



Westwood & Overdown surgeries: findings from Healthwatch Reading visits

Where: Westwood Road Surgery Health Centre, 66 Westwood Rd, Reading, RG31 5PP, and Overdown Rd Surgery, 6 The Collonade, Overdown Rd, Reading, RG31 6PR (two Tilehurst branches of the Westwood Road Practice, which also has a third branch in Whitley Wood Lane in south Reading that is covered in a separate report)

When: 3 March 2016, for one hour each at Westwood Rd & Overdown Rd, in the morning

Who: 17 people in total from both sites spoke with a trained Healthwatch 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

- 15 out of 17 patients were happy with the care, treatment and service they received
- 15/17 were satisfied with the opening hours
- 14/17 said they were always seen the same day for urgent matters



What patients dislike

- Only 8 patients said they could see a doctor or nurse of their choice; 7 patients said it was important to see someone they knew for routine matters



Healthwatch observations

- Reception staff knew patients by name and greeted them cheerfully - there was a friendly atmosphere in waiting rooms at both sites
- Posters and health information displayed attractively, in spite of very limited space in the case of the smaller site (Overdown)



Patients' suggestions

- Several patients wanted more convenient appointment booking
- One patient suggested longer opening hours

'The receptionists are always very helpful and doctors do take time to explain or reassure you about your symptoms.'

'I don't like the booking system. It's hard to get an appointment if you work 9am-5pm, and the calling times are not suitable.'

'Two very prompt referrals for cancer and another condition. Good!!'

'It would be great to see the same doctor - sometimes you worry with someone new, that they won't pick up on the same things.'

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



How the surgery has responded to the patient feedback

'The phone issues are one we are addressing and are in fact reviewing a new system that will keep patients informed of a queuing system particularly in the morning between 8am and 10am, when we experience a particularly high volume of calls.

We do have a number of pre-bookable appointments that can be booked online, and we operate a triage system every morning and guarantee that if a patient wants to be seen the morning they phone in, they will be seen. We will remind patients of this in our next newsletter.

The issue of privacy [at reception] will be discussed at our next practice meeting, when this report will be reviewed with practice staff.

Seeing the same doctor has been an issue over the past six months as one of our salaried GPs has been on long term leave, so therefore her sessions have been covered by locums. She is back with us from March 2016, so this situation should improve.'

More info about Westwood Rd & Overdown surgeries (supplied by practice)

Number of patients: 5,300 (across three surgery sites)

Number of female GPs: 1 full time and 1 part time (across 3 sites)

Number of male GPs: 1 part time (across 3 sites)

Appointment booking: Online and by contacting reception

Open times: Westwood Rd: Mon-Wed 8am-6.30pm; Thurs 8am-8pm; Fri 8am-5pm. Overdown: Tues & Thurs only, 8am-12.30pm

Plus three Saturday mornings per month offering pre-booked appointments at either Westwood Rd, Kennet or London Rd surgeries under a joint 'advanced access' scheme

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.