

Enter & View Visit

Five Elms GP Surgery



For further copies of this report, please contact
info@healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk

or

Telephone: 020 8526 8200

www.healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk

Contents

	Page
Introduction	3
Summary	4
Details of the Visit	5
The Organisation and Service Provider	6
Information and Observations	7
Conclusions and Other Comments	11
Recommendations	13
Response from Five Elms GP Surgery	14-15

Introduction

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham is the local independent consumer champion for health and social care. We aim to give our citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for people in the borough.

Enter & View is carried out under Section 186 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. It imposes duties on certain health and social care providers to allow authorised representatives of local Healthwatch organisations to enter premises and carry out observations for the purposes of Healthwatch activity.

Authorised representatives observe and gather information through the experiences of service users, their relatives/friends and staff to collect evidence of the quality and standard of the services being provided.

To do this we:

- Enable people to share their views and experiences and to understand that their contribution will help build a picture of where services are doing well and where they can be improved.
- Give authoritative, evidenced based feedback to organisations responsible for delivering and commissioning services.
- Are able to alert Healthwatch England or the Care Quality Commission, where appropriate, to concerns about specific service providers of health and social care.

This report is a current reflection of views and experiences that Healthwatch representatives received back from patients and staff.

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham would like to thank the patients for their feedback and the staff at Five Elms Surgery for their assistance and co-operation during the visit.

Summary

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham carried out an unannounced visit to Five Elms GP Service. Representatives spoke with members of the public during the time they were there and spoke with the Practice Lead GP, Dr Abaniwo; the acting Practice Manager/Senior Admin, Jo Cumber and other reception staff on duty at the time.

Over the last 12 months - Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham has identified a trend of consistent, negative feedback from patients, about this GP service. Examples of some comments include:

- *'I cannot get a doctor's appointment, not answering the phone.'*
- *'The receptionist was abrasive, very rude and unhelpful.'*
- *'Waiting times for appointments are too long - 3 to 4 weeks.'*
- *'Not very child friendly - made to feel like a nuisance by the receptionist.'*

On the day of the visit, Healthwatch representatives found that patients were mostly positive in their views about the service and staff.

The majority of people indicated that they were satisfied overall with how they are treated by the staff - a minority number of patients however, expressed their dissatisfaction, citing a general lack of empathy towards them at difficult times. One patient said they felt their needs had been trivialised by reception staff and the GP.

The GP Practice has undergone significant changes. Since May 2015, there has been the recruitment of another GP to replace a practice partner who left. The practice manager also left and has not been replaced. That job is currently being carried out as a dual role by the most experienced of the admin staff. In addition, the practice has 2 administrative members of staff who have been employed in the last 3 months. One of the staff is employed on an apprentice scheme and is currently receiving ongoing training.

Details of the Visit

Premises visited:

Five Elms GP Practice

5 Five Elms Road

Dagenham

Essex. RM9 5TT

Date:

Friday 15th September 2015

Enter & View Authorised Representatives:

Richard Vann - Lead Officer

Val Shaw - Enter & View Representative

Kim Christy - Support Worker

Purpose of the Visit:

To carry out a survey of patients to get their views and experiences of using and accessing the services at Five Elms GP practice.

This was an unannounced visit - as an initial introduction, the lead representative spoke with the acting practice manager - Jo Cumber. The lead representative was introduced to Dr Abaniwo prior to speaking with patients and staff. Once established why Healthwatch was there, both the practice manager and doctor assisted representatives for the duration of the visit.

The Organisation and Service Provider

The GP Practice is set within a medical centre located in a populated residential area close to a parade of shops that includes a community pharmacy.

The GP Practice shares the building with other community services:

- Children's Health and Development Team
- Minor Surgery Team lead by District Nurses
- Community Dental services

The GP service is open from 8.30am to 6.30pm; Monday to Wednesday and the same on Friday. On Thursday, it is open from 8.30am to 1.30pm.

The practice is closed at weekends - patients are provided with and directed to, contact details for other services by way of an answer phone message on the practice's main telephone number.

Healthwatch was advised that priority for appointments was given to the elderly and children under 5 years old. The practice has implemented the policy of carrying out telephone consultations with patients. These are usually carried out after surgery times.

The practice currently has 7 staff - 4 of whom started during summer 2015.

There are 2 GPs - Dr Abaniwo and Dr Momoh (works 4 days a week) - and 5 admin/reception staff. The most senior member of the admin staff - Jo Cumber - is currently undertaking a dual role that includes the job of practice manager.

According to the NHS Choices website, the practice has just fewer than 4,500 registered patients.

Information and Observations

Healthwatch representatives spoke with 19 people that attended the surgery over a 2 hour period and asked them to complete a questionnaire, telling us about their experience of using the services.

Collective responses for each question are as follows:

1) How long have you been a registered patient with this surgery?

Months	2	3																	
Years			1	2	4	7	7	8	8	8	10	11	15	18	19	30	40	46	48

Of the patients Healthwatch spoke with - 14 (74%) have been registered and established patients for 7 years or more; 5 (16%) 4 years or less.

2) When you contact the surgery for an appointment, how easy is it to get through on the telephone?

Always			✓		✓									✓					
Sometimes												✓							✓
Never	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

From the patients Healthwatch spoke with - 14 (74%) said it was never easy to get through on the telephone to book an appointment or make an enquiry.

3) When making an appointment, how long were you told you would have to wait for the next available one?

Days		✓		✓		✓								✓			✓	✓	
Weeks	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓

The majority of responses - 13 (68%) - indicated that more often than not, they waited weeks rather than days for their appointment.

4) How well were you treated by the staff at the practice?

Poorly											✓								✓
Good	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓			✓			
Very Good									✓					✓	✓			✓	
Excellent		✓										✓					✓		

Most patients - 17 (89%) - said that their treatment from the staff at the practice was generally good; with others commenting that it was very good or excellent.

5) If you needed to see a GP urgently at evenings or weekends, would you know where to go?

Yes	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
No			✓					✓				✓		✓	✓				

The majority of patients - 14 (74%) - said they would know where to go - 5 (16%) - indicated they did not know.

Examples of some responses:-

- ‘Ring 111 or the surgery for an alternative number’
- ‘I would go to the walk in centre’
- ‘A&E at the hospital’
- ‘Queens Hospital’
- ‘Out of hours GP or 111’

6) In your view, does the time you get for appointments, deal with your needs in a satisfactory way?

Yes	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
No			✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		

Patients told us - 7 (37%) - that the length of appointment times does not allow long enough to deal with the health issues that they need to discuss with the GP. However, 12 patients (63%) - said that they did have a satisfactory time for their appointments. Some examples of what patients said about not getting enough time for their appointments:

- ‘Appointments could be longer’
- ‘Overall not long enough’
- ‘One issue, one appointment, but cannot get one’
- ‘Not always’
- ‘Alright if just one issue but not usually and it is very rare to get a double appointment’
- ‘One issue is ok but anymore than that and the GP will not deal with it; one problem, one appointment’

7) Have you tried to access your GP service on-line?

Yes																		✓		
No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Of the 19 patients Healthwatch representatives spoke with - 18 (95%) - had not tried to access the GP booking service on-line. The one individual that did said ‘Brilliant’. Some examples of the feedback from patients who hadn’t accessed the service on-line:

- ‘Not aware’
- ‘I wasn’t aware I could’
- ‘I did not know you could’
- ‘Not aware’

8) Overall, what is your experience of using services and dealing with staff at this practice?

Poor							✓				✓							✓
Fair								✓										
Good			✓	✓		✓			✓	✓			✓			✓		
Very Good	✓	✓			✓							✓		✓	✓			✓
Excellent																✓		

Of the 5 categories used to find out patients' overall experience - 15 (79%) of responses were 'Good' - 'Very Good' or 'Excellent'. One person (5%) said their experience was 'Fair' and (16%) said it was a 'Poor' experience.

9) Please tell us any other views or comments you have about the service and your experiences of it.

'Prescriptions are taking about a week - should take 48 hours at the most'
'This service was not so good a while back, but over the last few months it seems to have got better'
'It used to be bad and now it is good - been better for the last couple of months was bad at the beginning of the year'
'Long wait for appointments; receptionist raised her eyebrows when I asked about on-line appointments and did not give me a answer'
'The doctors themselves are not a problem once you can get in to see them. There seems to be a bad breakdown of communication from the receptionist to the doctors. One of the receptionists is extremely rude; seems to be every time I come here someone has a row with her'
'No real trouble with them - always polite'
'Always very helpful'
'Everyone very helpful'
'Sometimes not enough doctors makes it hard to get an appointment'
'The reception staff always go that bit further to help you'

Conclusions and Other Comments

- Although there were a number of information boards on the walls around the waiting area, it was noticeable that they didn't appear to be utilised as much as they could have been - there was not much information on them and very little publicity material to inform patients of various initiatives being provided.
- A white board with large red writing was directing the attention of patients to use the hand cleanser on the wall. Although clearly signed, the dispenser was empty.
- A number of mothers with babies and young children came into the surgery; however there is nothing put out in the waiting area to keep young children occupied whilst waiting. The waiting area is not child friendly even though there is a Child Health and Development drop-in service sharing the premises.
- When first entering the waiting area, a wall mounted television for waiting patients to watch was switched off - it was switched on during the visit.
- There was a constant flow of patients between 10am and 11am. There weren't a large number of patients at any one time during that period - after that the flow of patients dropped off. A number of patients told Healthwatch about how difficult it is to get an appointment by telephone and that they are compelled to attend the surgery to make an appointment; on some occasions the queue was long enough to stretch outside the waiting area. It was also apparent that there was a lack of incoming telephone activity occurring. The GP carries out telephone consultations usually after surgery closes.
- The GP highlighted problems with referrals being made into the BHRUT appointment systems. He advised that patients are being referred back to him with the trust saying there are no appointments available. This is having a negative impact on services being provided by the practice.

- The GP advised that he had carried out a programme of half hourly appointments with older registered patients aged 75+ - this was approximately 140 people at the time of the visit.
- Healthwatch was told that the practice gives patients the option to book appointments on-line. There is nothing in the surgery to publicise and give information about this service even though Healthwatch was advised that the practice was making a concerted effort to encourage patients to use it. There is nothing on the practice web-site to publicise the service or to explain how patients can access it.
- The GP advised that the practice was in the process of transforming the way they work. Many more referrals are made to the Community Treatment Team (CTT) and a multi-disciplinary approach to treating patients has been implemented. The practice clinicians meet with other health and social care professionals - once a fortnight - to discuss the needs of patients.
- The practice has undergone a number of staff changes in a short period of time during 2015 - overall, the majority of patients said their current experience of the service was good and some commented that the service has got better since the changes occurred.
- The GP advised that the practice does now have a Patient Participation Group (PPG). It is not clear how effective and influential the PPG is in working with the practice. There was no evidence to support the collaboration.
- Some patients said that they took exception to the way they were treated by a particular member of the reception/admin staff. On the day of the visit, 3 individuals mentioned the same member of staff as being rude and abrasive towards them.
- On speaking with Dr Abaniwo and acting Practice Manager, Jo Cumber - the lead Healthwatch representative saw that it was evident there is a drive and commitment to improve the services provided at Five Elms GP Practice. There is concern however, that changes are having an impact on the service being provided and patients are not being made aware of them.

Recommendations

More information should be made available to patients to advise and assist with a better understanding of the changes happening at the practice. The practice web-site should have up-to-date information on it. Many more patients would benefit if the practice provided clearer information available about the on-line appointment booking service.

Patients should be treated in a professional manner when attending the practice. The patient charter sets out expectations for how patients should conduct themselves towards the staff. The practice should ensure that the same standards of conduct are applied when the staff are serving members of the public.

Patients would benefit from having better communication - more accessible publicity and information about the various health initiatives that the practice is involved with would help to educate people about the services available to them.

Referrals for appointments to BHRUT are causing problems for patients, due to cancellations and the referrals being sent back to the GP. This is a concern and a gap in service for which a solution should be sought as a matter of priority.

The sanitising hand wash in the practice waiting area should always be stocked not left empty, especially as the signage clearly directs people to use it.

Consideration should be given to making the waiting area more child friendly - there are other services in the borough that make provision for this and perhaps Five Elms Practice would benefit from finding out what has been put in place to keep young children occupied whilst waiting.

The telephone appointment system isn't working for patients - information on the web-site about appointments is not accessible to many patients. The practice should consider looking for another solution to minimise the stress and frustration this has on patients.

In response to the report, Five Elms GP Surgery replied as follows:



Five Elms Medical Practice

Five Elms Road, Dagenham Essex RM9 5TT **BD33**

T 0208 517 1175 **F** 0208 592 0114

W www.fiveelmsmedical.co.uk

Mr Ndalai Majiyebo Abaniwo MBBS, DFFP, FRCS, T (GP), PG Diploma in Law (The College of Law) & Associates

Ref: NA11112015/JC

11th November 2015

Health Watch Barking and Dagenham
Harmony house Dagenham
Baden Powell close
Dagenham
RM9 6XN

Dear Mr Vann

Thank you for your report on Five Elms Medical Practice, please find below our response.

With regards to some of the negative feedback from our patients not being able to get an appointment and the telephone not being answered. During peak times, mainly in the morning when the phone lines are opened, all the receptionists answer the telephone. Whilst we appreciate this is a very busy time they are answered as soon as we can, but we also have to deal with the patients that choose to come to the surgery at 8.30am to arrange appointments in person. Appointments are often added to the Doctors clinic on a daily basis to cover urgent needs of the patients on the day. We are meeting capacity, over and above, for our practice list size. The patients are only encouraged to use other services ie the walking centres, hub, community treatment teams and 111 when it is appropriate.

The surgery opening times are from 8.00am to 6.30pm, although we are often still dealing with patients until at least 7.30pm. We are covered by PELC between the hours of 6.30pm and 9.00am.

The policy at the practice to see children under the age of 5 years and telephone consultations are done during surgery clinic times. The children are placed on a sit and wait appointment which means the Doctor will fit them into his surgery.

Patients have commented on the fact that the surgery is not 'child friendly'. Due to infection control restrictions it is not appropriate for the surgery to have toys or books to occupy children. Unfortunately, it may be necessary for a member of staff to intervene if a child's behaviour affects other service users. We would ask the parent to mind their child.

Our practice policy is to offer appointments daily from on the same day to no more than 2 weeks in advance for a Doctor. There are various reasons that a patient will wait longer than 2 weeks, but these are to do with patient choice ie waiting for a specific Doctor. Follow up appointments are always booked in advance if the Doctor/Nurse has requested it.

Our patients are made aware of various other services they can use during our closing times. We have notices on our notice board and on our overhead. We always direct patients to the appropriate service specifying A&E and Queens Hospital are only options in an emergency.

We have advertised our online services throughout the surgery, on the noticeboards, at the reception desk and on the overhead. It is also on our website and where possible, at every opportunity, the receptionist will always bring it to the patient's attention.

The comment about prescriptions taking a week is untrue. We follow national guidelines and prescriptions are issued within 48 hours.

We would not expect our patients to be aware of the capacity requirements and a small number of patients may comment about the number of Doctors at this practice. As before, I would like to point out we offer over and above the capacity requirements.

The building we occupy has various other services operating out of it. As such we are tenants of the building and it is not our responsibility to maintain such things as hand cleansers, televisions or the car park. These are controlled by the Health clinic and have nothing to do with the Doctors surgery, but we can pass on your feedback about these issues.

We do have a Patient Participation Group but we have found the uptake for patients attending these meetings have been quite poor, although we do try to recruit new members all the time.

We do hope you find our response helpful.

If we can be of any more service please contact us on the above number. We apologise for the lateness of our response, but as you can appreciate this is a busy time.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ndalai Abaniwo