



Eldon Road Surgery: findings from a Healthwatch Reading visit

Where: Eldon Road Surgery, 10 Eldon Road, Reading, RG1 4DH

When: 12 January and 1 February, 2016, for two hours in the morning, each visit

Who: 10 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

- 9 out of 10 patients were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the quality of care, treatment and service they received
- 6/10 were happy with opening surgery's opening hours



What patients dislike

- Only 2 out of 10 said it was easy to get through on the phone
- 3/10 said they could always get a same-day urgent appointment



Healthwatch observations

- Receptionists are friendly & polite
- One receptionist speaks Nepali and was heard helping patients using their preferred language
- Noticeboards in the waiting room are attractively laid out and clearly labelled
- The reception desk is in the waiting room, which could mean a lack of privacy when patients speak to receptionists



Patients' suggestions

- One patient said the surgery hours, combined with working in London, made it difficult for their partner to get an appointment - could hours take needs of commuters into account?

'Good doctors, although only one doctor working at a time, so can be hard to get an emergency appointment if you do not get through the first time.'

'Friendly staff.'

'Personal level of services is good - reception is typically chaos.'

'I go to the walk-in centre [if I can't get an emergency appointment].'

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



How the surgery has responded to the patient feedback

'The telephones are busy first thing in the morning on most days. We have two receptionists in the surgery and they both take calls to minimise delays. Unfortunately, if we have a member of staff on leave or off sick, then only one receptionist may be on duty and therefore it may be possible that there are delays getting through. We do try to minimise people from holding the lines up by promoting online booking; by doing this they can access requests for their prescriptions as well as looking at their results.

We also encourage people who are ringing for results/queries etc. to wait until after 11am to help ease the telephone calls first thing. We also have an automatic attendant on our telephone system which reinforces this message.

Eldon Road Surgery offers a variety of appointments, including pre-bookable. We offer 14 book-on-the-day appointments and up to 10 telephone appointments a day. Telephone appointments are triaged by the doctor on duty and if necessary the patient will be seen on the day.

Once all the appointments are booked then sometimes it is necessary for patients to be asked to ring at 8am the following day for a book-on-the-day appointment or to go to the NHS Walk-In Centre [in Broad Street Mall].

Our reception area is very open but we do have notices up telling patients they can talk us confidentially and we will take them to another room for privacy.

On occasions reception can appear to look chaotic but we will endeavour to try to rectify this.'

More info about Eldon Road Surgery (supplied by practice)

Number of patients: 2,452

Number of female GPs: 1, part-time,

Number of male GPs: 2, part-time

Blood tests: Phlebotomist available

Wheelchair access: Limited

Open times: Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri,
8am-6.30pm; Weds, 8am-7.30pm

Appointment booking: People can book online, 24 hours a day, for routine appointments up to five weeks in advance or by contacting receptionists during opening hours

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.co.uk, visit our website www.healthwatchreading.co.uk or visit us on the 3rd floor, Reading Central Library, Abbey Square Reading, RG1 3BQ.