



Enter & View

The Greenwood Practice

89 Gubbins Lane, Harold Wood

RM3 0DR

7 November 2016

Healthwatch Havering is the operating name of
Havering Healthwatch Limited
A company limited by guarantee
Registered in England and Wales
No. 08416383



What is Healthwatch Havering?

Healthwatch Havering is the local consumer champion for both health and social care. Our aim is to give local citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for all individuals locally.

We are an independent organisation, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and are able to employ our own staff and involve lay people/volunteers so that we can become the influential and effective voice of the public.

Healthwatch Havering is a Company Limited by Guarantee, managed by three part-time directors, including the Chairman and the Company Secretary, supported by two part-time staff and a number of volunteers, both from professional health and social care backgrounds and people who have an interest in health or social care issues.

Why is this important to you and your family and friends?

Following the public inquiry into the failings at Mid-Staffordshire Hospital, the Francis report reinforced the importance of the voices of patients and their relatives within the health and social care system.

Healthwatch England is the national organisation which enables the collective views of the people who use NHS and social services to influence national policy, advice and guidance.

Healthwatch Havering is your local organisation, enabling you on behalf of yourself, your family and your friends to ensure views and concerns about the local health and social services are understood.

Your contribution is vital in helping to build a picture of where services are doing well and where they need to be improved. This will help and support the Clinical Commissioning Groups and the Local Authority to make sure their services really are designed to meet citizens' needs.

***‘You make a living by what you get,
but you make a life by what you give.’
Winston Churchill***

What is an Enter and View?

Under Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Healthwatch Havering has statutory powers to carry out Enter and View visits to publicly funded health and social care services in the borough, such as hospitals, GP practices, care homes and dental surgeries, to observe how a service is being run and make any necessary recommendations for improvement.

These visits can be prompted not only by Healthwatch Havering becoming aware of specific issues about the service or after investigation, but also because a service has a good reputation and we would like to know what it is that makes it special.

Enter & View visits are undertaken by representatives of Healthwatch Havering who have been duly authorised by the Board to carry out visits. Prior to authorisation, representatives receive training in Enter and View, Safeguarding Adults, the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberties. They also undergo Disclosure Barring Service checks.

Background and purpose of the visit:

Healthwatch Havering (HH) is aiming to visit all health and social care facilities in the borough. This is a way of ensuring that all services delivered are acceptable and the safety of the resident is not compromised in any way.

The Healthwatch team were met by the Practice Manager who advised that she had worked at the practice, which is provided over two sites (the second being in Ardleigh Green Road), for some 28 years.

The premises

The Gubbins Lane surgery is provided in two converted houses on a very busy road, with only 4 designated parking bays (maximum waiting time 3 hours) - one of which is designated for disabled drivers. There is no parking on Gubbins Lane although it is possible to park in the side street (The Drive) other than during a restricted period, between 10.30am and 11.30am.

The external building appeared to be in good condition. The surgery opening times were displayed at the front door but there was no signposting to the disabled/wheelchair access at the side of the building. This access is via a ramp through a rather narrow door but there is a bell inviting patients to ring if they need assistance in entering, when a member of staff will attend. There appeared to be little or no accommodation for pushchairs etc. There was also a notice displaying details of the GP Hub out-of-hours services and the walk-in Centre at Harold Wood.

The waiting room displayed posters on a wide variety of conditions and available services. There was also a poster indicating that the CQC would be visiting the surgery on Thursday 10 November and there were comment cards and a box on the reception counter.

There did not appear to be any signage towards the reception area but this was obvious once inside the building. Patients reported to reception and were then called to see the doctor/nurse from one of two waiting rooms. The doctors/nurses buzzed reception to indicate when the next patient should be called in and the receptionist called out the patient's name, directing them as necessary. We found that the reception staff were very discreet although there appeared to be little privacy overall in the reception area, which was very wide. The team were advised that there was a panic button installed in the reception office but it was sited at one end of a fairly long reception desk.

There is an on-line booking service for doctors' appointments but not for nurses' appointments.

Internally, the surgery was clean and comfortable, other than three chairs which needed to be removed and replaced/re-covered. The medical records were stored in a number of purpose-made filing cabinets but had overflowed into cabinet top boxes, although they looked neat and tidy. Because the surgery is provided in two converted houses, the pre-existing design presents particular problems.

The nurses' treatment room was well-equipped and well organised. Some minor surgery procedures such as lump removal and joint injections are performed here.

The team did note that there was little space in which to accommodate children away from the mainstream of patients waiting to be seen. Potentially infectious patients are requested to sit in the small clinic room available.

The practice

The opening hours are 9am-11am Monday to Friday, 5pm-6.30pm Monday and Friday and 4pm-5.30pm Tuesday and Wednesday; there are limited weekend surgeries on alternate Saturdays for booked appointments. These times reflect the availability of booked appointments: it is, however, normal practice for all patients to be able to attend and be seen the same day at the end of the booked sessions. The morning nurses' clinics are provided on a walk-in basis but evening appointments are bookable and it may be up to two weeks' wait for a booked appointment.

There are 6 doctors providing cover over the two sites: 3 full time partners, 1 full time salaried GP and 2 part-time salaried GPs. Additionally, there are 2 Practice Nurses on each site. There are 6 part-time reception staff who, between them, cover annual leave and sickness.

The practice website is updated every month or so.

When patients are referred for tests, they are asked to ring for results at a time appropriate for the tests to be processed. GPs/nurses review results as they come back and an action box is completed daily. Where action is required, every effort is made to contact the patient by telephone but if this fails, a letter is sent out. Non-response from 3 letters instigates a further phone call and, if the patient is unable to attend the surgery, a visit to the patient's home.

The only service charges made are for Hepatitis B injections. Details of this are displayed within the waiting room.

According to the website, requests for repeat prescriptions are dealt with within 48 hours but the team was advised that all prescription requests received by 11.30am were written up on the same day. The practice has electronic links with several local pharmacies.

Additional support is provided, by nurses, to patients with long-term conditions. Regular warfarin tests are carried out in patients' homes if necessary and nurses promote additional/ancillary services such as Alcoholics Anonymous, drug rehabilitation etc. Regret was noted about the withdrawal of the Weight Watchers free service.

There did not appear to be any annual reviews of patients over 70 and there was no doctor allocated specifically for older patients, but patients with long-term conditions were monitored and tests were carried out where these were indicated.

The team noted that the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is managed online, which is less than satisfactory; direct, personal contact with PPG members through meetings is preferable.

Staff training appeared to be carried out on an ad hoc basis and most had undertaken Life Support training, Fire training and Safeguarding. Doctors and Nurses were trained to a higher level in courses appropriate to their duties.

It was noted that the practice did not make use of telephone triaging of appointment requests. This is something that, after a period of consultation with patients and preparation, might usefully be introduced.

Patients' views

During the visit, the team talked to a few patients, whose views about the practice were mixed. Some felt that it was “brilliant” but others - possibly those who would be going to work after their consultation - felt that the wait for an immediate consultation was unacceptably long. There were comments about the length of wait for nurses' booked appointments.

Recommendations

The team recommend that:

- Consideration be given to managing the PPG by direct contact and meetings rather than simply online.
- All soft furnishings be examined for damage and repaired or replaced as required.
- The arrangements for storing medical records be reviewed to provide a more user-friendly, logical way of storage.
- A notice indicating the location of the wheelchair access be fitted to the main surgery sign.
- Consideration be given to providing some early morning appointments specifically for patients who must proceed to work.
- Consideration be given to consulting patients on the possibility of providing some telephone triage/consultations to help reduce the high attendance at the surgery.

The team would like to thank all staff and patients who were seen during the visit for their help and co-operation, which is much appreciated.

Disclaimer

This report relates to the visit on 7 November 2016 and is representative only of those residents, carers and staff who participated. It does not seek to be representative of all service users and/or staff.

Participation in Healthwatch Havering

Local people who have time to spare are welcome to join us as volunteers. We need both people who work in health or social care services, and those who are simply interested in getting the best possible health and social care services for the people of Havering.

Our aim is to develop wide, comprehensive and inclusive involvement in Healthwatch Havering, to allow every individual and organisation of the Havering Community to have a role and a voice at a level they feel appropriate to their personal circumstances.

We are looking for:

Members

This is the key working role. For some, this role will provide an opportunity to help improve an area of health and social care where they, their families or friends have experienced problems or difficulties. Very often a life experience has encouraged people to think about giving something back to the local community or simply personal circumstances now allow individuals to have time to develop themselves. This role will enable people to extend their networks, and can help prepare for college, university or a change in the working life. There is no need for any prior experience in health or social care for this role.

The role provides the face to face contact with the community, listening, helping, signposting, providing advice. It also is part of ensuring the most isolated people within our community have a voice.

Some Members may wish to become **Specialists**, developing and using expertise in a particular area of social care or health services.

Supporters

Participation as a Supporter is open to every citizen and organisation that lives or operates within the London Borough of Havering. Supporters ensure that Healthwatch is rooted in the community and acts with a view to ensure that Healthwatch Havering represents and promotes community involvement in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social services.

Interested? Want to know more?

Call us on **01708 303 300**; or email
enquiries@healthwatchhaverling.co.uk



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