

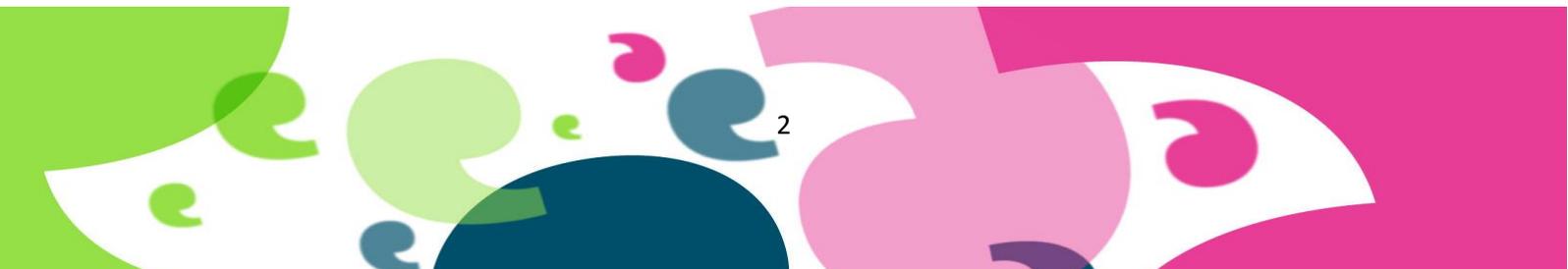


**Roseberry Practice  
Enter and View Report  
February 2017**

<b>Date of Enter and View:</b> Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2017	<b>Opening Hours:</b> Monday 8am - 8pm Tuesday 8am - 6pm Wednesday 8am - 1pm / 2pm-6pm Thursday 8am - 6pm Friday 8am - 6pm Saturday 8.30am - 12noon Closed Sunday
<b>Practice Manager:</b> Alison Cain	
<b>Current Number of Patients Registered:</b> 8,500	
<b>Practice Contact Details:</b> The Roseberry Practice Abbey Health Centre Finchale Avenue Billingham TS23 2DG 01642 552700	

<b>Number of GPs</b>	2
<b>Number of Practice Nurses</b>	2
<b>Number of Nurse Practitioners</b>	2
<b>Number of Healthcare Assistants</b>	1
<b>Number of Receptionists</b>	6

<b>Services Provided / Specialised Clinics:</b> Phlebotomy General medical services Maternity services ante-natal and post-natal care Child health surveillance Childhood Immunisations Heart disease management and healthy heart checks Diabetes management Health/well person checks Travel vaccinations and advice Rheumatology management Contraception and sexual health, including IUD and implant procedures Minor Surgery Asthma management Stopping smoking advice Weight management Support and information for carers
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### Introduction

#### Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees

Local Healthwatches have been set up across England to create a strong, independent consumer champion with the aim to:



- Strengthen the collective voice of citizens and communities in influencing local health and social care services to better meet their needs.
- Support people to find the right health and social care services for them by providing appropriate information, advice and signposting.

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees works with local people, patients, service users, carers, community groups, organisations, service providers and commissioners to get the best out of local health and social care services. This doesn't just mean improving services today but influencing and shaping services to meet the needs of the local communities tomorrow.

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees is steered by a Board of volunteers, commissioned by the Local Authority and accountable to the public. Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees are the only non-statutory body whose sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak-out on their behalf.

#### **Healthwatch has:**

- The statutory right to be listened to; Providers and commissioners must respond to Healthwatch within 20 days of submission of requests for information or reports.
- The statutory power to Enter & View publicly funded health and social care services.
- A statutory seat on the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## What is Enter & View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter & View visits. Enter & View visits are conducted by a small team of trained volunteers, who are prepared as 'Authorised Representatives' they conduct visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement or capture best practice which can be shared.

Enter & View is the opportunity for Local Healthwatch's to:

- Enter publicly funded health and social care premises to see and hear first-hand experiences about the service.
- Observe how the service is delivered, often by using a themed approach.
- Collect the views of service users (patients and residents) at the point of service delivery.
- Collect the views of carers and relatives.
- Observe the nature and quality of services.
- Collect evidence-based feedback.
- Report to providers, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Local Authorities, Commissioners, Healthwatch England and other relevant partners.

Enter & View visits are carried out as 'announced visits' where arrangements are made between the Healthwatch team and the service provider, or if certain circumstances dictate, an 'unannounced' visit can take place.

Enter & View visits are carried out if people tell us there is a problem with a service, they can also be undertaken 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.

## Roseberry Practice

Roseberry Practice serves the whole of Billingham as well as its surrounding area and is located in Abbey Health Centre, a modern building which is situated approximately 143 meters from the town centre in Billingham. Dr Rasool's Practice and Marsh House Medical Practice are also located within the Abbey Health Centre. A pharmacy is located conveniently within the Abbey Health Centre and has the added value for patients using the centre of a 'drive through pharmacy'.

Roseberry Practice's Mission Statement:

"To provide a high quality of patient care by striving to reach the highest possible standards of professional practice whilst balancing needs of patients and practice."

## Rationale and Purpose of the Visit

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees have gathered information from members of the public via their information and signposting service and have been made aware of several issues regarding patient experience at Roseberry Practice.

Some of the information received by Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees included complaints about no male GP's employed at the practice and difficulty accessing the practice by telephone.

## Aim:

- To carry out an Enter and View to gather further patient and staff feedback regarding access to services at Roseberry Practice to determine if any recommendations can be made to improve patient experience.

## Objectives:

- Arrange a meeting with the Practice Manager to gather background information about Roseberry Practice.
- Carry out an Enter and View at the Roseberry Practice site.
- Analyse results to determine issues arising and common themes.
- Feedback information gathered to Roseberry Practice with suggested recommendations to help improve patient experience.

## Methodology

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees planned an 'announced visit' at Roseberry Practice. Before the visit was carried out, Healthwatch contacted the Practice Manager informing them of the date and time of the planned visit. Healthwatch also arranged a meeting with the Practice Manager to discuss reasons why an Enter and View had been planned, which gave the practice the opportunity to provide background information about patient access to appointments and recent changes to the practice, which could have impacted on service provision.

In preparation for the visit, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees designed a structure for the visit and a questionnaire to complete with staff and patients attending the practice during the Enter and View period. A copy of these questionnaires can be found in the Appendices. (Appendix 1 and 2)

**Results** \*Text in pink are actual quotes from patients and staff.

### Feedback from Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees' meeting with the Practice Manager

The meeting with the Practice Manager informed Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees of the issues which the practice is currently experiencing which are detailed below. The Practice Manager welcomed the visit and the opportunity to feedback the increasing volume of complaints the practice is receiving, and the pressures the practice is under with a reduction in GP's working there currently. It was explained to Healthwatch that there is a difficulty in recruiting GP's to the area. Roseberry Practice shares its site with Marsh House Medical Practice who have been supportive in sharing resources.

The Practice Manager is pleased to report that they have two male GP's starting in March 2017, which will ease the pressure however, the practice will still be below staffing levels experienced a number of years ago when they had 4.5 GP's for approximately 8.5 thousand patients. Recently, the practice operated with only one GP and the same number of registered patients. They applied to close their list to avoid an increase in patients registering, however this was initially denied although more recently it was agreed for a sixth month period. This will alleviate the pressure a little until the new male GP's are in post. An added pressure is that the Nurse Practitioners don't see anyone with depression or antenatal, as they are not trained in these areas. With extended opening hours on an evening and weekends at the practice, it was explained to Healthwatch that the GP's quality of life is poor due to increased administered workload.

The Practice Manager explained to Healthwatch that the crisis the practice has been under was predicted and reported to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) last year and the outcome could be the closure of the practice if recruitment of GP's was unsuccessful.

Despite the pressures of reduced resources, the practice was pleased to receive it's latest CQC rating of 'Good'. The Practice Manager informed Healthwatch they always put patient safety first.

The Practice Manager also informed Healthwatch she feels the staff have done a great job in ensuring the practice does not close and is surprised there has not been more sickness due to the pressure they are under. She further reported that abuse from patients is common. There are currently six front line reception staff, of which four start at 8am. It was explained to Healthwatch that although this is a busy period, the practice do not have the funds to have more reception cover at that time of day.

The practice operates an on-line appointment booking system, of which just under the target of 10% of patients at Roseberry Practice access.

Healthwatch were informed that the patient's attending the practice's PPG group had fed back that they would like a different type of phone system to the one that was in use at the time. That system was holding patients in a queue; some patients objected to remaining on hold due to the cost. The practice acknowledged this feedback and changed the system to one that directed patients to the area they needed to be. For example for

prescriptions or appointments etc. The practice conducted a survey to gather patient feedback on the new system. It was found that patients did not like this system and wanted to revert to the engaged tone system, if the lines were busy.

As a result of the volume of calls, phone lines have been transferred to the administration team during busy periods.

Roseberry Practice does not use a 'Doctor First' system, they use a mix of telephone and face to face appointment systems. The practice book on-the-day appointments to minimise patients not turning up for appointments and avoid a several week wait for appointments. Receptionists try to get as much information from the patient to determine if a Nurse Practitioner, GP face-to-face or telephone appointment is needed. If the patient does not wish to disclose their illness to the reception staff, a note is put on the system to flag this and a doctor will then call the patient back to determine the urgency and triage appropriately.

The practice is currently reverting to the previous system for managing incoming calls, and have advertised this in the waiting area and on their website. The following extract is taken from the website;

*'We would like to apologise for the difficulty in getting through to the practice on the telephone, we are experiencing high volume of calls and if possible please can you leave non-urgent requests until after 10am. We are reviewing a new telephone system to improve the situation'*

It was explained to Healthwatch that the practice does not refer to walk-in centres to alleviate the pressure from patients. Locally, practices are not encouraged to do this. As 111 services signpost to both Roseberry Practice and the walk-in centres, the Practice Manager has asked the 111 service to give information to the practice on their criteria for signposting.

Healthwatch were informed that complaints currently received directly to the practice are about patient access by telephone and not being able to see a GP. These have increased to 8 / 9 per week. The Practice Manager follows up all complaints with a one to one conversation with patients and informed Healthwatch that most patients are understanding once the situation is explained to them.

## Healthwatch Observations

During the Enter and View visit, Healthwatch made numerous observations at Roseberry Practice.

Observation	Yes	No	Comments
Wheelchair / Pushchair accessible?	x		Access to the building is gained through automatic sliding doors.
Electronic self check-in in waiting room?	x		This was out of order at the time of Healthwatch's visit to the practice
Is there confidentiality / privacy at reception?	x		The seated area for patients is a suitable distance away from reception which provides privacy. There is a sign encouraging patients to wait behind it, to queue to be seen, which is also a suitable distance from reception.
Is there a call system for appointments?	x		A patient call and information screen in the waiting area is easily seen by all.
Is online booking advertised?	x		There is an online appointment booking system that is advertised on the website, but no signs in the waiting room.
Is the waiting room child friendly?	x		There is a separate area for children with toys, but no seating.
Are there clear notice boards with up to date information?	x	x	Notices at reception are clear and concise. While some notices throughout the waiting area are easily visible others would benefit from being larger.
Are translation services available? Are they advertised?			Staff didn't know if there was a translation service. No service was advertised in the waiting room.
Is there a comments / complaints box?		x	There is currently no comments/complaints box available.
Is there a Patient Participation Group? Is this advertised?		x	There is currently no PPG at the practice. The receptionist wasn't aware of what it was. The last PPG report featured on the website was from 2015.
Are the names and photographs of the GP / Nurses / Reception staff displayed?	x		There are pictures of the 2 GPs and the Nurse Practitioner, but no photos of other staff.
Is the website displaying up to date information?		x	Not up to date. Dr Varze's information is missing.
Is there a text reminder service?		x	There was a text reminder service but this was taken off due to faults. There is no information regarding this service (or that they are experiencing a fault) on the website or in the surgery.

## Observations

Healthwatch conducted the Enter and View; arriving at 8am to observe the waiting area. The environment was found to be bright and spacious with early morning surgery underway. This started at 7.30am with Nurse Practitioner consultations.

The environment was calm and relaxing with music playing at low volume. Adequate seating in the waiting area was clean and well cared for. Healthwatch noted that telephones were not heard ringing in the reception area, which added to the calming environment.

The doors opened at 8am for patients wishing to speak to reception staff or check in for their appointments. Reception staff were observed greeting all patients throughout the day, in a friendly and professional manner.

Throughout the day Healthwatch observed the reception and administrative staff keeping the waiting area clean, tidy and safe.

Reception has a clear sign stating 'WAIT HERE' positioned at a suitable distance from the reception area, which offers privacy for patients to speak to reception staff and check in for their appointments. Healthwatch observed the self-service check in which is suitably located for patients. However, it was not in operation during Healthwatch's visit with an 'Out of Order' sign attached to it. Healthwatch observed a patient with mobility problems waiting in the queue to speak to a member of the reception team. A chair was positioned for the patient's comfort, and available portable chairs which could be used for this purpose, positioned in a suitable location and proximity to the reception desk.

Healthwatch observed the queue at reception, throughout the day, did not exceed 4 people waiting at any one time.

Patients waiting to be called for their consultation can observe the calling system which is easily visible from all seats in the waiting area. This is also a tool for basic information sharing such as the on-line services and self service check in, advertising when the practice will be closed for staff training and a polite notice regarding cancellation of appointments. Other messages included 'Do you want to stop smoking? Make an appointment with our Practice Nurse' and 'Please advise reception of an up-to-date phone number'.

The waiting area also has a play area for younger children and a convenient area for pushchairs to be parked. Antibacterial gel is available and located at the reception desk and on a wall in a central area. Healthwatch found the toilets to be clean, well stocked and on ground floor level with easy access for all. The repeat prescription box is in a suitable location and clearly labelled although Healthwatch noted it is not within a comfortable reach for wheelchair users. Healthwatch noted that there wasn't a clock in the waiting area.

Notices at reception inform patients of a variety of things including, how to register and the requirements for the on-line booking system, the appointment of two new male GP's to start in March 2017, and a notice apologising and informing of the high volume of calls, asking patients to leave non-urgent enquiries until after 10am.

A notice board is located facing the seating area in the waiting room and directly below the lighted calling system. The board advertises a number of pieces of information which educate the patient. Information includes a 'Who can I see' chart which outlines which clinician can deal with what ailments. This is displayed on two pages of A4 and not easily visible, with wires crossing the front of the notice.

There is also extensive information clarifying the role of the Nurse Practitioner, a notice on 'Communication' and the 'Future.' It's not clear if this is the future of the role of the Nurse Practitioner. However, Healthwatch observed that these notices although informative, are not easily readable or creative in delivery. They also contain a number of references and acronyms.

Phlebotomy was closed on the day Healthwatch conducted the enter and view. Although there was a sign advertising this, patient's were confused and a number of patients came to that area to be seated for this service. Once the notice was pointed out by the Healthwatch team some patients informed Healthwatch that they didn't know it was not available on that day.

Staff pictures are located on a wall within the waiting area; these face the seating. The reduction in GP's at the Practice has meant that the pictures of those that have moved on have been taken down. However, the picture hooks are still in the wall which highlights the lack of GP's currently working at the Practice.

### Patient Feedback

Healthwatch supported 42 patients to complete questionnaires to gather feedback on their views and experiences of Roseberry Practice.

75% of those who completed the survey were attending the practice for a non-urgent appointment.

Patients were asked how easy it was to make an appointment at the practice; the following table shows the responses.

Answer choices	Number of patient responses	
Very easy	13	31 %
Easy	31	43 %
Relatively easy	5	12 %
Difficult	5	12 %
Very difficult	5	12 %

The majority of patients (77%) made their appointments by telephone, with the remaining patients informing that they made theirs at the reception desk.

72% of patients attending the appointment on the day Healthwatch visited, had booked the appointment on that day.

Healthwatch asked patients how they would rate the system for booking appointments, the table below shows the responses.

Answer choices	Number of patient responses	
Very good	8	20 %
Good	8	20 %
Acceptable	2	5 %
Poor	7	17.5 %
Very poor	11	27.5 %

Some patients chose to comment on the booking system; the following comments were received.

Negative comments:

“Can’t get through”

“Phone constantly engaged”

“Can take ½ hour to get through”

“Receptionists try and diagnose when they are not the GP”

“Prefer the old queuing system”

“Need more receptionists”

“You can’t book in advance, you have to book on the day”

“Have to explain to receptionist the nature of the illness, no privacy”

“Have to ring early at 8am to get an appointment and its not always guaranteed”

“Impossible to make an appointment in advance”

“Not everything is classed as an ‘emergency’ this doesn’t work for after school and non-emergency appointments”

“On hold for 45 minutes”

“I only ring up for help/advice today and was told to come and see a nurse immediately”

“Phone lines and can’t get through. It’s not actually getting the appointment, it’s getting through on the phone. Phone is constantly engaged, can take up to half hour to get through”

“Used to be a queuing system that would tell you where you were in the queue, you wouldn’t be constantly ringing for ½ hour or engaged”

“Constantly ringing”

“No answer machine”

“Have to keep hanging up and ringing back”

“Need more receptionists and phone lines”

Positive comments:

“Not hard to get through”

“Always happy with surgery”

“Accepting the pressures of the phone lines”

“Understanding they are busy”

“Prefer to make an appointment at the desk and never had a problem getting one”

“Never had a problem getting through on the phone”

“Dealt with straight away, rang in the morning for an appointment and got a call straight back”

“Consistently good”

“Spoke to Dr and she made me an appointment at once”

“Quite happy to wait”

“Better now than it was, Dr has to call you back”

“No answering the phone until they can speak to you is an excellent move, paying to be on hold and listen to music was annoying and expensive for patients”

“I don't mind waiting if the lines are busy”

58 % of patients stated that they did not ask to see a preferred, or male/female doctor, Patient comments given regarding this question are below.

“Whoever is available”

“Could not get an emergency appointment with any Dr because the receptionist perceived falling downstairs and badly injuring back and therefore being unable to walk properly was properly was NOT an emergency. Had to wait 5 hours to see a nurse. Admitted to hospital with a fractured vertebrae and slipped disk”

“Would prefer to see the Dr but usually is the nurse”

Patients were asked how long they had waited to be seen by the GP that day, once they were seated in the waiting area. 31 patients responded to this question; the results can be seen in the table below:

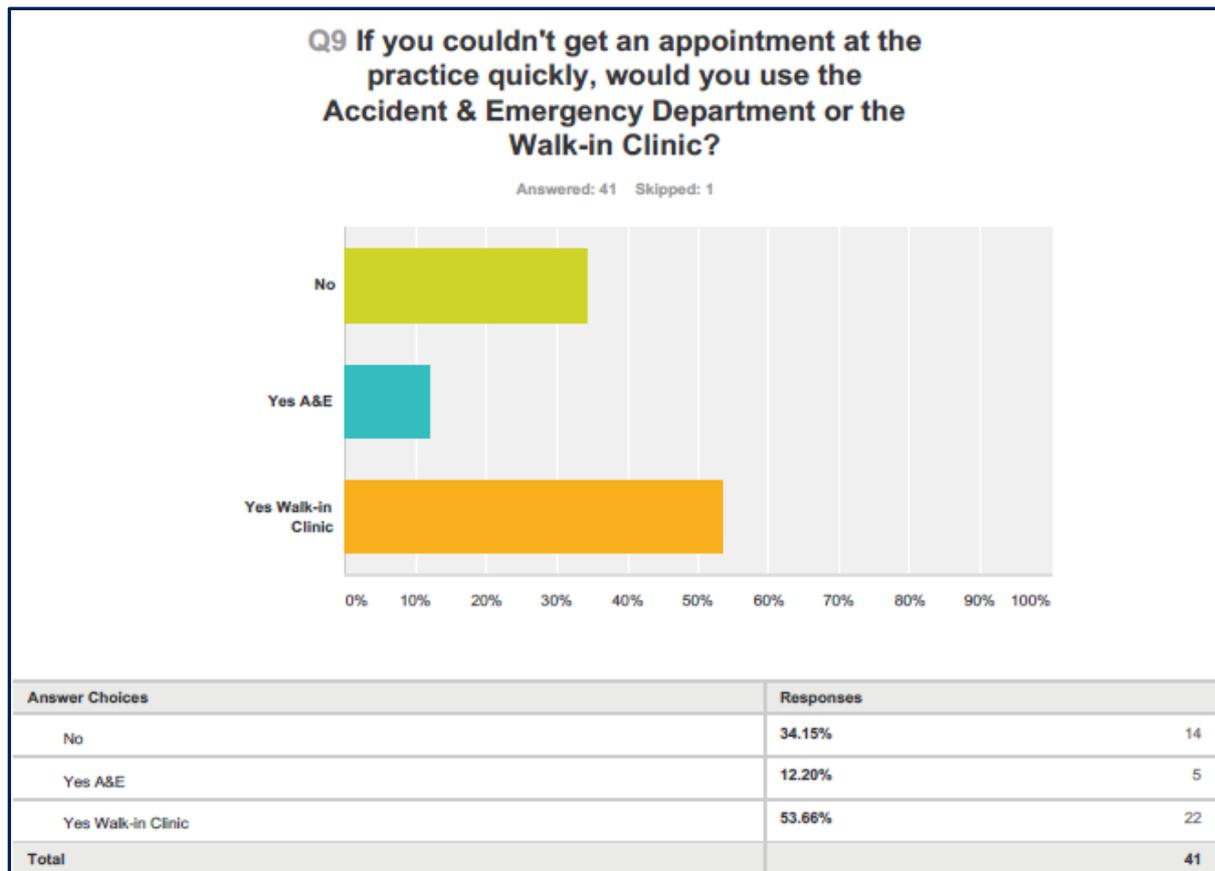
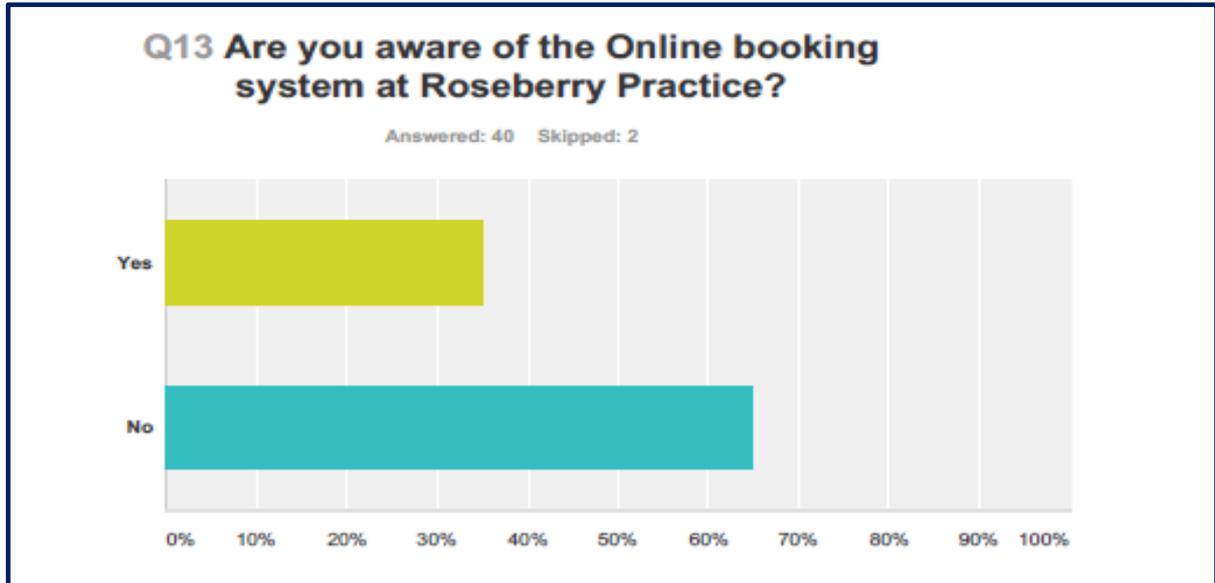
Time patients waited to be seen	Number of patients
Within 5 minutes	14
Within 15 minutes	11
15 - 30 minutes	3
30 - 45 minutes	1
45 minutes or more	2

Similar results were found when patients were asked how long they had waited to be seen by the Nurse Practitioner. 50% waited 5 minutes or less and 35% waited up to 15 minutes.

Healthwatch asked if patients were aware of the conditions the Nurse Practitioner can deal with and prescribe for; 58 % said 'Yes'.

In addition to completing a survey, one patient gave this additional feedback: They were very dissatisfied with the appointment booking method employed by the practice. "The telephone system is very frustrating, having to redial constantly for sometimes up to 2 hours" The patient felt that it was inappropriate to "hang on the phone in the morning" and to accept a 'call back' from a Doctor when they cannot accept personal calls at work. They also commented that they are unable to book an appointment online as it "does not work properly" This particular feedback was not uncommon and a regular feature when speaking to patients.

Roseberry Practice have an on-line booking system which is advertised on the practices website and is accessed by a link to the 'Patient Access' site. The charts below show how patient's responded to a question about the booking service (Q13) and if they would use an alternative service if they couldn't get an appointment quickly (Q9)



Healthwatch asked patients if they had previously used pharmacy services as an alternative to visiting the GP. The table below shows the responses:

Answer choices	Responses	
Yes	21	70%
No	6	20%
I wasn't aware I could ask for advice from the pharmacy	2	7%
I know I can ask for advice but prefer to be seen at Roseberry Practice	1	3%

Patients were asked what they liked about the practice. 38 patients answered this question and lots of positive feedback and praise was received regarding the practice staff. 25 patients commented on how polite and helpful the reception staff were. Comments included;

“Very pleasant staff; I usually works nights and sleep through the day but the staff are very accommodating in getting me an appointment.”

“Smashing! Dr M is especially good; she talks to you and not the computer! Reception staff very professional.”

“The staff are helpful under such difficult circumstances.”

2 patients responded positively regarding appointments. Their comments were;

“Don't wait too long for an appointment; all staff are helpful”

“You can always get an appointment on the same day, but not always with a GP”

Additional positive comments received are below:

“Nice building”

“Don't use it very often thankfully, but when I do I seem to get sorted quickly”

“Close to home, clean and tidy”

“Easy to park”

“Well organised”

“Female GPs”

“Like the layout, car parking is brilliant”

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees gathers data from feedback received from patients during engagement in the community, and from calls received to its Information and Signposting service. The following information is taken from this database.

One patient described his frustration in not being able to get through on the phone easily due to it “being constantly engaged”. The patient also had a number of complaints about the practice and highlighted that it had “gone downhill” in the last two years. He was unhappy there wasn’t a male GP.

Another patient informed Healthwatch that they felt there was a lack of privacy and confidentiality, as he was expected to explain his condition with lots of other patients stood around him.

### Feedback from the Receptionists

Healthwatch distributed questionnaires to reception staff, six responded.

Staff were asked to consider both non-urgent and emergency appointments when answering the following questions, below is a summary of the responses:

1. What is the process for taking appointment bookings at the practice?

Responses from staff were consistent in describing the appointment booking system, informing Healthwatch that patients can phone on the day they want the appointment, come down to the surgery or make an appointment on line.

Patients can call from 8am to book their appointment. When all routine appointment slots have gone for that day, anything urgent is directed to the ‘Duty Doctor’ who will call the patient back and invite them for an appointment if necessary.

If a patient rings late in the afternoon for routine appointments, staff explained they ask the patient to ring back the next morning so they can be accommodated. Pre-bookable appointments can be made to see the Nurse Practitioner. Early morning slots and on-line appointments are also available with the Nurse Practitioner in advance. GP’s do offer Saturday appointments and there is also late night opening once per week. These appointments are also bookable in advance.

2. What happens if the lines are busy?

Reception staff informed Healthwatch that the telephone lines are constantly busy. If the patient is unable to get through on the phone they hear the engaged tone. The previous system put patients in a queue. Some patients prefer to come down to the surgery to make their appointment; they may do this if they haven’t been able to get through on the phone. One member of staff commented “it’s not always the best scenario, especially for the elderly or families”.

If a patient phones the surgery later in the day with an urgent problem and there are no appointments available, staff will pass the details to the Duty Doctor who will call them back.

3. How is the answer machine managed?

Five members of staff responded to this question in the same way, stating that the answer machine is managed by an external source/IT department. One member of staff explained there was no answer service available for patients to leave a message.

4. Do any of the GP's get more requests for appointments and if so, how is this managed?

It is evident from all staff responses that there is one doctor who gets more requests for appointments. If that GP is fully booked, an alternative is offered. Staff commented that patients are either happy to see another GP or call back the following day.

5. Is there a time difference between the time a patient waits if they want to see a GP rather than a Nurse Practitioner?

Three staff members stated there was no difference in the time a patient would wait, two of which explained the daily appointment booking system with patients ringing in the morning to be seen. Two members of staff informed Healthwatch that there is a difference. There are more Nurse Practitioner appointments available, and they have the option of pre-booking with the Nurse Practitioner as well. One staff member felt the doctor or Nurse Practitioner running late impacts on the waiting time to book an appointment.

6. How do you make the appointment system accessible for those with additional needs?

Most staff members commented on the 'Type Talk' and 'Hearing Loop' systems which are available for those with hearing difficulties. Staff also suggested that the on-line booking system could be used for those with additional needs.

7. How do you think the waiting times can be reduced for patients making appointments to come to the surgery?

Staff responses varied with one staff member commenting "Not applicable Doctor First" and others highlighting that 'on the day' appointments are offered to save patients having to wait to be seen. One member of staff felt having more GP appointments available, and suggested the appointment of newly qualified GP's at foundation stage 2 (F2), and change the phone system to how it was previously set up to put patients in a queue was an option. Another member of staff informed Healthwatch that due to the shortage of GP's, there's a shortage of available appointments. However, having 2 new GP's partners starting soon should resolve the issue.

8. Once the patient is in the waiting room how long would they expect to wait before being called?

Four members of staff indicated that patients are seen within 15 minutes and two informed Healthwatch that if emergencies arise, delays may be likely. Another commented that patients may ask more questions in their consultation but had not asked for extra time to accommodate this.

9. Is there anything the practice could do to improve the appointment booking service, or any additional information you would like to share with us about the practice?

The majority of staff reported the appointment of two male GP's due to start at the practice in March would improve the availability of appointments for patients. One staff member commented "that will help so much with our appointments for patients" Three members of staff highlighted that the phone system is due to be changed and they hope this will help. Suggestions for improving were to have a handful of pre-bookable appointments on a morning and afternoon, possibly 2-3, and a stand-alone phone line for appointments was another option that staff felt could be considered.

10. Please tell us what your role is at Roseberry Practice, how long you have worked there and what you like and dislike about your role.

The reception team have a number of members who have worked at the practice for many years. All reported that they enjoy their work with one commenting;

"Staff are excellent to work with, we work well as a team"

The increase in demands on the service over the years was highlighted as well as patient demands increasing.

Some commented that they like helping patients, dealing with the general public and the rapport that has been built up with patients.

"The people I work with and helping people"

"Never feel unable to ask for help or support"

Responses also highlighted that reception staff suffer abusive behaviour from patients, the following comments were received regarding what they dislike about their role;

"Sometimes the way patients speak to us isn't too kind"

"We do get spoken to inappropriately more now"

"Getting shouted at off patients, being swore at down the phone"

"Being stressed out when there's no appointments with GP's"

"Dislike being spoken to inappropriately by our patients"

### Additional information

The NHS choices website operates a 1-5 star rating system for patients to rate and feedback on services. 26 comments have been added to this website relating to Roseberry Practice; 20 negative and 6 positive. Healthwatch noted that the timescale for these comments is from 2010 to 2017 and as yet the website is displaying that the 'practice have not responded to any of the feedback'.

A patient had commented through Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees' Information and Signposting service that they were not happy that the information about the practice on NHS choices as it was out of date.

Some comments shown on NHS choices website can be seen below;

“Telephone consultation works for me!”

Patient was very impressed with the telephone consultation system. They phoned early one morning and the doctor phoned straight back and quickly made an appointment that afternoon.

“Brilliant!”

Patient visited the surgery regularly over a few weeks for ongoing investigations and was “thoroughly impressed.” They found it easy to make an appointment. “The doctor is very caring and thorough, I couldn’t be happier with the service.”

“Terrible”

The patient suffers from depression and needs to be continually seen by a GP. They can’t get to see their own doctor and are “passed around” many different doctors. Patient doesn’t like the telephone system as “phoning takes forever to get through” and “cant book in advance.”

“Telephone consultation works for me!”

Patient was very impressed with the telephone consultation system. They phoned early one morning and the doctor phoned straight back and quickly made an appointment that afternoon.

“Brilliant!”

Patient visited the surgery regularly over a few weeks for ongoing investigations and was “thoroughly impressed.” They found it easy to make an appointment. “The doctor is very caring and thorough, I couldn’t be happier with the service.”

### Conclusion

Healthwatch were encouraged that the The Practice Manager was positive and welcomed an Enter and View being conducted at Roseberry Practice. The increasing pressure on the practice with reduction in GP’s and difficulty recruiting them to the practice is echoed across the Stockton Borough. The Practice Manager felt it was important to share information on the challenges the practice and staff have faced, particularly over the previous 18 months. Healthwatch welcomed the open and transparent approach which was offered in gathering information. The practice has managed to recruit two new GP’s who started in March 2017, although this will increase resources and appointment availability the practice will still be below previous staffing levels while managing the same amount of registered patients.

The commitment by the whole staff team to ensure the safety and service continues to meet appropriate standards is evidenced in the last Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection where the practice was rated as ‘Good’.

The practice have consulted patients with the aim to improve the service a number of times.

Patient choice has been considered and addressed with changes made, an example of this is the adjustments the practice has made to the phone system in an attempt to manage patient calls.

Roseberry Practice emanates a calm, relaxed and safe environment which meets patient need.

Despite negative feedback Healthwatch had gathered regarding waiting times before the Enter and View, on the day Healthwatch visited 74% of patients reported that they found it 'Very Easy' or 'Easy' to book an appointment and 77% did this by telephone however, when rating the system for booking appointments 45% rated the system 'poor' or 'very poor'.

It was brought to the attention of Healthwatch that 65% of patients Healthwatch spoke to were not aware of the on-line booking system.

Negative comments received highlighted the themes of not being able to get through on the phone and not being able to make an appointment in advance. Positive feedback highlighted some patients are accepting of the pressures the practice is under and acknowledged the pleasant, helpful manner of the staff.

The Practice do not support signposting of patients to the walk in clinics however, 54% of patients asked said they would use this facility if they could not get an appointment at the practice.

70% of patients who completed the survey had used pharmacy services as an alternative to visiting the GP. This demonstrates the education of patients and a positive move towards patients looking for an alternative when ill, thereby alleviating some of the pressure on the practice.

Although some patients are happy that they can secure a 'same day' appointment some feel it a disadvantage that pre-bookable GP appointments are not widely available. The practice do offer pre bookable appointments on a Saturday and one later night per week. The demand for this is high, however, the results show that the majority of patients are satisfied with the current system.

The 'Duty Doctor' will be under increased pressure with this system in operation; when all available appointments have been taken, they are required to call the patient back. Patients could potentially abuse the system by failing to disclose information to the receptionists or by saying the appointment needed is "urgent;" they will indeed receive a call back. The practice promotes the services of the Nurse Practitioner, educating patients about the conditions they can prescribe for, and encouraging patients to make a pre-bookable appointment. This helps to alleviate the high demand for GP appointments.

Healthwatch gathered positive feedback from the reception team on how they feel about their role and working at Roseberry Practice which demonstrates the practice has the right people in the right roles. Feedback also highlighted the frontline team work to ensure a quality service is delivered consistently.

## References

- <http://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1>
- <http://www.theroseberrypractice.co.uk/540922273>
- <http://www.nhs.uk/Services/gp/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=45142>

## Recommendations

1. Healthwatch recommend Roseberry practice remove the hooks from the wall where previous staff members photographs were, and update this to reflect the full staff team currently in post to ensure all patients are aware of staffing levels and who is appointed to which roles.
2. It is recommended literature, posters and the advertising the practice's services and information are reviewed, to ensure good visibility and detail accurate information without jargon. In particular Healthwatch recommend the following be addressed:
  - The illuminated strip could advertise the text reminder and on-line booking service to support the management of appointment bookings and attendance for consultations.
  - The phlebotomy service poster informing of opening times could be larger to enable increased visibility.
  - The poster advertising the on-line booking and prescription service in the waiting area could be larger. These services are not clearly visible or accessible on the website, Healthwatch recommends this is addressed.
  - The 'Who should I see' poster could be larger in size and it is suggested this is formatted in a more visually attractive way. It is suggested the wires are trailed away from the notice board and some of the literature removed which contains jargon.
  - The text on the poster describing the role of the Practice Nurse could be condensed, made larger and more colourful.
  - It is recommended that the Practice advertise the additional services they offer on their website, for example the phlebotomy service.
3. It would benefit patients if the NHS choices website was brought up-to-date to reflect current statistics and information regarding Roseberry Practice. The practice's website also needs updating to reflect current service provision.

4. Patient Participation Groups at GP practices have been a contractual requirement since April 2015. Healthwatch recommend that these are reinstated and advertised in the waiting area.
5. Healthwatch recommend the self service check-in facility is repaired.
6. Healthwatch recommend that translation services are available, advertised for patients and that staff made aware of this facility.
7. Healthwatch recommend that the text reminder service is more widely advertised for patients.
8. It is recommended the repeat prescription box is lowered to ensure accessibility for wheelchair users.

### Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to thank the Practice Manager and team at Roseberry Practice who were extremely accommodating, professional and cooperative during our visits.

Healthwatch would also like to thank the patients, their family, friends or carers who gave their time to provide information about their experiences of Roseberry Practice.

### Service provider's response

The Practice Manager has been given the opportunity to respond to the report and recommendations made by Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees, however, is yet to respond.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1 - Questionnaire for Patients

**21.02.2017 Enter & View**

**Roseberry Practice Patient Survey**

Male

Female

Child

Age.....

We welcome any additional information on the service provided by this practice, so please fill in the boxes if you would like to make any additional comments.

**1. What type of appointment are you attending today?**

Non-urgent

Emergency

**2. How easy was it to make an appointment at the practice?**

Very easy

Easy

Relatively easy

Difficult

Very difficult

**Please circle how you made the appointment**

By Phone

At the reception desk

Online

**3. How long did you wait for your appointment to visit the surgery?**

Booked today

1-2 days

3-7 days

7-10 days

10days -2 weeks

3 weeks

4 weeks or more

5 weeks

**4. How would you rate the system for booking appointments?**

Very good

Good

Acceptable

Poor

Very Poor

Please say why you have chosen your response



**10. Are you aware of the text reminder service the practice operates?**

Yes

No

**11. Are you aware that the practice has changed its phone lines to try to resolve any issues?**

Yes

No

Tell us what would improve this experience

**12. Have you used pharmacy services as an alternative to visiting the GP?**

Yes

No

I wasn't aware I could ask for advice from the pharmacy

I know I can ask for advice but prefer to be seen at Roseberry Practice

**13. Please tell us what you like about the practice**

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, your feedback is very important to us and can help shape improvements in the services you use.

The information you, other patients and staff have shared will be collated in to a report which will be shared at a later date on our website.

If you wish to share more of your views and experiences of health and social care services in your area then please get in touch using the contact details below. If you would like to become a member of Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees and find out more about the work we do then please fill in a membership form. See a member of the team today or you can complete the form on our website

**Website:** [www.healthwatchstockton.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchstockton.co.uk)

**Email:** [healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net)

**General telephone:** 01642 688312

**Information & Signposting query:** 08081729559

**Post:** Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees, Catalyst House, 27 Yarm Road, Stockton-on-Tees, TS18 3NJ

Appendix 2 - Questionnaire for reception and administration staff

**The Roseberry Practice – Enter and View 21.02.2017**

Receptionist Survey

Please consider both non-urgent and emergency appointments when answering the questions.

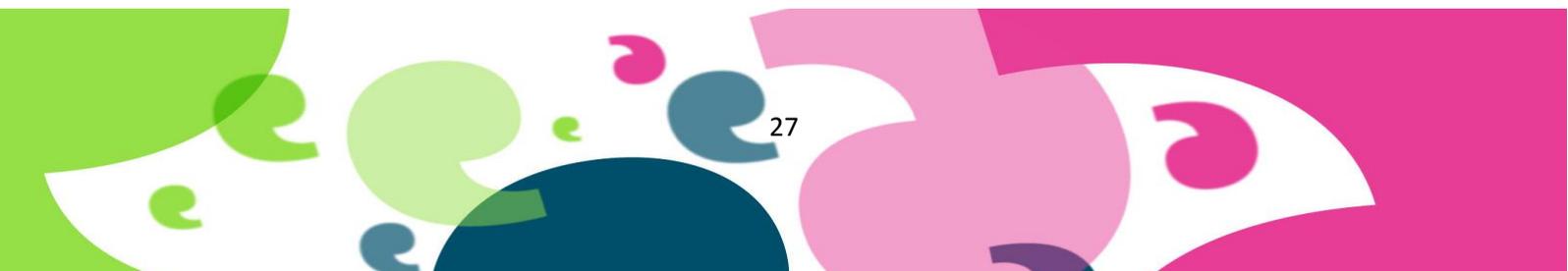
1. What is the process for taking appointment bookings at the practice?

2. What happens if the lines are busy?

3. How is the answer machine managed?

4. Do any of the GP's get more requests for appointments and if so, how is this managed?

5. Is there a difference between the time a patient waits if they want to see a GP rather than a Nurse Practitioner? please give details.

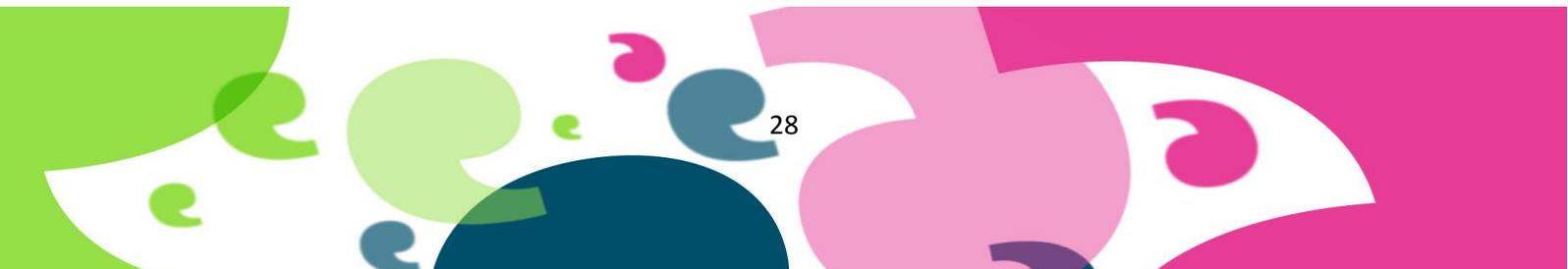


6. How do you make the appointment system accessible for people with additional needs?

7. How do you think the waiting times can be reduced for patients making appointments to come to the surgery?

8. Once the patient is in the waiting room how long would they expect to wait before being called?

5 minutes    5 – 15 minutes    15 – 30 minutes    30 - 45 minutes    more than 45 minutes.



9. Is there anything the practice could do to improve the appointment booking service or any additional information you would like to share with us about the practice?

10. Please tell us what your role is at Roseberry Practice, how long you have worked there and what you like and dislike about your role.

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, your feedback is very important to us and can help shape improvements in services.

If you wish to share more of your views and experiences of health and social care services in your area then please get in touch using the contact details below. If you would like to become a member of Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees and find out more about the work we do then please fill in a membership form. See a member of the team today or you can complete the form on our website

**Website:** [www.healthwatchstockton.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchstockton.co.uk)

**Email:** [healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net](mailto:healthwatchstockton@pcp.uk.net)

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