



**Yarm Medical Centre**  
**Enter and View Report**  
**May 2018**

## Introduction

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?**

Enter & View visits are conducted by a small team of trained volunteers, mainly accompanied by trained staff. The 'Authorised Representatives' conduct visits to any identified publicly-funded health or social care premises, to see and hear how people experience the service, and to observe the quality the service being provided. These visits enable Healthwatch to develop an understanding about the service and make recommendations for improvement. The visit also provides the opportunity to identify ways in which "best" practice can be shared.

An Enter & View is an opportunity for any Local Healthwatch 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, relatives and staff.
- Observe the nature and quality of services.
- Collect evidence-based feedback.
- Report to providers, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioners, Healthwatch England and other relevant partners.

**Enter & View is not an inspection, it offers an independent layperson's perspective.**

Enter & View visits are normally carried out as 'announced visits' where arrangements are made between the Healthwatch team and the service provider. However, if 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 but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation; therefore allowing us to learn about and share examples of what they do well, from the perspective of people who experience the services first hand.

### **Rationale**

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees attended Yarm Medical Centre's Patient Participation Group (PPG) to give a presentation about the role of Healthwatch and to gather feedback from the attendees. Healthwatch informed the PPG about the statutory powers it has and gave examples of some of the work which has been carried out over the past year. Following this meeting, the Practice Manager invited Healthwatch to the practice to carry out an Enter and View visit to gather patient feedback and identify any areas which may require improvement.

### **Aim**

- To carry out an Enter and View to gather patient and staff feedback regarding provision of services at Yarm Medical Centre and determine if any recommendations can be made to improve patient experience.

### **Objectives**

- Arrange a convenient date with the Practice Manager to carry out the Enter and View.
- Analyse results to determine issues arising and common themes.
- Feedback information gathered to Yarm Medical Centre with suggested recommendations (if required) to help improve patient experience.

**Methodology**

Healthwatch contacted the Practice Manager to agree a date and time for the planned visit. The Enter and View was carried out on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018 by two Healthwatch staff members and three Healthwatch volunteers.

Healthwatch designed a questionnaire for patients, family members and carers to complete during the visit. Healthwatch staff and volunteers spoke to patients in the waiting rooms prior to their appointments and supported them to complete the questionnaires. Healthwatch also distributed a questionnaire to staff members to gather additional feedback and made a number of observations during the visit.

\*A copy of the patient and staff questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.

**Results - Patient Feedback**

**\*Text in pink are direct quotes**

A total of 90 patients completed a questionnaire during the Enter and View visit, 63% of which were women. 50% of patients who complete the questionnaire had a long term health condition, 7% of patients were a carer and 6% stated that they had a disability.

The patients who completed the questionnaire were of the following age categories:

Age	Percentage of Patients
Under 16	3%
16 - 24	8%
25 - 44	25%
45 - 64	18%
65 - 79	30%
80+	16%

The results of the patient questionnaire are as follows:

**How easy is it to make an appointment at this practice?**

How easy is it to make an appointment?	Percentage of responses
Very easy	19%
Easy	21%
Relatively easy	39%
Difficult	19%
Very difficult	2%

How long did you wait to get your appointment today?

Length of wait	Percentage of responses
Booked today	55%
1-2 days	17%
3-7 days	16%
10 days - 2 weeks	10%
3 weeks	1%
4 weeks or more	0%

Do you use any of the following online services which you can access via the practice website?

Online Service	Percentage of responses
Order a prescription	41%
Access the appointment system	27%
Change personal details	11%
Sign up to the newsletter	14%
No / I did not know about these online services	51%

How would you rate the system for booking appointments?

Rating	Percentage of responses
Very good	25%
Good	36%
Acceptable	25%
Poor	13%
Very poor	1%

Did you use the electronic check in today?

Used electronic check-in?	Percentage of responses
Yes	67%
No	33%

Did you know about the Patient Participation Group?

Aware of PPG?	Percentage of responses
Yes	23%
No	77%

### Do you know the role of the Patient Participation Group?

Aware of role of PPG?	Percentage of responses
Yes	7%
No	93%

### How would you rate the staff at this practice?

Staff rating	Percentage of responses
Excellent	53%
Good	41%
Acceptable	6%
Poor	0%
Very poor	0%

### What do you like about this practice?

#### Practice Staff

Healthwatch received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback and praise for all staff working at Yarm Medical Centre. Out of the 90 patients Healthwatch spoke to over a third of patients commented about how approachable, friendly and helpful the staff are at the practice. This was inclusive of both the medical and reception staff.

‘The staff are caring, knowledgeable and act when required’

‘Lovely healthcare staff’

‘My GP is very friendly and approachable’

‘Doctor’s very friendly’

‘Been a patient here for many years have certain doctors that have spent getting to know the family & treat us to the best of their ability’

‘Good professional doctors and staff’

‘Friendly, helpful, willing to listen’

‘All the doctors are marvellous’

‘Very friendly approachable staff’

‘Friendly, helpful staff, great understanding Doctors’

#### Environment and Atmosphere

Healthwatch received a lot of comments about the environment and atmosphere at the practice. Patients described the practice as being clean and tidy with a pleasant atmosphere which has good accessibility.

‘Pleasant surroundings’

‘Modern and clean’

‘Clean, bright and cheerful’

‘It is comfortable when you are waiting for an appointment’

‘Accessibility, staff and cleanliness’

‘Nice friendly atmosphere’

‘Clean and tidy building / rooms’

‘Clean modern building’

### **Location of Practice**

A number of patients commented about the location of the practice and stated that it was close to their home address and that it was easy to access.

‘Close to home’

‘Not too far away from home’

‘Convenient’

‘Easy to get to’

‘Local and friendly’

### **Ease of Booking Appointments**

Healthwatch received positive comments from patients who said they found it easy to make an appointment which is something they particularly liked about the practice.

‘Ease of getting appointments’

‘Great when need to get the children seen’

‘If you ring early enough, you can get an appointment that day which I think is very important as a working mum’

‘You can usually get an appointment on the same day’

‘The ease of making appointments’

‘Easy to get an appointment if you ring early enough’

### **Additional Comments**

Healthwatch received good feedback around a number of other areas in the practice including; the availability of information, online services, opening hours and good overall quality of care.

‘Lots of information available and leaflets in practice’

‘Good opening hours’

‘I am a new patient, I am so far very impressed with the whole service I have received so far’

‘It runs smoothly’

‘I like the way you are directed to professionals other than GPs when relevant and feel confident with them’

‘Can book appointments online and order repeats online’

‘Been a patient here for many years have certain doctors that have spent getting to know the family & treat us to the best of their ability’

‘I have no dislikes about this practice. I rate it highly’

‘It is friendly, efficient. The best!’

### **How could your experience of the practice be improved?**

A large number of patients stated that they were currently happy with the service provision and they felt that no improvements were needed currently at the practice.

‘Haven't found any faults to date’

‘Happy as it is’

‘I have always have a good experience’

‘Been satisfied with the service’

A number of suggestions for improvements were also made by patients, family members and carers.

### **Parking Facilities**

A number of comments were received about the parking facilities at the practice. Patients highlighted their frustration with the limited spaces available at the practice and the problems they have experienced with the traffic light system.

‘Traffic light system can be problematic’

‘Need improved parking facilities’

‘Parking is sometimes difficult’

‘More parking spaces’

‘Parking could be better’

‘More parking availability’

‘Parking is a major problem’

‘Parking can be frustrating at certain times of day’

### **Telephone System**

Patients explained to Healthwatch that they often felt frustrated when trying to ring the practice for an appointment early in the mornings. Patients often experience the phone being engaged or being put on hold for a long period of time. Patients made a number of comments about the need for an improved telephone system.

‘Sometimes on hold for a long time if you telephone for an appointment’

‘Ringing for an appointment at 8:00am can be difficult as the phones are engaged’

‘It does get frustrating when you are hanging up and redialling’

‘Better access by telephone, especially every morning’

‘More phone lines in the mornings’

‘Better telephone communication system. One that works effectively and efficiently’

‘Process of phoning at 8am for an emergency appointment is very difficult.

‘The number of phone lines prevents even getting in a queue. Once in queue, wait is understandable.’

‘The phone in system is a nightmare’

### **Availability of Appointments**

A number of comments were received about the need for more appointments at shorter notice. Some patients felt that there was limited availability and that they often had to wait longer than anticipated to get an appointment.

‘More accurate appointments time to booking times’

‘Booking appointments could be made easier’

‘More appointments available’

‘Get appointments quicker’

‘Better appointment system’

‘Being able to get appointments more easily’

### **Consistency with GP Appointments**

Healthwatch received feedback from patients stating that their experience could be improved if they were able to see the same doctor each visit improving consistency of appointments.

‘I would prefer to see the same doctor each time’

‘If it was easier to get an appointment with the doctor you have been seeing over a period’

‘Should be easier to get an appointment with own doctor’

‘Just being able to see the same Doctor regularly’

‘It would be nice to see my own Doctor easier’

### Additional Comments

Additional comments with suggestions for improvements included:

‘When booking nurse appointment online it would be useful to know which nurses can offer which services?’

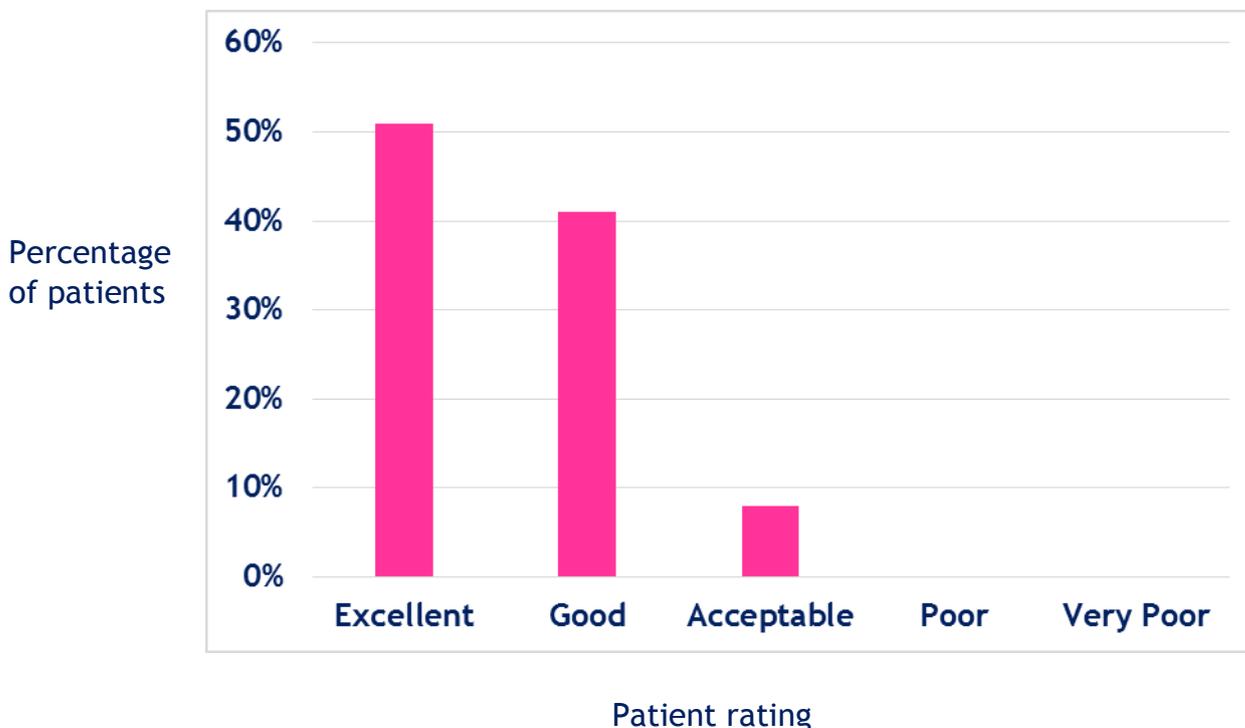
‘Books and toys for children’

‘When send automatic text appointment confirmation, please state which patient as we use one phone for the whole family’

‘Patients of toddler age should have appointments downstairs as the stairs are a risk for young children’

Overall, how would you rate Yarm Medical Practice?

Patient rating of Yarm Medical Practice



### Results - Staff Feedback

Healthwatch distributed approximately 20 questionnaires for staff to complete, however only two members of staff completed it.

Staff feedback highlighted that the practice often receive praise and compliments from patients. It was highlighted that the doctors and practice staff are regularly praised for the care and treatment and level of service they provide.

The staff commented about how much they enjoy working at the practice which has good staff morale amongst colleagues. The staff explained that they regularly look at ways to help improve patient experience and they feel that all their ideas are considered and acted upon appropriately.

### Healthwatch Observations

During the Enter and View visit, Healthwatch made the following observations:

Observation	Yes	No	Comments
Wheelchair / Pushchair accessible?	x		Access to the building is gained through automatic sliding doors. There is also a lift to the 1 <sup>st</sup> floor.
Electronic self check-in in waiting room?	x		Electronic self check-in is located at the entrance to the practice and was in good working order during our visit.
Is there confidentiality / privacy at reception?	x		The seated area for patients is a suitable distance away from reception which provides privacy. When patients queued at reception, there was a barrier in place which ensured people stood a good distance away from the reception desk so each patient had adequate privacy.
Is there a call system for appointments?	x		Patients were called to their appointment via a TV monitor in the waiting room which notified patient of the Dr / Nurses name and room number.
Are services available for patients online?	x		Yes, patients can access the following services online via the practice website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Order a prescription</li> <li>- Access appointment system</li> <li>- Cancel appointment</li> <li>- Update personal details</li> <li>- Complete patient survey</li> <li>- Sign up to newsletter</li> </ul>
Is the waiting room child friendly?	x		The waiting rooms are easily accessible for pushchairs and there is a box of children books available.

Are there clear notice boards with up to date information?	x		The practice has several notice boards with the following information displayed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Posters about sign and symptoms of cancer</li> <li>- Bank holiday dates and opening times</li> <li>- Walk-in Clinic poster</li> <li>- Social media information</li> <li>- Posters about measles and meningitis</li> <li>- Pregnancy information</li> <li>- Consent and confidentiality information</li> </ul>
Is there a Patient Participation Group? Is this advertised?	x	x	The practice does have a Patient Participation Group however there is no information advertised about it.
Is the website displaying up to date information?	x		There is up to date information about opening times, practice staff, news and contact details on the website.
Is there a text reminder service?	x		Patients are sent a text to confirm their appointment.
Is the practice clean and tidy?	x		Practice is clean, bright and tidy.

## Conclusion

During the Enter and View visit, Healthwatch were pleased with the overwhelming positive feedback received about Yarm Medical Centre. 40% of patients found it 'very easy' or 'easy' to make an appointment at the practice with only 11% of patients saying that they have to wait more than 10 days to get an appointment.

The practice staff including the doctors, nurses and reception team were all highly praised with 94% of patients Healthwatch spoke to rating the staff as 'excellent' or 'good'. Patients felt that all the staff at the practice were friendly, approachable and willing to help at all times.

Patients also gave positive feedback about the relaxed calm environment and facilities available at Yarm Medical Centre. The majority of patients were also happy with the central location of the practice.

Healthwatch staff and volunteers made a number of observations during the visit which highlighted that the practice is easily accessible, displaying up to date information, providing confidentiality and privacy at reception and is kept clean and tidy.

Although feedback about the practice was largely positive, a number of suggestions for improvement were made. These included; addressing problems

experienced with the telephone and appointment system, improved parking and better consistency for patients being able to see the same doctor regularly.

Overall, 92% of patients rated their experience of Yarm Medical Centre as 'good' or 'excellent'.

### **Recommendations**

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Following analysis of the feedback from the patient questionnaires, it was highlighted that 77% of patients did not know about the Patient Participation Group and 93% did not know its role at the practice. Healthwatch recommends that the practice promote the PPG within the practice on notice boards and the TV monitor to ensure patients have the opportunity to get involved and have their say if they wish to do so.
2. When patients were asked what they felt would improve their experience at the practice, patients expressed their frustration with the appointment booking and telephone system. Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees are aware that this is a widespread problem with a number of practices in the area however, would recommend that the practice reviews their appointment booking system to identify if there are any ways this could be improved.
3. Over 50% of patients did not know about the online services available or chose not to use them. Healthwatch recommends that the practice promotes these online services to patients to increase patient awareness and uptake to help reduce the pressures currently experienced on the telephone lines.

### **Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to thank the Practice Manager and team at Yarm Medical Centre who were extremely accommodating, professional and cooperative during our visit. Healthwatch would also like to thank the patients, their family, friends or carers who gave their time to provide information about their experiences of Yarm Medical Centre.

### Response from Yarm Medical Practice

Yarm Medical Practice welcomes the report and is delighted to see so many positive comments.

We understand the comments relating to the car parking facilities at the practice. Unfortunately the site we are on dictates the number of spaces permissible for use. We have made the most of the space by creating the upper deck parking (hence the traffic light system) but this is open to misuse. We would encourage patients who are able, to seek alternative transportation or use the spaces within this high street which is within walking distance of the practice building.

Our telephones are extremely busy, especially on a morning. As a practice we encourage patients to sign up for online services which would allow access to bookable appointments. We have also introduced 'sign-posting' in the practice which has allowed us to obtain information from patients about the reason for their request so we can advise them who would be most appropriate to see and we hope to develop this further. We appreciate that this will not sort problems overnight but we hope that patients will accept the advice regarding appropriateness of their requests. In addition we have recently updated our whole telephone system which allows us to give more information whilst facilitating the telephone call.

The practice encourages continuation of care with GP's and where possible will accommodate this. Some of our GP's do not work full-time therefore there are occasions when they are not available. Again, we hope that by developing care navigation skills, patients will see the appropriate clinician and this in turn will free up appointments with the GP.

The booking screens for online appointments allow minimal changes therefore additional information in relation to Practice Nurses is tricky to add. We have added some advisory information at the top of the screens and we are looking to develop this further as we appreciate that this can be frustrating.

Finally the practice has a fully functioning Patient participation Group but is keen for their work and participation to be advertised to the wider population. The practice has a regular newsletter (sent to patients who sign up via the website) but will encourage the PPG to make their presence felt.

Tara Rose  
Practice Manager  
Yarm Medical Practice  
1 Worsall Road,  
Yarm,  
Cleveland,  
TS15 9DD

Appendix 1 - Patient Questionnaire

## Yarm Medical Practice Patient Survey

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees recently attended Yarm Medical Practice's Patient Participation Group (PPG) and have been invited to the practice to conduct an Enter and View. An Enter and View gathers patient feedback to report on the service provision for patients.

Please take a few moments to tell us about your experiences at the practice. This information will help to inform and shape future service provision.

### 1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other

### 2. What is your age category?

- Under 16
- 16-24
- 25-44
- 45-64
- 65-79
- 80+

### 3. Please tick all that apply:

- I have a disability
- I am a carer
- I have a long term health condition
- Not Applicable

### 4. How easy is it to make an appointment at this practice?

- Very easy
- Easy
- Relatively easy
- Difficult
- Very difficult

**5. How long did you wait to get your appointment today?**

- Booked today
- 1-2 days
- 3-7 days
- 10 day - 2 weeks
- 3 weeks
- 4 weeks or more

**6. Do you use any of the following online services which you can access via the practice website?**

- Order a prescription
- Access the appointment system
- Change personal details
- Sign up to the newsletter
- I did not know about these online services

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

- Very good
- Good
- Acceptable
- Poor
- Very poor

**8. Did you use the electronic check in system today?**

- Yes
- No

**9. Did you know about the Patient Participation Group?**

- Yes
- No

**10. Do you know the role of the Patient Participation Group?**

- Yes
- No

**11. How would you rate all the staff at this practice?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Acceptable
- Poor
- Very Poor

**Comments:**

**12. Please tell us what you like about this GP practice:**

**13. How could your experience of using this practice be improved?**

**14. Overall, how would you rate Yarm Medical Practice?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Acceptable
- Poor
- Very poor

Appendix 2 - Staff Questionnaire

## Yarm Medical Practice Staff Survey

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees recently attended Yarm Medical Practice's Patient Participation Group (PPG) and have been invited to the practice to conduct an Enter and View. An Enter and View gathers patient and staff feedback to report on the service provision.

Please take a few moments to tell us about your experience of working at the practice. This information will help to inform and shape future service provision.

### 1. What is your role at the practice?

- Doctor
- Practice Nurse
- Nurse
- HCA
- Receptionist
- Phlebotomist
- Other (please specify):

### 2. What is your length of service?

- Under 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-7 years
- 7-10 years
- Over 10 years

### 3. What are the top 3 compliments you, or your colleagues, have received about the practice?

1.
2.
3.

4. Please tell us what you like about working at Yarm Medical Practice:

5. Please tell us what you feel would improve patient experience at the practice?