



Calcot Surgery (branch of Theale Medical Centre): a visit report by Healthwatch

Where: Calcot Surgery, 72a Royal Avenue, Calcot, RG31 4UR (a member of the North and West Reading Clinical Commissioning Group but geographically, over the Reading border, within West Berkshire)

When: 25 February 2016, for two hours in the morning

Who: 11 people in the waiting area spoke with a Healthwatch staff member

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



What patients like

- 11 out of 11 patients praised the quality of care, treatment and service
- All 11 phoned to book appointments and said it was generally easy to get through
- 9/11 patients were happy with the surgery's opening hours



What patients dislike

- Having to wait 2-4 weeks for an appointment
- Only 4 people said they were able to get same-day urgent appointments



Healthwatch observations

- Small branch surgery with limited hours but patients can also use main centre at Theale
- GP sickness or leave can result in temporary surgery closure
- Tidy and clean reception with informative noticeboards
- Potential access difficulty through 2-door, non-automatic entrance
- Reception based in waiting area so may affect privacy
- No patients during the visit said they booked online, so may need promoting



Patients' suggestions

- Reduce waiting times
- Extend hours

'The GPs and staff have always been approachable and help as they can.'

'Easy to get through on the phone, difficult to get an appointment, sometimes wait 2-3 weeks.'

'Limited hours, sometimes closed for a week. Offered Theale, but difficult to get to.'

'If they can't give you a same-day appointment, a telephone consultation is offered and this works.'

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



How the surgery has responded to the patient feedback

'From 1 April 2016, there will be appointments every morning at Calcot. In addition, Theale is open full days. We do aim to open Calcot at these times but unfortunately this is not always possible due to sickness or absence. We also do two late evenings per week and two Saturdays per month at Theale.'

We have a duty doctor on every day who deals with all requests from patients for urgent appointments. The duty doctor will call the patient and triage them to identify whether they need to be seen on the day or book a routine appointment.

We do our utmost to accommodate patients and offer a wide range of appointments and signposting to the pharmacy etc to try and ensure best use of nurse and GP appointments. Due to the high demand from patients, appointments are taken up quickly and yes, there is sometimes a wait to see a GP. Depending upon the nature of the request and the urgency, patients are not always able to see their GP of choice. We do however do our best to ensure continuity of care and GP of choice wherever possible.

'At busy times our phone lines do get extremely busy, but we always have at least three receptionists answering phones at any one time.'

More information about Calcot Surgery

Number of patients: 10,866 (at Theale main site and Calcot branch)

Number of female GPs: 7 (across whole practice)

Number of male GPs: 2 (across whole practice)

Blood tests: Phlebotomist available only at Theale Medical Centre

Opening times: Monday to Friday 9am-12 midday at Calcot branch; Theale open 8am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, plus extended hours some Saturdays and evenings

Appointment booking: Some appointments can be booked online

Wheelchair access: Yes

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 0118 937 2295, email info@healthwatchreading, visit our website www.healthwatchreading.co.uk or drop in to us on the 3rd floor, Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading, RG1 3BQ.