



Baltimore Park Surgery: findings from a Healthwatch Reading visit

Where: Baltimore Park Surgery, 59a Hemdean Road, Caversham, RG4 7SS

When: January 29, 2016, for 2 hours in the morning

Who: 50 people spoke with a trained Healthwatch Reading staff member

Why: Healthwatch Reading is visiting all local GP surgeries to get patient views

How: Healthwatch used 'Enter and View' powers to visit on a pre-agreed date



What patients like

- 48 patients out of 50 praised the quality of care, treatment and service they received
- 48/50 patients were happy with the surgery opening hours
- Most patients booked appointments by phone, and most found it quick and easy to do so
- 35/50 patients felt it important to see a doctor or nurse of choice and 34 achieved this
- 32/45 patients who had ever wanted to be seen urgently, had got a same-day appointment



What patients dislike

- Some reported technical issues with online bookings



Healthwatch observations

- Very busy surgery, but well managed with five phone lines answered in a back office, to free up front-desk receptionists
- Adjoining pharmacy on site
- Children's play equipment in waiting area
- Many people used electronic sign-in, freeing up reception
- Good access - automatic doors
- Machine in reception area can measure blood pressure, height and weight, to give results that can be taken into consultations



Patients' suggestions

- 1 person asked if patients could email GPs about health issues

'Can't think of anything I am unhappy about - lovely doctors and staff - no problems.'

'I would like to have more time with my GP.'

'I phoned at 10am and was still seen on the same day.'

'I haven't had a good experience with the website.'

Turn over to read the surgery's response to the feedback



How the surgery has responded to the patient feedback

'We are very pleased that the majority of patients found it easy to make an appointment. All patients, whose own problems are deemed urgent by the doctor through our telephone triage system, will be seen on the same day. We operate an 'own doctor' system, so that patients are seen the majority of the time by the same doctor and on the occasions where this is not possible, they will be seen by one of our permanent, salaried doctors. We only use one locum, who is well known to our patients, as she was previously a salaried GP here.

We are planning a campaign to increase the number of patients booking their appointments online, at present only 3% are using it and our target is 10%. We do have both Saturday and evening pre-bookable appointments available. We have recently installed a new telephone system as we were aware of the difficulties patients were sometimes having getting through. This will be much more efficient and enable patients to know where they are in the queue. We discourage patients from emailing the surgery with clinical problems as we cannot guarantee that the email will be checked regularly enough to maintain safety.

We are very pleased that the majority of patients are very satisfied with the care that they receive at Balmore Park Surgery.'

More information about Balmore Park Surgery

Number of patients: 16,077

Number of female GPs: 6 part-time, 1 locum

No. of male GPs: 4 full-time

Blood tests: Phlebotomist available 8am-11.30am Mon-Fri, or a healthcare assistant takes bloods at other times

Wheelchair access: Yes

Open times: Mon-Fri 8am-6.30pm; plus one rotating evening per week on Tues/Weds/Thurs until 7.30pm and Saturdays 8am-12pm via pre-bookable appointments

Appointment booking: Contact reception, or book online for routine appointments with your own GP only

Healthwatch Reading thanks patients for giving their time to share their views. We also thank practice staff for their assistance. Enter and View findings are only a 'snapshot' of services on a particular day/s so they are not a comprehensive judgement on the overall quality of the service.

Healthwatch Reading is an independent charity with some statutory powers. We can take your feedback in confidence, help you make complaints, and refer serious concerns to other agencies. Phone us on 0118 937 2295, email info@healthwatchreading.co.uk, visit our website www.healthwatchreading.co.uk or visit us on the 3rd floor, Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ.