



# Circuit Lane Surgery: findings from a Healthwatch Reading visit

**Where:** Circuit Lane Surgery, 53 Circuit Lane, Southcote, Reading, RG30 3AN, plus two local care homes where some patients live, and a baby clinic used by patients

**When:** 31 March, 22 April, and 21 May (at the practice); 9 and 11 June (care homes) and 10 June (children's centre), 2015

**Who:** 60 people in total shared their views (53 at the surgery and 7 at the other sites)

**Why:** Healthwatch Reading is running a project to gather patient feedback from every GP surgery in Reading between April 1 2015 and 31 March 2016. We also wanted to hear how patients had been affected after Circuit Lane was temporarily taken over by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust from 1 February 2015.

**How:** Healthwatch Reading used its legal 'Enter and View' powers to visit on pre-agreed dates. Trained Healthwatch staff spoke to patients in waiting areas.

## Patients said they liked:

-  Reception staff, who are friendly and helpful, and 'nice' doctors
-  Being notified about the change of management - most had received a letter about this

## Patients said they disliked:

-  How difficult it can be to make appointments - phoning repeatedly, being on hold for a long time or queuing up at reception
-  Not being able to see the same doctor every time, which meant having to repeat 'their story'

## Healthwatch Reading's observations:

-  More patients at the May visit said they could see a GP of their choice than those on later visits
-  Not many patients were aware there was a Patient Participation Group they could join

## Patient ideas for fixing concerns:

-  Look at whether appointment booking can be adapted so patients don't have to mostly rely on calling first thing in the morning
-  Recruit more staff to ease workload pressures

## How managers plan to fix issues raised:

-  Online booking system launched in May 2015, aims to get 30% of patients booking this way
-  Triage system changed to avoid duplication and delays, and pre-bookable appointments extended to four weeks ahead, instead of two
-  A replacement telephone system is being considered
-  A recruitment drive is underway to attract permanent doctors and reduce the use of locums

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

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“Can be hard to get an appointment. I work 6am-2pm but have to call at 8am. When I can call [I find] they’re fully booked.”

“Main issue is appointments system. Call and get a queue system.”

“A lot harder to get through on the phone - call 8 - get through at 9.”

When you do get to see a doctor they are all nice - they do a good job.”

“Reception staff very polite. Have recently moved away, but staying here because fantastic doctor - travel to come here.”

“Quite hard to see doctor of choice. My preferred GP has retired...lots of changes. Most recent doctor I saw, commented about patients seeing so many doctors. To see chosen doctor you must book ahead.”

“Appointments going later - into the evening - for example, 6.30pm, works well”

“Have they considered recruiting an extra nurse?”

“Fantastic service today.”

“Would like appointments three weeks in advance.”

Healthwatch Reading thanks patients for giving time to share their views. We also thank practice staff for their assistance on the visits.

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 organisation. We can take your feedback in confidence, help you make complaints, and refer serious concerns to other agencies.

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