



Enter & View Report Barlby Surgery

November 2023

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff and patients who met members of the Enter & View Team on that date.

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Practice Details

Contact details:

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Practice Manager:

Donna Seymour

Date and Time of Enter & View Visit:

29 November 2023

10AM-1PM

Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea Authorised Representatives:

Ruth Daniel (Engagement & Volunteer Coordinator)

Anna Velkova (Volunteer)

Jacqueline Ferguson (Volunteer)

Introduction

At Healthwatch Kensington and Chelsea, our mission is to collect the perspectives and experiences of individuals, particularly those whose voices are often overlooked, in order to provide them with a platform to share their views about a service. The goal of an Enter & View visit is to gather feedback and insights from both patients and staff of a service, while also observing and assessing the quality of the environment.

During our Enter & View visits in 2023, Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea visited three GP surgeries in Kensington & Chelsea, with Barlby Surgery being one of them.

These GP visits focused on evaluating the accessibility of the practice and identifying any challenges patients, may encounter when accessing their GP, especially for those who are vulnerable or have disabilities. All the Enter & View visits were conducted by authorised representatives who have the authority to visit health and social care facilities, whether announced or unannounced.

On November 29, 2023, Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea conducted an announced visit to Barlby Surgery. During this visit, our team gathered feedback from both patients and staff, and conducted observations of the clinic, which formed the basis of this report. The report highlights areas of good practice as well as potential areas for improvement.

As an independent organisation, Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea does not make judgments or express personal opinions. Instead, we rely on the feedback received and objective observations of the environment. The report is shared with the manager

to provide them with an opportunity to respond before it is published on the Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea website at www.healthwatchrbkc.org.uk

Additionally, we will schedule a revisit to assess the progress of any improvements. The report is also made available to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England, and any other relevant organisations.

General Information

Barlby Surgery is part of the West London Group Practice, which covers over 40 practices based in West London, these are divided into five Primary Care Networks (PCNs) Barlby Surgery falls under the Inclusive Health PCN. Services include GPs, Clinical Practitioners, Practice Nurses, Pharmacists, Social Prescribers and Administrative staff.

Methodology

During the announced visit, Enter and View representatives engaged with 12 patients and three members of staff to gather feedback. Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea collected the views and experiences of both patients and staff. A patient questionnaire was utilised, adapted to capture individual experiences and assess the accessibility of Barlby Surgery. Patients were asked to provide suggestions for improving their GP Surgery, including feedback on appointment scheduling, communication, and the

overall environment of the surgery. Staff members were also given a questionnaire to gather their perspectives on service provision, appointment management, communication, staffing levels, and support, including training opportunities. In addition to gathering feedback, Healthwatch Kensington and Chelsea Representatives conducted their own observations on the internal and external environment of the surgery, identifying barriers to accessibility and assessing the friendliness and communication skills of the staff.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, all names, pronouns, and identifiable details have been removed from the report.



12 Patients
3 Staff
1 Practice Manager

Summary

Surgery Demographic

Barlby Surgery is a member of the West London Federation, which serves a diverse patient population encompassing both affluent and deprived areas of Kensington & Chelsea, a substantial refugee community, and many individuals managing long term health conditions, among various other underrepresented groups. Patients have the flexibility to choose any practice based on their preferences and circumstances. Additionally, recognising the need to reach communities with limited access, Barlby Surgery offers specialised clinics and home visits tailored to older, more vulnerable patients, providing essential health services, information, and support from healthcare professionals.

Appointment Management

Appointments at Barlby Surgery are exclusively scheduled through the online system PATCHs or via telephone; they cannot be arranged in person at reception. Patients undergo triage to ensure they are seen by the most suitable healthcare professional.

Additionally, patients have the option to request video or phone consultations instead of face-to-face appointments.

For those unable to physically access the practice, Barlby Surgery offers a home visit service provided by GPs and Nurses.

Upon arrival, patients can self-check-in using an electronic system that has over 10 languages, although some opt to check in with reception staff. Interpretation services, including British Sign Language (BSL), can be arranged in advance for face-to-face or telephone appointments.

Visit Summary

The team at Barlby Surgery welcomed Healthwatch representatives and staff with Practice Manager Donna offering tea and coffee upon their arrival.

Updated informational materials such as flyers, leaflets, and posters detailing various services available at the practice, including interpreter services, were prominently displayed on a message board accessible to patients. However, it's worth noting that some patients in wheelchairs may have difficulty accessing the information due to chairs displayed in front of the notice board, and the fact that patients in wheelchairs could not see all the information on the notice board as it is not within their eye view.

Barlby Surgery offers a wide range of services, although only one GP is permanently employed, with others working on a rotating schedule; Practice Manager Donna explained this was due to a shortage of GPs across London.

The surgery has Regular Practice Nurses, Clinical Pharmacists, Social Prescribers, interpreters, and home visits are available to vulnerable patients.

The practice actively engages with a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Patient satisfaction with Barlby Surgery was generally positive; with most patients seen within 15-20 minutes and some patients only having to wait 10 minutes to see a GP on arrival.

Staff expressed satisfaction with their work environment, feeling adequately supported and capable of delivering person-centred care.

Overall, patients and staff alike were content with Barlby Surgery.

Enter & View Observations

Location and External Environment

Barlby Surgery is situated within the St Charles Centre for Health and Wellbeing in North Kensington, housed within a hospital building that also incorporates parts of a Mental Health centre. Adjacent to the practice are small private gardens. Access to the practice is through an entrance set back from the footpath, marked by a large black gate and numerous signs guiding visitors to the main hospital entrance.

Navigating the hospital complex on the initial visit can be somewhat confusing, given the interconnected nature of the buildings. However, clear signage within the hospital helps direct visitors to Barlby Surgery once inside the entrance.

The area benefits from excellent public transport links, and road access allows for convenient drop-off and pick-up. Additionally, there is a designated bay for disability parking at the hospital entrance, although local car parks must be utilised for those driving to the practice.

Access into the building is level from the footpath, ensuring ease of entry for wheelchair users and individuals with limited mobility. The practice itself is located on the second floor, with a lift available for accessibility.

Internal Environment and Waiting Area

Upon entering the second floor, a corridor leads into Barlby Surgery reception area, the reception is situated in a separate space to one side, clearly distinguishable from another GP surgery on the opposite side. There is ample space for both GP practices to have distinct receptions and waiting areas, with transparent glass providing some privacy between patients and staff, in adherence to ongoing COVID measures.

However, when more than three people are waiting in a queue, the space can become somewhat cramped, leading to overflow into the waiting room and potential overhearing of conversations with staff. Doors from the reception area lead to another waiting area where patients are directed after checking in.

Various rooms branch off from the central waiting area to accommodate GPs and other clinical and non-clinical teams. The second waiting area provides amenities such as water and hand sanitiser, with a disabled toilet conveniently located at the end of the corridor, away from the seated waiting area. The toilet is equipped with facilities for individuals with disabilities.

Patients arriving for appointments have the option to use an electronic check-in point, although most prefer to check in with reception staff. There is a display screen in the main reception area, that was not switched on or working on the day we arrived.

although not in use, G.P's or nursing staff would call out patients' names, when it was time to be seen.

Informational materials are prominently displayed around the waiting room, predominantly clinical in nature, with some information pertaining to the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and the Friends and Family Test (FFT).

While the hearing loop service was available, the one deaf patient that was asked about the service was not aware of it and had not been informed by members of staff, it was explained by staff that British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation services are available upon advance booking. Patients inquiring about the loop service would be accommodated accordingly.

Barlby Surgery Interactions

During attempts to arrange a Enter & View visit by phone, email and in person there were challenges reaching the practice manager, it was explained this was attributed to her recent return from annual leave and the subsequent workload. Nonetheless, staff exhibited professionalism and friendliness with Healthwatch staff and representatives.

Patients were verbally summoned into appointments by the attending Doctor or Nurse, with limited observed interaction between staff and patients beyond check-ins. Healthwatch representatives primarily interacted with patients in the second waiting area, with minimal engagement between staff and patients observed during check-in procedures.

Discussion with Barlby Surgery management revealed the practice's implementation of regular separate clinics for older, vulnerable patients. This initiative aims to improve the experience for patients who struggle with accessing weekday services, catering to individuals who may find regular visits overwhelming or stressful.

Patient Involvement

Healthwatch representatives engaged with 12 patients during their visit, although more patients could have been interviewed, as several were called into their appointments before completing the questionnaire.

Additionally, some patients declined to participate after the purpose of the questionnaire was explained. Among those who did provide feedback, one patient expressed distress over medication side effects related to their diabetes prescription, while another, who was deaf, encountered difficulties accessing the surgery Wi-Fi to communicate with doctors using an app. Some patients simply wished to be left alone, while others preferred to leave the practice immediately after their appointment. Patients who interacted with the Healthwatch team were at the practice for various reasons, including consultations with GP or other healthcare professionals and general inquiries.

Patient feedback

How did you make your appointment?

Among the 12 patients interviewed, 10 had arranged their appointments via telephone, following the practice's protocol of calling between 8 am and 10 am to secure a slot. One patient was asked to come into the practice to discuss their long-term condition, while another used the online app, (Dr.IQ), to make their appointment. Out of the 12 patients, 10 found the appointment scheduling process for their visit on that day to be easy. Two found it difficult as it took weeks to schedule the appointment.

We heard the following feedback regarding Appointment booking from several patients:

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"I prefer to call, as I do not know how to use the app."

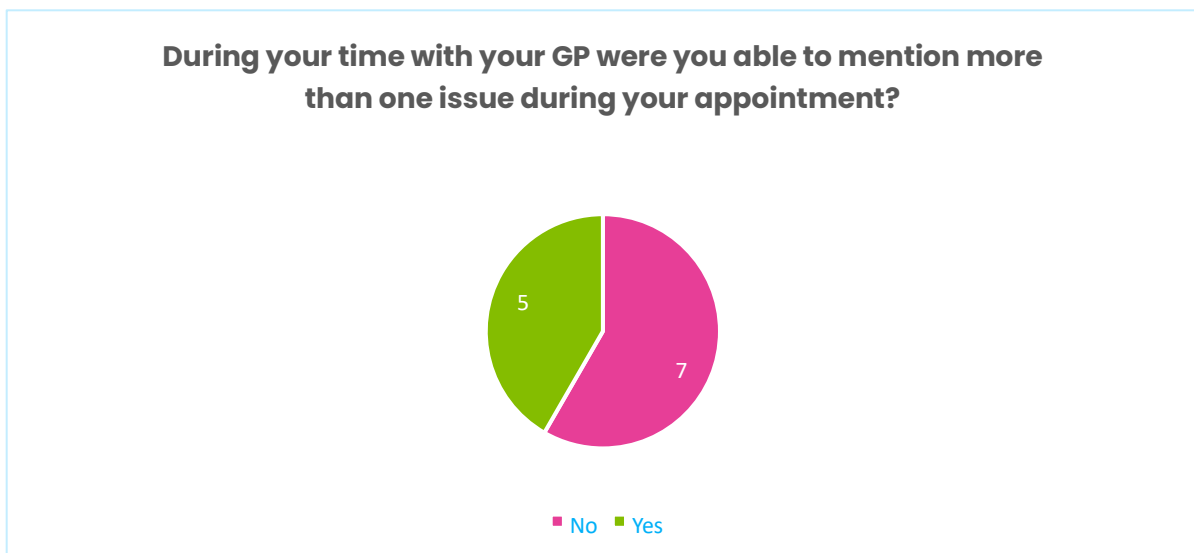
9

6

"I would like more booking options."

9

During your time with your GP were you able to mention more than one issue during your appointment?



Out of the total number of patients, five said they could address more than one health concern in a single visit. The remaining seven said they would need to make future appointments to discuss more issues.

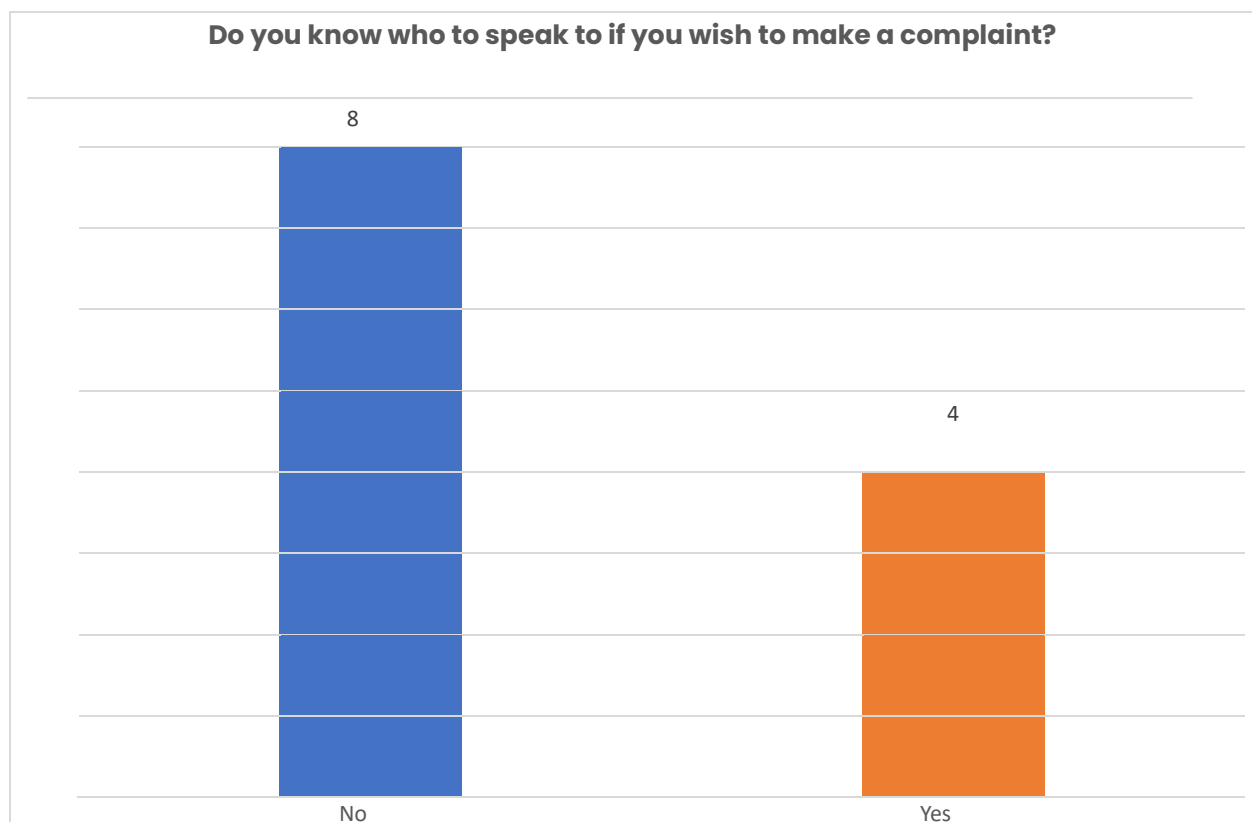
Are the reception staff easy to communicate with?

Of the 12 patients surveyed on communication, 10 reported positive experiences, while two mentioned variability depending on the staff member on duty.

Are you aware of Social Prescribing?

None of the patients were familiar with Social Prescribing, although one patient recalled their GP referring them to their local gym after surgery, which aligned with the concept.

Do you know who to speak to if you wish to make a complaint?



Of the patients questioned four stated that they were aware of whom to contact in the event of a complaint. Eight patients, however, acknowledged that they were unsure of how to file a complaint. Barlby Surgery has a complaint process, but it is not visible to patients who visit the surgery.

Suggestions for improvement

We asked patients how the service could be improved. We heard the following from some patients:

“I can only book GP appointment by calling at 8am, would like more flexible time options”.

“Would like to be able to book appointments in advance”.

“Have a longer appointment with doctor”.

“Staff sometimes giving contradicting information from one another, improve on communication”.

“Not having to discuss personal information with reception”.

Staff feedback

During the Enter & View visit at Barlby Surgery, Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea provided a questionnaire to three reception staff members. These staff members were observed interacting with patients briefly and demonstrated confidence in their roles while maintaining a friendly demeanour. Listed below are some of the questions they were asked.

How has staffing levels changed since the pandemic?

Overall, staff indicated that there have been no significant changes in staffing levels since the pandemic, and they did not elaborate on any pandemic-related staffing shortages.

How do you support patients to use the online booking/Messaging system?

All Staff mentioned supporting patients by directing them to workshops and admin buddies with relevant knowledge, as well as providing personal assistance with using the online system. They expressed satisfaction with the support provided to patients in this regard.

Do you have enough time to deal with each patient enquiry?

All Staff simply responded "yes" to this question without providing further detail.

What training have you had over the last year?

All staff members indicated that they have received adequate training to perform their duties, specifically mentioning 28 CPD (Continuing Professional Development) hours.

How do you think the current appointment system can be improved?

All three staff members commented there was nothing to be improved.

Does this GP Surgery have a personalised Care Plan for the elderly?

Again, not much detail in answering this question, just yes from all three staff members.

Summary and Recommendations

Based on observations of the environment and questionnaire feedback from patients and staff, the following recommendations have been developed for Barlby Surgery:

Strengths:

- The Staff at Barlby Surgery is caring, committed, compassionate and professional.
- The Surgery is delivering a holistic service with a blended mix of appointments geared to individual need about which patients are positive in their feedback.
- There is a loop service and other supporting services for more vulnerable patients.
- There are two separate waiting areas, one for checking in and one in a larger area where you wait to see your doctor or nurse, creating some privacy when patients first check in.
- There are disabled bays outside the entrance of the hospital.

Recommendations for improvement

- There is an opportunity to ensure wheelchair-accessible space in the second waiting area to accommodate patients comfortably, considering varied seating types to meet individual needs, and incorporate a designated play area for young children, currently lacking in both waiting areas.
- Establish a clear point of contact for the named Practice Manager at Barlby Surgery, potentially by displaying staff structure with photographs alongside posters delineating clinical and non-clinical roles, facilitating patients' quick reference to staff members they may encounter.
- Provide clear information regarding the complaints procedure to ensure all patients are aware of how to raise concerns or issues, potentially by implementing a Compliments, Comments, and Complaints box for easy access.
- Enhance the development of the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and actively work towards creating a more diversified group representative of the patient population.
- Improve accessibility for patients with disabilities by implementing an accessible notice board positioned at eye level for individuals in wheelchairs, ensuring they can easily access information about available services.
- Improve on the current level of flexibility regarding booking appointments at the surgery. The existing appointment system should allow patients the flexibility to schedule appointments in person.

Provider response

Despite multiple attempts made via email and extension of deadlines to facilitate a response, Barlby Surgery did not provide feedback. As a result, their input is not reflected in this report.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Kensington & Chelsea would like to thank management, staff and patients for taking the time to speak to us during the visit.

