

Enter and View Report

Bedfont Clinic

Imperial Road, Bedfont, Middlesex, TW14 8AG

26th September 2019



Service visited:	Bedfont Clinic (BC) Imperial Road, Bedfont, Middlesex, TW14 8AG
Practice Manager: Registered Managers:	Fahmeda Kazi (FK) – Interim Practice Manager Dr Nittin Kumar
Date and time of visit:	12 th September 2019, 11.30am – 1.30pm
Status of visit:	Announced
Enter and View Authorised Representatives:	Gurdeep Sagoo (GS), Ranjana Selvaraj (RS) and Mystica Burrige (MB)
Lead Authorised Representative:	Mystica Burrige
Healthwatch Hounslow contact details:	Healthwatch Hounslow 45 St Mary’s Road Ealing W5 5RG Tel: 020 3603 2438 Email: info@healthwatchhounslow.co.uk

Healthwatch Hounslow has the power to enter and view services in the borough of Hounslow. Enter and View visits are conducted by teams of trained Enter and View Authorised Representatives.

Background for the visit

The Health and Social Care Act allows Healthwatch Hounslow (HWH) Enter and View Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and speak to patients, residents, staff, relatives, friends and carers. The visit can happen if people tell us there are concerns, but equally, the visits can take place when services have a good reputation. We can therefore learn from shared examples of what they are doing well from the perspective of the people who experience the service first-hand.

Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with the HWH Safeguarding Policy. If at any time an Authorised Representative observes a potential safeguarding concern, they will inform their lead. The lead Authorised Representative will then end the visit. 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) and Hounslow Council’s Safeguarding Team.

On this occasion, three Enter and View Authorised Representatives attended the visit. The Authorised Representatives spoke to patients and staff. Suggestions have been made on how to improve the service and good practice has been highlighted.

HWH liaises with the CQC, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Local Authority (LA) to create an Enter and View Programme, as well as the information that it collects about the experiences of local people. Several health and social care providers are selected to be visited to provide a sample of different services.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Fahmeda Kazi (Interim Practice Manager), and the patients and staff at BC for making us feel welcome, facilitating our visit and for taking the time to talk to us on the day. We would also like to thank HWH Enter and View Authorised Representatives Gurdeep Sagoo, Ranjana Selvaraj and Mystica Burridge.

Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View visit. We spoke with several patients and staff members about their experiences at BC.

Information about Bedfont Clinic

Bedfont Clinic (BC) is run by Hounslow Medical Centre (HMC) which manages other GP practices in the borough. The practice provides NHS primary care services to approximately 5,400 patients living in the Feltham area through an Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contract (a locally negotiated contract open to both NHS practices and voluntary sector or private providers e.g., many walk-in centres). The practice is part of Hounslow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which consists of 54 GP practices.

The practice operates from a single level portacabin with access to four consulting rooms. The practice portacabin is situated on the site of NHS community services which includes district nurses, speech therapy and podiatry. The practice facilities are maintained by the landlord.

The practice is registered as an individual with the Care Quality Commission to provide the regulated activities of diagnostic and screening procedures; treatment of disease; disorder or injury; maternity and midwifery services; and family planning.

CQC are the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourage care services to improve.

Observations

When approaching the site, it was clearly marked as a GP practice. However, the entrance wasn't straightforward. Once we found the door, there was signage on the front door saying Bedfont Clinic. We were asked to wait in the reception area for FK (Practice Manager). During that time, a patient who was visibly upset was asking to speak to the Practice Manager immediately. FK led them to a private area to speak with them.

There is a small waiting area with chairs for patients to sit. Toilets are available for patients to use. Posters of joining the PPG (Patient Participation Group) were displayed on the doors. We were not given a tour as the GP practice was small and all clinical rooms were visible and adjacent to us. We were shown to the staff room where staff have their lunch. Sometimes, staff run consultations for patients in there as well.

Interview with FK (Practice Manager)

Staff make-up

- 1 Long-term GP Locum (Monday's – PM)
 - 1 Long-term GP Locum
 - 5 Receptionists
 - 1 Admin
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- 1 Interim Practice Manager (FK) – Permanent Practice Manager is sick. FK oversees Heston GP Practice, Great West Road Practice and Hounslow 92 Bath Rd.
- 3 Salaried GPs
- 1 Full-time Practice Nurse
- 1 Healthcare Assistant (HCA)
- 1 Clinical Pharmacist

Mental health care and advice

FK said GPs carry out mental health reviews.

Staff vacancies

FK said they just filled a receptionist position.

Staff training

FK said they had face-to-face training for customer service a while back for receptionists. All staff received training on infection control, safeguarding, manual handling etc. FK said no recent training has come up.

GP appointments

FK said online appointments are available. She said they usually are all booked up. Whilst patients are registered, they are given the option to register for online booking as well. The practice is open Mon – Fri, 8am – 6.30pm. On Saturday, they are open 8am – 12pm.

- Rotas are carried out 4 weeks in advance.
- Telephone consultations are available. These are split between 2 GPs.
- Mon and Tues AM – 3 GPs are available for emergency appointments. For online appointments, there are 4 appointments available every day.
- Mon and Tues PM – 5 emergency appointments are available.

Patient criticisms of the appointment system and how are they addressed

FK said patients want to see a specific GP but that's not always possible. They try to balance routine and emergency appointments. More appointments are available now and there are other GPs available too.

FK said the provider HMC held a patient engagement event in which 37 patients attended. HMC introduced themselves and their plans, vision, building, telephone calls etc. FK said HMC took over in February 2019 – Bedford clinic, 92 Bath Road Hounslow, Feltham.

Temporary or unregistered patients

FK said patients who want to register don't need ID but do ask them for it to make sure the spellings match. Temporary or homeless residents can use the clinic's address. Every 2 weeks they are asked to collect their post.

Home visits

FK said the GP will phone the patient before a home visit to check if it's needed. Whichever GP is on call will go to see the patient. Patients who do not engage with the practice are already referred, unless it's needed specifically.

GP Facilities

In terms of patients navigating their way through the building, FK said there was no problems and patients find the practice easily.

Additional facilities

FK said they have a Pharmacist who works across 3 of their sites – HMC Bedfont clinic, HMC Feltham and HMC 92 Bath Road. There is a nurse who carries out several procedures e.g. complex wound care, 24-hour BPs, sexual health clinic in 92 Bath Road and ECG. There are drop-in blood tests at HMC Heston. FK said there is a Pharmacist who holds diabetes/asthma clinics. FK said GP surgeries hub clinics are shared around the network.

Vulnerable Patients/Significant events and incidents

FK said in terms of carers, they have a list of carers and the GP has known them for a long time. There are support services and coffee mornings available which they signpost carers to. If specialist services are required, they are then referred on.

Significant events or incidents

There was an incident involving a parent and child. The practice then implemented changes so staff are required to check birth certificates and records to see if they match parent and child.

Uptake of cervical screening

HRCH (Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare) PCPC assist with this and run a search on who is not booked in and give the patient a call. FK said in the provider's Hounslow site, they have a Patient Officer who leads on campaigns and events – sending out information to patients. But calling patients helps.

Extended Opening hours and 111 service

FK said on Saturday's they are open from 8am – 12pm. This Information is available on the website. On their answer machine they have 111 information.

Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Generally made up of a group of volunteer patients, the practice manager and one or more of the GPs from the practice, patient participation groups meet on a regular basis to discuss the services on offer, and how improvements can be made for the benefit of patients and the practice.

PPG

FK said since they took over this year, they haven't started a PPG yet – they currently have 11 patients who have expressed an interest. FK said texts were sent out to all patients to join. Posters have been displayed around the GP practice. FK said the previous provider had an existing PPG, but they are starting from scratch. They felt that a virtual PPG didn't work, and a face-to-face PPG was preferable. They do have a PPG Chair in place.

Complaints Procedure/Comments/Feedback

FK said patients are aware of how to complain. The information is displayed on their noticeboard. Patients can feedback on NHS Choices and through their patient engagement events. All complaints and feedback are recorded and go to FK.

How are complaints dealt with?

FK said if a formal complaint is made then she calls the patient back and puts it into writing. If the complaint is related to a clinical issue, FK acknowledges it and hands it over to clinical staff.

Communication with patients

FK said they have posters around the GP practice and on GP doors. The practice also communicate with patients through text messages/reminders.

Good Practice/Challenges

FK said they have a hearing loop for patients with hearing aids. BSL is available. Reception staff can speak different languages. They have language line available, a direct line to interpreters.

Are there more patients attending your practice than there used to be?

FK said the footfall is the same. She said a few hundred patients have left the practice and this is a smaller practice with more local patients.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about?

FK said they have 5 clinical rooms available. However, 1 is not equipped. FK said it's not enough space for staff. They can operate however there are limitations. They recently had the waiting room painted. FK said A&E uptake is 'not too bad'.

Other

FK said their patient list size is 5000. Their patients are mainly in their mid-30s – 40s. FK said some of the area is deprived with patients who have long-term conditions. There is also high alcohol and drug dependency.

Prescribing wisely – Pharmacist explains this to patients. GPs refer patients who are borderline diabetic to a programme called 'Our path'. They provide a weighing scale, messages and advice – 30 patients have been referred so far.

Interview with Receptionist

Role

They have been working in the practice for 3 years. Their role includes attending calls, booking appointments, dealing with prescription requests, managing paperwork, registration of new patients etc.

New Provider

They said there has been a big change since the new provider took over the practice. In terms of their workload, since the change in provider it has been less hectic and stressful. They said more appointments have been made available and there have been less complaints. They said staff have been helpful and more available to talk to. They said things had changed in a good way.

Induction/Training

They said they were up to date with their training. They said they were given an induction and training by the previous management which was face-to-face. This included fire and hazard safety, manual handling, infection control etc. With the current management, the training is still pending.

Safeguarding

They said they knew the procedure for reporting safeguarding incidents and have undergone training for it. They said that they report the incident to the Practice Manager, and they investigate it and follow up on the incident to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Calls

They said when there is a high volume of calls, they have 4 – 5 receptionists to help. Two receptionists manage the booking of appointments and the other two manage the phone calls.

Signposting

They said that they do signpost but in their practice it's usually the GPs who do the signposting. For example, local pharmacy, nearest walking centre etc. They said it's a good idea to build up their knowledge about the community/voluntary services through accessing websites, receiving emails, a monthly newsletter. They suggested giving leaflets about signposting information to patients too.

Language barriers

They said they have an interpretation service. Through them they can book in future appointments. They also said that they have a multicultural staff team who are bilingual and can deal with patients when there is a language barrier. If it is something that must be done on the same day, they ask them to call the relevant family members. If privacy is of concern and they don't want to call their family member, they then ask them to write it on a piece of paper and they use google for translation.

Challenges

They said one of the challenges that they come across on a day to day basis is dealing with patients wanting prescriptions immediately. Another challenge is when patients call during closing time and ask for a same day appointment. During these instances, they signpost the patients to 111, nearest walking centre, A&E or give them a next day appointment.

Good Practice/Improvements

They said that there is good teamwork at the practice. They said another positive thing about the practice is that they get additional staff members to help when the practice is overbooked. However, an improvement could be 'maybe a new building'.

Interview with GP

GP appointments

The GP said 15 minutes would be more ideal for appointment slots – only if it's a straightforward consultation. The patient can usually raise 4 – 5 issues but the GP asks for a list first. Then the most important issues take priority. On some occasions, GP appointments have overrun.

Most prevalent issues that patients raise

They said that mental health is a common issue. They said more so here but cannot compare. They suggested it could be due to some parts of the area being deprived. Other issues identified were smoking and respiratory problems. The GP said there have been cases of suicidal patients and sometimes these appointments can take 20 – 25 minutes. They said they will then refer the patient to counselling or prescribe medication. They said for very young people – there's a follow-up appointment in 1 – 2 weeks and a review takes place.

Uptake of cervical screening

They said that they look at a dashboard to see which patients require screening. To encourage patients to attend the screening they explain about the early stages of cervical screening. To date they have only seen a few female patients.

Resources

They said they would like the practice to accommodate more clinical rooms.

Signposting

They said they have signposted few patients who are socially isolated. They dig into their history and some of them don't have family. They signpost these patients to relevant services such as

bereavement service, bereft, Age UK etc. They said that they have a piece of paper with few numbers on there to help with signposting.

Language barriers

They said that there have been some language barriers with a few patients, especially Eastern European/Asians. Sometimes they turn up without informing the need for interpretation services causing problems. They are then asked to schedule appointments in advance. Language line is available too.

Do you feel supported by the CCG?

They said that they did not feel supported by the CCG.

Do you support your CCG?

They said yes. They work within the CCG guidelines – referrals and counter medications.

Safeguarding

They said safeguarding concerns are reported to safeguarding leads. If serious then they are referred to the Police or social services. They said that these can be time-consuming. They said there is a high number of safeguarding incidents reported especially relating to children. They said that they had referred lots of families to social services. But were not sure why that is – if it's due to socio-economic status. One or two safeguarding concerns were from sheltered housing. Coniston and Derwent care homes had 3 safeguarding incidents reported.

Challenges

They said as a GP it can be a stressful role, as there is 'so much stuff to do in such little time'. Especially, non-medical issues. They also raised concerns around the ageing population and managing chronic problems.

Good Practice/Improvements

They said since the new provider took over, it has been 'good and organised'. They said the rota was organised well – Greenbrook (previous provider) used to add more appointments and it was not run so well. The on call was more organised.

Improvements

They said a new building would be good, but they are able to work with what they have. However, a 'spruce up' would be nice.

Interview with Healthcare Assistant (HCA)

Induction/Training

They have been working in the practice for 5 years as an HCA. Their role involves carrying out blood tests, BP, ECG, checking height and weight etc. They also mentioned the change in provider saying that they haven't seen any massive changes after they took over.

Training

They said that they had been given training by both the provider and the CCG. An example would be training for health checks, ECG etc.

Safeguarding

They said that they knew the procedure to report a safeguarding incident. Once reported to the lead GP, they don't know what happens next.

Volume of patients

They said that they get to see a lot of patients coming in for blood tests. There are a wide variety of reasons patients come in but the most common one is for diabetes.

Signposting

They said the GPs or nurses usually signpost patients. Currently, they are running a stop smoking group. In terms of being provided with more local information on community/voluntary services to patients, that would be helpful.

Language barriers

They said there are ‘not really’ any language barriers as the patient usually brings someone with them. If they need an interpreter, they are able book them.

Challenges

They said it’s always busy and overbooked. When a patient turns up late for their appointment, they miss their break which is ‘only 30 minutes’ and they said that they can’t take a break later as they’re the only HCA here.

Good Practice

They said there is good teamwork at the practice. They said the GPs are very approachable, especially when they’re unsure about complicated cases they are dealing with.

Improvements

They suggested moving to a different building as the space here is limited. More staffing. Another improvement would be to have a ‘nicer’ working environment.

Patient 1

They said that they had been with the practice for 11 Years. They said that they haven’t got any issues accessing the practice. In terms of GP appointments, the patient comes to the practice to book an appointment. They usually see the GP within a few days. They said that they are happy with the appointment system. Once they arrive at the practice, they wait for 10 minutes which is ‘not long’ for them. They’re not part of the PPG and are not interested in joining. The patient said that they are satisfied with the treatment and service they receive. They also felt that the GP/nurse explained the results well. They said that they usually get to see their usual GP. They haven’t had any problems communicating with GP staff.

Patient 2

The patient has been with the practice for 5 years. They said registration process with the practice was ‘easy’. They said since the provider took over in February there hasn’t been a difference from the previous provider. They said it was convenient to get to their practice. They said the waiting room is ‘very small’ and can get ‘very crowded with pushchairs’. They said it was easy to get through on the phone, but they must wait two weeks for an appointment. They said if they ring for an emergency appointment then they can get an appointment straight away. In terms of waiting time, they said sometimes they must wait up to 30 minutes in the practice depending on how busy it gets. They said they haven’t heard of the PPG before and can’t ‘be bothered and haven’t got the time’ to join the PPG. The patient said that they are satisfied with the treatment and service they receive. They also felt that the GP/nurse explained the results well. They said they were not bothered by seeing a GP of their choice. They haven’t had any problems communicating with GP staff.

Patient 3	Patient 4
<p>The patient said that they had been with the practice for 20 years. Since the new provider took over in February, they have noticed that there are longer opening hours and less queues. The journey to the practice is convenient and 'very easy'. In terms of making a GP appointment, they said that when they phone to make an appointment it's difficult to get through as it keeps ringing. Also, it takes 2 – 3 weeks to see a GP. They said when waiting to see the GP it can sometimes be 10 minutes or up to half an hour. They said they had not heard of what a PPG is.</p>	<p>The patient said they had been registered with the practice for one month. They said that when they booked their first appointment it was 'very easy'. Today was their first appointment and they came to the practice with their baby. They said they had to wait 'half an hour' before seeing the GP. They also said that they wouldn't be interested in joining the PPG as they 'don't have time'.</p>
Patient 5	Patient 6
<p>The patient said they had been registered with their practice for 8 years. They said it was 'quite convenient' for them to get to their GP Practice. They said that they sometimes book their GP appointments online. However, whenever they try to phone in, they can't get through for almost 'half an hour' sometimes. They said it takes almost 2 weeks for a routine appointment. They said last time they had to take their son to a walk-in clinic. They said, usually they have to wait 10 – 15 minutes in the waiting room. They're not aware of the PPG group but would consider joining the group. They said when booking online, they can pick their doctor of choice but on the phone, they are not able to pick their choice of doctor. They said the doctors are 'okay but the rest of the staff can be rude over the phone and in person'. They also said the waiting area is 'not big enough and is crowded with pushchairs and can get very hot'.</p>	<p>The patient said that they had been with the GP Practice for 11 years. Their GP is located close by to their home, so it's convenient for them. They said that they come to the practice to book their GP appointment and within a few days they can see a GP. They said they were happy with the appointment system. In terms of waiting times, they said they usually wait for 10 minutes before seeing a GP.</p>
Patient 7	
<p>They said they had been registered with this practice for 52 years, since birth. They have also registered their children here. They said that they found the process 'easy and staff are helpful'. In terms of the provider change, they said that they don't see any 'massive changes' after February and it remained the same. They live in a street close by, so they usually walk to the clinic. They usually ring the practice to make an appointment and find it easy to get through the phone. They can get same day appointments. If not, they ask them to ring the practice the next day. They said the doctors</p>	

here are very good. In terms of waiting time, they said it depended. They said sometimes the patients before them may need some more time than the usual 10 minutes and the doctors 'don't want to rush which is understandable'. If they needed an extra 10 minutes, they can ask their GP for it and they will be happy to extend the consultation. They said they're aware of the PPG. They said they were part of the smoker's group as they are a cancer patient and smoker. They said that they believed 'all works well in the practice' and they have many friends through the PPG. They said they were happy with the treatment and care provided.

The doctors/nurses explain the treatments/results well as they have dyslexia. They said they usually see their GP of choice. They felt this was important because of their complex condition and their GP knows them well and their history. They have also developed a good relationship with them. They said in the 52 years, they have faced a problem only once. When they came with a complaint of back pain, they were given a painkiller for the pain many times and then they were rushed to A&E for surgery and they have got rid of that doctor now. They said everything works well being a renal cancer patient, they have been 'well taken care of the doctors here'. They said they know how to make a complaint – there is a form at the reception, they fill in and put in the anonymous box. They said this was the best practice in the area.

Conclusion

Overall, this is a well-run practice. It was positive to hear that HMC (Hounslow Medical Centre) held a patient engagement event to introduce themselves as the new provider. They have a Patient Officer leading on campaigns and events which helps with raising awareness about several issues (e.g. smear tests, diabetes, asthma etc.).

It was clear that staff welcomed the new provider and felt positive about the change. Staff also felt that it would be beneficial for them to receive more information on different services to signpost patients to. HMC run multiple GP surgeries across the borough and staff have mentioned that if cover is needed, they would be able to request staff members from the other sites. Whether this impacts the service delivery of other GP surgeries is questionable. Majority of staff mentioned that a new space/building or additional space would be helpful, but it didn't prevent them from delivering a high standard of care. It was visible to us and patients, that the waiting area is small and can become overcrowded.

Most of the patients we spoke to had been at the practice for several years (between 5 – 52 years). Some said they were pleased with the appointment system and others raised the issue that it can be difficult to get through on the phone and routine appointments can take up to 2 – 3 weeks. This is not unusual and many patients from other GP surgeries have fed back similar experiences. But it would be good for the Practice to investigate further. Patients have raised the issue of waiting times saying that they must wait between 10 – 30 minutes to see the GP/nurse. This again was not uncommon feedback. Many patients across other GP surgeries have fed back similar experiences. However, it would be good for the Practice to see how waiting times could be reduced. Many of the patients said they hadn't heard of the PPG (Patient Participation Group) and were not interested in attending. However, one patient who had been part of the PPG prior to the new provider taking over was complimentary of it.

Longer opening hours introduced by the new provider were positively received by staff and patients. Majority of the patients were pleased with the treatment and care they received and treatment explanations from their GP/nurse.

Next steps

The report will be published on the Healthwatch Hounslow website www.healthwatchhounslow.co.uk/enter-and-view-visit-reports/ and will be circulated to the provider and the commissioners of GP services in Hounslow.

This report is based on our observations and the views of patients and staff that Healthwatch Hounslow spoke to on the day of our visit, and we appreciate it does not necessarily represent the views of all the patients and staff members at Bedfont Clinic.