

## Details of visit

**Rudgwick Medical Centre**  
**Announced visit: 9 August 2017, morning surgery only**

This was a visit to listen to patients about their experiences, to support this general practice to improve their Care Quality Commission rating.

## Authorised Representatives:

**Team of trained representatives from Healthwatch West Sussex:**  
**Sue Morton and Alan Packham**

## Local Healthwatch contact details:

**Healthwatch West Sussex**  
**0300 012 0122**

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch West Sussex would like to thank the partners and medical centre's management, its patients, visitors and all staff for their contribution to this Enter and View visit.

## Disclaimer

Please note this report relates to findings observed on the specific dates set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients, visitors and staff, only an account of what was observed and was contributed during the visit.



## What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View activities. Local Healthwatch representatives undertake these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if a safeguarding concern arises during a visit it will be reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policy. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything they feel uncomfortable about, they are required to inform their lead who will inform the service manager and the visit will be ended.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.



## Purpose of the visits

As part of our programme of engaging with local people we have a schedule of visits to GP and hospitals across West Sussex. Following the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) inspection and report, we extended an offer of support to the practice. The purpose of this visiting programme is to:

- Speak to patients and their families to gain insight into their experiences
- Make general lay observations of staff and patient interactions, the care environment and how health and care is being provided locally.

## Strategic drivers

*Experience of care, clinical effectiveness and patient safety together make the three key components of quality in the NHS. Good care is linked to positive outcomes for the patient and is also associated with high levels of staff satisfaction.*

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/>

As the independent watchdog for health and care in West Sussex we want to gather personal accounts from people who are currently receiving treatment, care and support. This in turn will enable us to help local NHS organisations to better understand their patients lived experiences to improve the health and wellbeing outcome for future patients.

## Methodology

We agreed with the practice a visit to the surgery to speak to patients attending the surgery on the day and to make observations. The visit involved a small team of trained authorised representatives. Our representatives are tasked with approaching patients; visitors and staff, to introduce Healthwatch and our role in supporting health and social care organisations to deliver the right quality of care. We invite people to share their personal experiences, good and bad. These are captured using our standard feedback form and then entered on our secure database.

Representatives are required to note their observations and to complete a summary sheet together, immediately after completing the visiting activity.

Where we have previous insight from local people, this may inform the areas we visited.

We spoke to people in the surgery's waiting room. We captured **15 personal accounts** during the morning surgery.

Our sharing of anonymised information here contains examples and/or quotes to amplify peoples' voices. The names used are ones we have given and not actual names.



## Summary of findings

- Most people we spoke to were very satisfied with the services offered at this practice. There were two exceptions, with these patients not having confidence in one particular doctor's approach, due to a lack of empathy and interest in their health issues.
- Surgery telephone number is answered fairly quickly and patients are able to get a same day appointment for urgent needs, and a routine appointment within 3 days on average.
- Patients spoke of the difficulty in getting to see the one female doctor, as she only works on a Friday.

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## Results of Visit

We would like to thank the Surgery staff for being very friendly towards us during our visit and the patients who spoke to us.

### Observations

There is a dispensary (of medications) on site.

The waiting room was very clean and tidy, with leaflets displayed in a neat order.

The intercom, for calling patients to their appointment, was very crackly and people were finding it difficult to hear if it was their name called. This was highlighted to the Practice Manager at the end of the visit, who is going to investigate and readjust the settings to improve this. The Practice Manager told us that if someone had difficulty in hearing their name called, the receptionist would be aware of this, as they can clearly see all the patients and would alert them to their name having been called.

The waiting room has chairs with arms but does not appear to have any raised chairs and we would **recommend** the practice invests in 'raisers' for a few chairs to support patients who may need the extra height to sit comfortably.

The practice had a disability-friendly toilet but did not have any disabled parking. The Practice Manager told us there is a dropped kerb at the front of the building that originally had a marked bay on the road for disabled parking. The work to facilitate this was originally carried out by West Sussex County Council highways department. However, it has since come to light that as an un-adopted road, the marked bay can no longer be maintained. We suggest the practice could consult patients with mobility issues on what would be possible with regard to parking.

One patient asked if there could be music in the waiting room?

### Patient feedback

*"All A1. Service is very good and it's easy to make an appointment. Staff are very friendly and helpful and the doctors and nurses involve me in decisions. I never feel rushed".*

This type of commentary was common to most patients, who were a mixture of long-standing patients and those who had more recently registered with the practice.

About a quarter of the patients felt it was a challenge to get an appointment with a female doctor, as the surgery only has one female GP and she works on a Tuesdays and Fridays.

Two patients made comment about the lack of empathy shown by one particular doctor, and that they felt this doctor was out of touch.

Patients commented on the short wait to be called for their appointment.

Parking at the surgery can be a problem. One patient said that *the parking can be abused and it should be improved, with more signs for 'Patients/Staff Only'*. The Practice Manager stated that they are aware that from time to time non-patients park at the surgery and staff occasionally make use of the car park during surgery hours. We feel inappropriate parking is not an issue and the volume of cars parking is simply down to busy surgeries.

We suggest that the practice monitors this situation as patients had mentioned this as an issue.

A few patients mentioned it would be good to have access to the surgery on Saturdays, due to working during the week.

Patients (who had cause to use the service) spoke highly of the practice nurse.

### **Additional findings**

The insight below, will be shared anonymously with the appropriate services, so they can compare this with other sources of patient feedback, such as: their *Friends and Family Test* results. We will ask them to let us know how they will use this insight to bring about positive changes.

One patient had recently registered at the surgery, as they were unhappy with their original surgery due to the long waits and they have found this surgery's staff to be more-friendly, saying the staff at the other surgery were 'sharp'.

Experience of accessing service at **Worthing Hospital, for child's hearing problem**, was less than positive, as the treatment and care felt non-personal and more detached, than other services.

One patient, who has a child with autism has found it very challenging to access support outside of the surgery, having waited over a year to get an appointment with the **Children and Adolescents Mental Health Services** (based in Chichester). When they finally managed to get an appointment they arrived only to find the doctor was on holiday. When they raised concern about the wait, they were told it was due to the department 'being down sized'. The waiting has had a detrimental effect on their child's education.

One patient had a negative experience at **Royal Surrey County Hospital (Guildford) A&E**, as the staff kept repeating everything, as no one picked up the original notes.

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### **Recommendations**

From our findings we would make the following recommendations:

- The practice invests in 'raisers', for a few chairs, to support patients who need the extra height to sit comfortably

- Management team reflect on the feedback from patients, to see:
  - how individual doctor can be supported to increase patients' satisfaction
  - whether there is a way of increasing access to female doctors.
- Monitor who is using the carpark and consider the signage in the carpark to see if this can be improved.
- Involve patients, particularly those with mobility issues, in any discussions or improvement to the carpark area.

### Service Provider response

Firstly, I would like to say that it was a pleasure to welcome Sue Morton and Alan Packham to the practice. The listening event was a positive experience for the practice and patient feedback will be useful to us.

### Further Healthwatch comments

We would like to thank the practice and partners for working positively and proactively with Healthwatch to identify and implement positive changes. We have offered to support the practice with getting a new Patient Participation Group up and running.

Issues raised during our visit, which relate to other health and care services have been captured and are being included in our wider work across the county.

We would encourage local people to continue to share their personal stories so we can help GPs, hospital and other services to improve the way they provide health and care.



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