



**Norton Medical Centre Enter and
View Report
August 2019**

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 gathers feedback from the public about their views and experience of local health and social care services via the Information and Signposting service and engagement activities. Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees identified that a number of complaints had been received about Norton Medical Centre which were of the following themes:

- Staff attitude
- Difficultly getting an appointment via telephone
- Misdiagnosis

Aim

To carry out an Enter and View to gather patient and staff feedback regarding provision of services at Norton 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 Norton Medical Centre with suggested recommendations (if required) to help improve patient experience.

Methodology

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees contacted Norton Medical Centre and attended a meeting with the Practice Manager and a Partner of the practice to discuss these complaints and to inform them about the announced Enter and View visit. Healthwatch staff and Enter and View representatives carried out the Enter and View on Tuesday 27th August 2019.

Healthwatch designed a questionnaire for patients, family members and carers to complete during the visit. The team 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 from patients and staff**

A total of 80 patients completed the questionnaire during the Enter and View visit, 66% of which were women. 47% of patients who completed the questionnaire had a long term health condition, 8% of patients were carers and 14% stated that they had a disability.

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

Age	Percentage of Patients
Under 16	0%
16 - 24	1%
25 - 44	23%
45 - 64	30%
65 - 79	35%
80+	11%

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	18%
Easy	21%
Relatively easy	42%
Difficult	14%
Very difficult	5%

How long did you wait to get your appointment today?

Length of wait	Percentage of responses
Booked today	49%
1-2 days	11%
3-7 days	10%
10 days - 2 weeks	16%
3 weeks	5%
4 weeks or more	9%

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	38%
Access the appointment system	14%
Change personal details	9%
Sign up to the newsletter	0%
No / I did not know about these or have access to online services	58%

How would you rate the system for booking appointments?

Rating	Percentage of responses
Very good	12%
Good	40%
Acceptable	28%
Poor	15%
Very poor	5%

Did you use the electronic check in today?

Used electronic check-in?	Percentage of responses
Yes	66%
No	34%

Did you know about the Patient Participation Group?

Aware of PPG?	Percentage of responses
Yes	18%
No	82%

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 reception / admin staff at this practice?

Staff rating	Percentage of responses
Excellent	36%
Good	49%
Acceptable	14%
Poor	1%
Very poor	0%

Comments received about the reception and admin staff:

- 'Brilliant, helpful and caring'
- 'Always smiling and more than happy to help'
- 'Always been impressed with the service I receive'
- 'Generally all helpful and friendly'
- 'Always polite'
- 'Always been impressed with the service I receive'
- 'Receptionists are very helpful'

Comments received about the medical staff:

- 'All very helpful and pleasant'
- 'Dr Morton is a very caring and approachable person who always makes me feel comfortable during appointments'
- 'Excellent - they really listen to patients and provide a high standard of care'
- 'Friendly, knowledgeable and approachable'
- 'Dr Hodgson is understanding'
- 'Some doctors rush you out and aren't bothered about your concerns'
- 'Really professional at what seems a busy practice'
- 'Not enough continuity of care for follow up'
- 'I've always had a very good experience with the medical staff'
- 'It depends who you get to see'

‘Dr Fazludden is excellent - we trust her and she is very thorough’

‘Good when you get to see them’

‘Couldn’t fault then’

‘Caring and supportive’

‘Excellent’

When patients were asked **‘What do you like about this practice?’**, the following comments were received:

‘They are always willing to help’

‘Close to home’

‘Easy to get to’

‘Easy to see a Doctor’

‘Very friendly practice’

‘Easy online ordering of repeat medication’

‘Have been in this practice all my life and have always had the best care’

‘One of the best practices I have ever attended’

‘Always receive first class service’

‘Great service over the years’

‘Doctors always listen’

‘Easily accessible, listen to concerns and act accordingly’

When patients were asked **‘How could your experience of the practice be improved?’**, the following comments were received:

‘Easier way to make an appointment’

‘Appointment system needs improving’

‘Sometimes it’s harder to get a later appointment e.g. after 5pm’

‘When you work it is very difficult to get an appointment’

‘Quicker answering the phones’

‘It takes forever to get through on the phones’

‘Shorter waiting times on the phone, sometimes a quick query can have you waiting 20-40 minutes’

‘More staff answering the phones’

‘Make it easier to see your own GP’

- 'If possible to always have two front desks open'
- 'Queue at reception is sometimes very long'
- 'Air conditioning in hot weather'
- 'Difficult to park - more disabled access'
- 'Greater flexibility to more urgent appointments'
- 'Hard to get an appointment out of working hours'
- 'Not having to wait 30 minutes to speak to a receptionist - always busy'
- 'More information for patients, maybe on websites or facebook'
- 'Don't like the practice doors to see the GP - not wheelchair accessible'

We also feel it is relevant to note that at least one person made comment about the fact that when attending the phlebotomy clinic bloods are not always being taken in private. Other patients can be in the room giving blood at the same time. This is not respecting the patient's right to privacy.

Overall, how would you rate Norton Medical Practice?

Rating	Percentage of responses
Excellent	35%
Good	43%
Acceptable	18%
Poor	1%
Very poor	3%

Results - Staff Feedback

Healthwatch Stockton gathered feedback from 11 members of staff working at the practice, mainly reception staff. Staff members had worked at the practice for between less than a year to over 10 years service.

Healthwatch asked staff about what they felt were the top three compliments which they or their colleagues have received about the practice. The following responses were received:

- 'Friendly and helpful reception team'
- 'Excellent service from the girls in reception'
- 'Going the extra mile'
- 'Compassionate and understanding reception and GPs'
- 'Thank you cards received'

‘Go above and beyond to ensure best care for patients is met’

‘Excellent practice with great staff’

‘Easy to get same day appointments’

‘Plenty of appointments available with new system now it has changed’

‘Efficient’

Healthwatch also asked staff for the top three things which patients complain about. The most frequently mentioned things were:

- Long wait on the phones
- Queues at reception
- Prescriptions not being ready
- Hard to get an appointment
- Busy waiting room
- Issues with the phones
- Appointments for people who work full time e.g. after 5pm
- Not being able to order prescriptions over the phone

When Healthwatch asked staff how they felt about working at Norton Medical Practice, the following responses were received:

‘I love my job’

‘We are a good strong team and work hard to help our patients’

‘All the staff are helpful and nice to work with’

‘Quite challenging at times’

‘I always like helping patients but it can be difficult at times’

‘One big happy family’

‘Everyone works as part of a team’

‘I feel well looked after working for Norton Medical Centre’

‘The job is very busy and demanding but I would not go anywhere else’

‘It’s a lovely family’

‘We all work well as a team and everyone is helpful’

When Healthwatch asked staff what they felt would improve patient experience at the practice, the following responses were received:

‘If patients understood the system and the pressures then this would benefit them’

‘If more patients used online services it would ease their queues’

‘If more patients used online services’

‘Having more future appointments to book’

‘If they knew how the system worked as there have been a few changes and they seem to get confused which leads to complaints’

‘Maybe a little easier to order prescriptions’

Healthwatch Observations

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

Observation	Yes	No	Comments
Wheelchair / Pushchair accessible?	x		There are two entrances to the building which have automatic sliding doors. There is also a lift to the 1 st floor.
Electronic self check-in in waiting room?	x		Electronic self check-in is available to use and was in good working order during our visit but not easily visible.
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"> - Book appointments - Order repeat prescriptions - View past/future appointments - Cancel appointments - View coded information from your medical records - View test results - Update contact details - Answer questionnaires
Is the waiting room child friendly?	x	x	The waiting rooms are easily accessible for pushchairs and there is a children’s play area although there were no chairs, books or many toys to play with while children are waiting to be seen.
Are there clear notice boards with up to date information?	x		The practice has several notice boards with signposting and information available to patients. There was also a

			pull up banner advertising the out of hours GP appointment service.
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	x	There is up to date information about opening times, practice staff, news and contact details on the website. Information about the last PPG report was last dated 2014/15.
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 received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback about Norton Medical Centre. 39% of patients found it 'very easy' or 'easy' to make an appointment with 60% of patients having booked their appointment that same day or in the last 2 days.

Patients gave lots of praise and positive feedback about all the staff at the practice including reception and medical staff. Patients also felt that the practice was in a good location and easily accessible.

The main issues faced by patients are the long queues at reception during times when the phlebotomy clinic is open and difficulty getting through on the phones during busy periods. Patients also reported that it was sometimes difficult to get an appointment, especially for patients who work full time e.g. 9am - 5pm.

Healthwatch identified that 58% of patients who gave their feedback did not use any online services either because they weren't aware of them being available or could not access them. 82% of patients were unaware of the Norton Medical Practice's Patient Participation Group and 93% did not know what the role of this group was.

Staff feedback was very positive with the majority of reception staff giving feedback about how much they enjoyed their jobs and felt they were part of a team also referred to as 'one big family'.

Overall, 78% of patients rated Norton Medical Centre as 'Excellent' or 'Good'.

This Enter & View was based upon feedback received by Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees over the last 12 months. It is pleasing to note that at the time of this visit feedback received about Norton Medical Centre was generally positive in nature.

Recommendations

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

1. Following analysis of the feedback, it was highlighted that 82% 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 promotes the PPG within the practice on notice boards and newsletters to ensure patients have the opportunity to get involved and have their say if they wish to do so. Healthwatch would also recommend that information about the PPG and any reports are updated on the website.
2. When patients were asked what they felt would improve their experience at the practice, patients often referred to improving 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 ensure patients are aware of any recent changes with the appointment booking system and ensure the phone lines are managed appropriately during busy periods. Patients should also be made aware of what is deemed as urgent and requires a same day appointment as patients are finding that when they ring after 8:30am all the appointments have been taken for the day due to the number of people ringing up at 8am for urgent appointments.
3. 58% of patients did not know about the online services available or chose not to use them. Healthwatch recommends that Norton Medical Centre promotes these online services to patients to increase patient awareness and uptake and to help reduce the pressures currently experienced on the telephone lines. A promotional / marketing campaign highlighting the benefits of using online services will be beneficial to increase the uptake of patients ordering their repeat prescriptions online. This should reduce pressures on the practice following the recent changes to process for ordering repeat prescriptions.
4. On the day of Healthwatch's Stockton's Enter and View, the phlebotomy clinic was on which resulted in long queues at reception for the majority of the morning. Healthwatch recommend that Norton Medical Practice encourages those who are not attending this clinic (or need to speak to reception) use the self check-in when arriving for their appointment. Healthwatch observed that poster promoting patients to use this was not easily seen as it was selotaped onto the table next to the screen. If the poster is placed on a stand near the entrance to the practice, more patients are likely to see this. Healthwatch also recommends that a sufficient number of staff are on reception during these busy periods.

5. Healthwatch observed that the children's play area was nicely decorated but had limited toys and was not used at all during the times of Healthwatch's visit. Healthwatch recommends that the practice provides some chairs, books and some more toys for children to play with while they are waiting to be seen.
6. When patients are attending the Phlebotomy clinic, good practice would suggest that they should give blood in private in order that confidentiality and privacy can be maintained at all times. They should not be required to give blood whilst another patient is present.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees would like to thank the Practice Manager and team at Norton 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 Norton Medical Centre.

Appendix 1 - Patient Questionnaire

Norton Medical Centre Patient Survey

Following recent information received, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees are visiting Norton Medical Centre to conduct an “Enter and View”. This enables us to gather **confidential** patient feedback about the services provided.

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 practice newsletter
- I did not know about these online services
- I do not have access to 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
- If no, why did you not use it?

9. Have you heard 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 the reception/admin staff at this practice?

- Excellent
- Good
- Acceptable
- Poor
- Very Poor

Comments:

12. How would you rate the medical staff at this practice?

Comments:

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

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

15. Overall, how would you rate Norton Medical Centre?

- Excellent
- Good
- Acceptable
- Poor
- Very poor

Appendix 2 - Staff Questionnaire

Norton Medical Centre Staff Survey

Following recent information received, Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees are visiting Norton Medical Centre to conduct an “Enter and View”. This enables us to gather **confidential** staff/patient feedback about the services provided.

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 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. What are the top 3 things you receive complaints about at the practice?

1.

2.

3.

5. Please tell us how you feel about working at Norton Medical Centre:

6. Please tell us what you feel would improve patient experience at the practice: