



Tilehurst Medical Centre (Dr Kumar & Partners): report of Healthwatch visit

Where: Tilehurst Medical Centre (part of Dr Kumar & Partners practice, which also has a surgery in Milman Rd), 5-7 Norcot Rd, Reading, RG30 6BP

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

Who: 12 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

- 12 out of 12 patients were happy with opening hours
- 10/12 praised the quality of care, treatment and service
- 10/12 phoned to make an appointment and most found it easy to get through



What patients dislike

- 7 out of 12 patients felt it important to see doctor or nurse of choice, but only 4 said they achieved this
- Only 6/12 said they could get same-day urgent appointments



Healthwatch observations

- Small surgery with car parking
- Bright reception with a selection of leaflets
- Single door access, not electronic
- Reception area is within waiting area so difficult to achieve patient privacy
- No patients said during the visit they had booked online, so online booking might need promoting



Patients' suggestions

- Ability to make appointments in advance
- More same-day urgent appointments

'This surgery provides appointments on Saturdays, which makes it easier for workers.'

'Have been overall happy with care provided, however sometimes I feel a bit rushed.'

'Easy to get through on the phone.'

'Make it easier to make appointments.'

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



How the surgery has responded to the patient feedback

'We have been through a period of change with longstanding doctors retiring or reducing their sessions. We recognise that this has been unsettling for patients and we keep our appointment system under review to ensure that reasonable demand is being met.'

It is not always practical to ensure that patients are able to see the doctor or nurse of their choice as we can only offer one doctor and one nurse per session, due to availability of ground floor consulting rooms.

We trust that we have gone some way to establishing a stable availability as we generally have one male doctor who is available 2.5 days of the week; one for 0.5 day on Wednesday and another (female GP) who covers Thursdays and Fridays.

We should like to clarify that our phones open at 8am for booking appointments "on the day". We have a mixture of appointments which can be pre-booked in advance as well as "on the day" appointments. We also offer a number of telephone consultation slots.'

More information about Tilehurst Medical Centre

Number of patients: 2,539 (plus 4,250 at Milman Rd main site)

Number of female GPs: 3 part-time (including 2 part-time locums) across the practice

Number of male GPs: 3 part-time across the practice

Blood tests: Nurse-led one-hour session per day

Opening times: Monday to Friday 8.30am-6.30pm; plus extended hours of Saturday mornings alternating each week between Tilehurst and other practice surgery at Milman Road

Appointment booking: Online or by telephone

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.

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