearer signage on the exterior of the building.
- To provide clearer information within the surgery about practice staff, their roles and the existence of the PPG.

Response from Practice

In response to the points raised I would like to respond as follows:

- The online booking system was recently been re-launched (January 2016) to promote its better use by:
 - improved posters in patient waiting areas and on the practice website
 - added as a tick box option on Registration Forms for new patients registering with the practice
 - a proactive approach by Reception staff when patients come in to surgery.
- It would be inappropriate to share the experiences of individual patients without breaching patient confidentiality. However, the practice could encourage patients to share their views on our Patient Participation Group Online Forum should they wish to do so. Details on how to register with the forum is detailed on our practice website. Additional notices encouraging patients to share their views re online booking will be placed in waiting areas and online.
- Clearer signage to the exterior of the building – could you please provide further details on what type of signage? Are you referring to the surgery name or more detailed information?
- Information regarding the practice organisation structure was something that was highlighted in our CQC report as would be useful to display to patients. This is

currently being prepared and will be displayed in waiting areas at all 5 practice sites shortly.

- I will discuss what information the practice PPG would like to display in surgeries with the group at our next meeting.

Practice Manager
South Axholme Practice



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