

Prestige Medical Group Parkside Surgery Burnley

Monday 3rd March 2022
10:00am – 12:00pm



Disclaimer: This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, visitors and patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.

Contact Details

Address

Prestige Medical Group

Parkside Surgery

Prestige Retail Park

Colne Road

Burnley

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01282 500666

<https://www.parksidesurgeryburnley.co.uk/>

Surgery Contact:

Nick Gwatkin (Business Manager)

Date and Time of our Visit:

Monday 3rd March 2025

10:00am – 12:00pm

Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Steve Walmsley (Engagement Team Leader)

Sue Edwards (Senior Engagement Officer)

Introduction

Healthwatch Lancashire is the independent public voice for health and social care in Lancashire and exists to make services work for the people who use them. We believe that the best way to do this is by providing the people of Lancashire with opportunities to share their views and experiences.

Healthwatch Lancashire has statutory powers to listen, act, challenge and gather feedback to improve local services and promote excellence throughout the NHS and social care services.

To help achieve this Healthwatch have a statutory power to 'Enter and View' health and social care services that are publicly funded. The purpose of an Enter and View is to listen to people who access those services and observe service delivery.

Following the Enter and View visit a report is compiled identifying aspects of good surgery within the service visited along with any recommendations for any possible areas of improvement.

As we are an independent organisation, we do not make judgements or express personal opinions but rely on feedback received and objective observations of the environment. The report is sent to the service provider providing an opportunity to respond to any recommendations and comments before being published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at:

www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk

The report is available to members of the public along with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations. Where appropriate Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to monitor the progress of improvements and celebrate any further successes.

General Information

Prestige Medical group serves 16,300 patients in the Burnley area. It has two sites located at Prestige Medical Centre and Oxford Road. It is part of the Burnley East Primary Care Network.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank patients, staff and management, for making us feel welcome and for taking the time to speak to us during the visit.

What did we do?

Healthwatch Lancashire Enter and View Representatives made an announced visit to Prestige Medical Practice on Monday 3rd March and received feedback from:



Pre-visit surgery survey

Healthwatch Lancashire emailed a pre-visit questionnaire to the Practice Management to learn about the patient population, services offered and how the surgery manage appointments for patients. Information from this questionnaire is included in the summary below.

Introductory meeting with Practice Management Team

At the beginning of the enter and view visit, Healthwatch Lancashire met with the Practice Management Team to discuss the background of the surgery and to view the facilities. The appointment system was explained, along with support offered to patients who are accessing services within the Primary Care Network (PCN).

One to one discussions with patients and their relatives

Healthwatch Lancashire spoke with patients and their relatives about their experiences including appointment booking, how they felt about the service and the care and treatment delivered by the staff at the surgery.

Discussions with members of staff

Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives spoke with members of staff about their experiences of delivering services to patients. Questions centred around support for patients and any improvements staff felt could be made at the Medical Surgery.

Observations

Observations were made throughout the visit. This included patient and staff interactions, accessibility measures in place throughout the surgery and the condition and cleanliness of the facilities.

Summary



Healthwatch Lancashire was invited to conduct an Enter and View at the Parkside Surgery, to provide an objective look at the services and make recommendations to improve the service.

Healthwatch Lancashire representatives viewed facilities that were available at the Parkside practice. This included the waiting area, reception office, clinical rooms and the staff areas which appeared clean and free from clutter.

Feedback received on the day patients were mainly positive about the care and support that they received from professionals at the practice. However, there were some concerns raised by patients about the appointment making process and the long waiting times that they were experiencing on the day. Although there was a large queue observed on the day, staff were observed to be polite and courteous with patients and ensured that they received the information that they needed about their medications or appointments.

There were some positive comments made about the online appointment booking process and the callback facility, where it made the process simpler. However, there were also some concerns raised about the availability of places in the callback queue and some uncertainty about whether patients would be able to keep their place once they requested a callback.

Surgery Overview

Location and public access



The practice is close to the centre of Burnley near the Prestige Retail Park. Frequent local bus services can be accessed from a bus stop close to the centre. There is a drop off point directly outside the front of the centre which allows patients using taxis to gain direct access to the centre.

Surgery Population

Around 16,300 patients are registered at the practice which is located across two sites, one at Parkside Surgery and at Oxford Road. Discussion with practice management highlighted that 58.5% of patients between the two sites have a long-standing health condition, which is above the national average of 54.6%. Conditions included cardiovascular disease, coronary heart disease, diabetes, mental health and long-term respiratory problems.

Services available

The practice offers face to face appointments with GPs and nursing staff, a diabetic clinic, minor surgeries along with a range of additional services, within the Burnley East Primary Care Network, such as social prescribers, Care Coordinators, a mental health (MH) practitioner, a first contact practitioner, clinical pharmacists, trainee nurse associates, a health and wellbeing coach and advanced clinical practitioners.



Appointment Management



The practice operates a care navigation system to maximise patient access linked to their medical needs for the same day service and face to face access. Patients can book appointments via the telephone or in person at the practice. Appointments are released every day to allow patients to book in two, four, and seven-days' time.

Telephone enquiries are handled by a team of care navigation trained staff who use a triage model to allocate appointments with clinicians based on their condition. There is a callback function available for patients to make use of which keeps the person's place in the queue and allows for a member of staff to get back in touch.

Patients who, following a consultation, have been advised to book a follow-on appointment can book within and beyond the 7-day period, up to 14 days in advance.

Appointments are offered on a patient choice basis as to whether they would prefer them to be face to face or telephone. At the time of the visit, there are plans to review this process to streamline it and address issues that have been identified.

Enter and View observations

External Environment

The main entrance to the building caters for wheelchair users and pushchairs with level to the kerb and automatic doors. The car park outside the centre has five disabled bays.

Signage outside the building is clear and easily visible, helping patients find where they need to go. Parking is clearly marked.

Internal Environment and Waiting Area

The practice has a large desk in the main entrance with a self-check in machine to the right of the main desk. There was a lowered section on the reception desk to allow wheelchair users to speak with staff members.

There is one main waiting area, with ample seating and a children's area for families to use. At the time of the visit there were a large number of patients attending the surgery but patients were able to find somewhere to sit. The chairs are of a standard design and size. The seating is spaced to allow for the movement of wheelchairs and pushchairs. There was some signage observed around the practice but it was not in a consistent format with different fonts and, in some instances, was damaged. (recommendation 1)



There is facility for patients to be called to their appointments using a visual screen mounted on the wall facing the seating area but this was not in use at the time of the visit, this was due to staff wishing to greet patients in person. (recommendation 2)

The waiting room has multiple large noticeboards displaying information about the local social prescribing services, community services, veteran support and information about common conditions. Of note is a board which explains the appointment making process and options for patients when they wish to contact the practice.





Patient Interactions

Healthwatch Lancashire observed several interactions with patients who were at different stages of their appointment journey.

At different times throughout the visit, there were different waiting times people were experiencing with some patients who were waiting 20-30 minutes for an appointment to one patient who was waiting in excess of 50 minutes. During some periods of the visit there was only one member of staff on hand to answer queries, which could explain some of the delays. (recommendation 3)

The members of staff on the desk made sure that provided the patients the support that they needed and informed patients about any delays. They answered a wide range of enquiries throughout the visit and gave updates to patients about the status of their appointments when they asked for updates.

Clinical staff would call patients from the waiting area, instead of sending a notification on the display boards, which appeared to cause some confusion when patients could not hear them. In some instances, staff needed to check more than once if they were not heard by the patients in the waiting area. (recommendation 2)

Patient Involvement



An active Patient Participation Group (PPG) is currently in operation and it was commented that they are actively looking to recruit more members. It was commented that there used to be a dedicated board advertising for people to join the group which would benefit from being reinstated.(recommendation 4)

The website features clear information about booking appointments, requesting prescriptions, and making use of the NHS app to access services. There is a section on the site to provide practice updates and news about the service to patients.

Patient feedback

Healthwatch Representatives spoke with **twelve** patients during the visit.

How did you make your appointment today?

Ten of the twelve patients, that Healthwatch Lancashire Representatives spoke with during the visit, had made their appointment using the phone system. Some had phoned directly to make an appointment whilst two patients were invited in by staff for a consultation on the back of their initial phone call.

“I only rang up with a question and they invited me in for an appointment.”

They commented that, whilst they were happy that they had been invited in for a consultation, they would have preferred to be able to choose which site to visit, as the Oxford Road centre was closer to where they lived.

Three patients reported that they had used online methods to book their appointments as they felt that the process was much quicker.

“It’s hard to get in when you just use the phone, the app is much easier and simpler.”

Seven patients commented that it was not a straightforward process to get an appointment and they referred to longer waits on the phone as being a cause of this frustration as they did not feel that they would still get their call.

A patient, who had used the call back system, commented that having it as an option was a much better experience than they had thought and that it was a good alternative to waiting on the phone.

One patient had experienced issues when calling for an appointment reporting that they were on hold for around 20 minutes and were more than “40th” in the queue which led them to try the online form for triage. They said it took over five days for any response from the practice to arrive in order for them to make an appointment to be seen. (recommendation 5)

“I would use online methods but it’s not the best, I waited 5 days before someone would see me.”

It was not clear whether they had tried to make contact in the interim for an update.

What works well at this surgery?



Ten of the twelve patients spoken with complimented the care that they received from staff members.

“When you get seen they listen to what you need and try and help you however they can, it’s just getting the appointment that is the sticking point.”

Three patients complemented members of the GP team and gave examples of how their appointments had led to referrals to get additional treatment for their conditions. One example was given where someone had been seen by their GP and asked to make a follow up appointment. They were able to make this at the end of their visit and the process for making this follow up booking was handled quickly by the staff.

Is there anything that can be changed to meet your needs?

Three patients commented that the online process for making appointments was a much simpler experience and took some of the “stress” out of making appointments.

“We sometimes don’t get messages when we book the appointments online as they don’t come through.”

One patient suggested it may be a problem with their phone but they had rung the practice to confirm their appointment and reported the issue. Two patients said that they did not feel confident using online methods and felt that more information was needed about making appointments online. (recommendation 5)

Three patients commented that they had experiences where there was an issue with the communication between themselves and the practice. They felt that they needed to double check appointments and scheduled tests with the practice to confirm that they were going ahead.

“Getting told about advance appointments is fine but we need better confirmation about the appointments and results so we don’t miss hearing what is happening with our conditions.”

One of these patients commented that receiving text message alerts was a good step in helping with this concern. (Recommendation 6)

A concern was raised by two patients about how they were spoken to by staff members on the reception desk in the past, particularly in busier periods.

“I feel sorry for the staff but they shouldn’t take it out on patients, particularly when it’s not our fault. They were really good today with it being busy but I have had some occasions where they (Staff) have been really short with me on the phone.”

Do you receive information from the surgery that is easy to understand?

Ten patients spoken with felt that staff at the practice shared information in a clear and consistent manner, which meant that they were well informed about their conditions and any future follow up appointments needed, during their clinical appointments. There were some inconsistencies described about the methods patients were kept informed about their appointments.



Eight patients complimented the staff on the Reception desk for providing clear information about their appointments. Three patients, who were waiting some time for their appointment said that they felt able to ask for updates, but it was not easy on the day of our visit, due to the large number of patients attending in person.

"I have just been up to ask about my appointment as it's late, but they told me when I asked. I just had to queue up again."

Two patients suggested that there should be a system or process to inform patients upon arrival about how long they may need to wait for their appointments.
(Recommendation 2)

Do you know how to make a complaint if needed?

All twelve patients said the same about how to raise issues and enquiries, that they would ask at the Reception desk or ask to speak with practice management. One patient referred to the complaints section on the website saying that they would make use of that facility.

Do you know what a Patient Participation Group is?

Most patients spoken with knew about the Patient Participation group and had seen information about the role it plays at the practice but five said that it was not something they felt able to commit to due to their own commitments.

Staff feedback

Healthwatch received feedback from **seven** staff members during the visit.



Do you have enough staff when on duty?

Staff felt that there were times when the practice was busier than others and three staff members felt that there was a shortfall in provision of people to provide support to patients.

“We are definitely short-staffed in the Reception as we cant always spend enough time with patients.”

They felt that the instances where there were longer queues needed another person to assist on the front desk.

“At some times like Monday mornings, we need more of a staff balance which needs looking at.”

Staff felt that the other areas of their work was manageable and that they were supported by other members of the team to meet the needs of patients but there were issues with patient demand at busy times which needed addressing (Recommendation 2)

Do you feel supported to carry out a person-centred experience?



It was mentioned that staff shared their expertise, particularly amongst the clinical team to learn about patients' conditions and needs. Protected learning time was praised as a positive method that helped staff develop skills and refine working practices.

“I can give a person-centred experience, but I could always use more time to give patients what they need.”

The training offer for members of staff was highlighted as being flexible to help staff develop, which would then benefit patients.

What measures are in place for people with additional communication needs?

Staff explained that the practice had used interpreters in the past and they used companies like language line to provide interpreters for patients. They mentioned that they were constantly working on making sure that patients' communication needs were being met in all instances. They explained “We use interpreters for people with additional languages and we have found if there is an issue we will be able to sort something out quite quickly.” They mentioned that they would hire interpreters to support people who use BSL (British Sign Language).



What is your experience of working here?

All members of staff spoken with on the day felt that they had a largely positive experience working at the practice. They complimented the support from the management team and from other members of the team.

Three members of staff commented that the work environment was sometimes stressful especially when trying to support patients.

"It is tough when we have angry and frustrated patients who give us abuse about not having enough appointments."

Are there any changes that can be made to improve the patient experience?

Three members of staff described plans that were being implemented to try and reduce some of the demands on staff and improve the triage process for patients. Which was being put in place later in the month (March). They felt that this was something that was timely and there were plans in place to implement a more effective system to triage patients and help manage the demand.

Two members of staff felt that having more GP appointments available would help mitigate some of the issues the practice was currently facing, but they understood that this was contingent on levels of funding and clinical need.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been formulated based on observations of the environment and feedback gathered from patients and staff.

1. Review signage in the practice to ensure it is a consistent style and accessible to patients with visual impairments.
2. Consult with staff and patients to re-introduce the display system to either call patients to appointments or give updates on waiting times for appointments.
3. Work with staff to deploy more people on the reception desk during busier period to reduce waiting times.
4. Reinstate advertising materials for Patient Participation group to increase awareness of how to join and how it supports patients
5. Work with the patient participation group to develop a comms plan to showcase the benefits for patients using online appointment making options and any relevant support to prevent digital exclusion.
6. Implement posters for the new triage system showing the benefits of using different methods to make appointments.

Provider response

Recommendation	Action from provider	Timeframe
Review signage in the practice to ensure it is a consistent style and accessible to patients with visual impairments.		
Consult with staff and patients to re-introduce the display system to either call patients to appointments or give updates on waiting times for appointments.		
Work with staff to deploy more people on the reception desk during busier period to reduce waiting times.		
Reinstate advertising materials for Patient Participation group to increase awareness of how to join and how it supports patients.		
Work with the patient participation group to develop a comms plan to showcase the benefits for patients using online appointment making options and any relevant support to prevent digital exclusion.		
Implement posters for the new triage system showing the benefits of using different methods to make appointments.		

Comments from Provider

The report is factually accurate.

We are happy with the recommendations and will begin to complete them.



healthwatch

Lancashire

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