

ENTER AND VIEW VISIT REPORT

Arran Medical Centre 18th December 2018

Part of Healthwatch Solihull's remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Solihull's Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Solihull's Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Solihull's safeguarding policy. The service manager will be informed, then the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding team will also be informed.

GP Surgery –Arran Medical Centre

Service Address: Arran Medical Centre, Mull Croft, Smiths Wood, B36 0PU

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Solihull would like to thank the Practice staff and the patients for their co-operation during the visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed during our visit made on Tuesday 18th December 2018. The report does not claim to be representative of all patients, only of those who contributed within the restricted time available.

Authorised Representatives

Nicola Standen
Natalie Travers

Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with Arran Medical Centre, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Solihull MBC, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CGG) and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Solihull website (www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk).

Background

Arran Medical Centre, located within North Solihull, has a practice list of 5960 patients (Source: <https://www.nhs.uk/Services/gp/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=35353>)

The Medical Centre's Consulting times are:

Monday	09:00 - 12:00	16:00 - 18:30
Tuesday	09:00 - 12:00	16:00 - 18:30
Wednesday	09:00 - 12:00	16:00 - 18:30
Thursday	09:00 - 12:00	
Friday	09:00 - 12:00	16:00 - 18:30
Saturday	Closed	
Sunday	Closed	

The Medical Centre also offers extended opening hours for appointments. Extended opening hours appointments are coordinated through the 'North Solihull Collaborative' that comprises 10 North Solihull GP Practices. Appointments are offered for all patients of Surgeries within the Collaborative at Bosworth Medical Centre between 6.30pm and 8pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 12pm on Saturdays and 9am to 11 am on Sundays.

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Purpose of our visit

Healthwatch Solihull visited Arran Medical Centre on Tuesday 18th December 2018.

The most recent CQC report (based on an inspection undertaken in January 2018) rated the Surgery as 'good' across areas of 'safety', 'effectiveness', 'caring', responsiveness and being 'well-led', with an overall rating of good

(Source: https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAH0315.pdf).

However, Healthwatch Solihull in their role of gathering intelligence from people living in the Solihull Borough regarding their experiences of local health and social care services, has received some mixed feedback from patients of Arran Medical Centre. Given the feedback we have received, the purpose of our visit was to explore first hand with patients present on the day of our visit, their experiences of the Surgery.

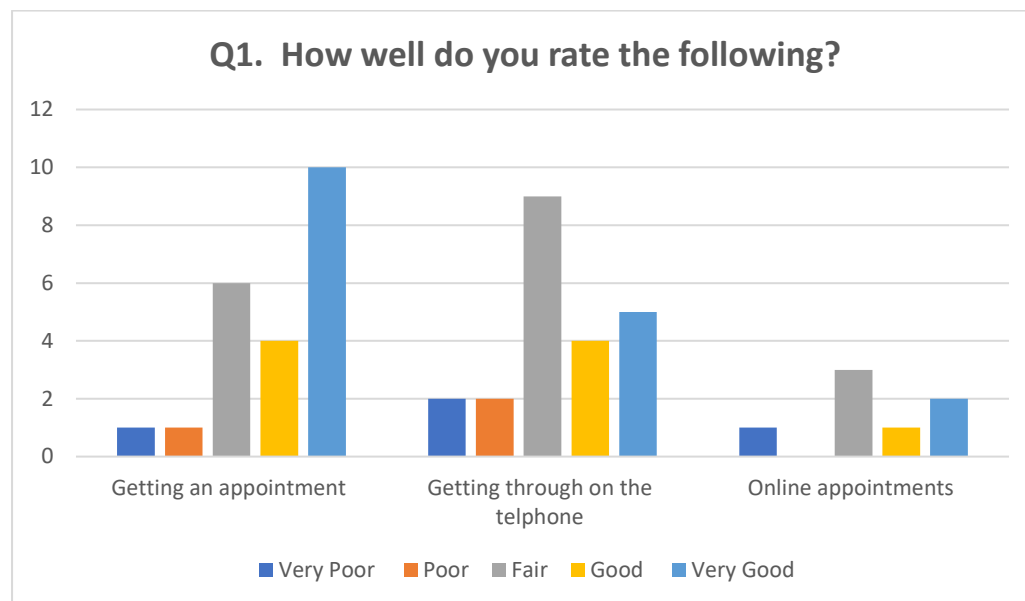
What we did

Two Authorised Representatives visited the Surgery from 10.00 am to 12.30pm on 18th December 2018. During our visit we administered 22 surveys with patients and also observed the environment. The visit was unescorted and at no time during the visit did we enter consulting rooms.

This report will detail a range of recommendations based on the findings of our Enter and View visit and it is anticipated that these recommendations will contribute to improving service delivery within the Medical Centre and in turn service experience for patients registered with the Surgery.

Findings:

- Please note not all patients answered all questions



'Getting an appointment' and 'Getting through on the telephone'

'Getting an appointment' received largely positive responses with 14 (of the 22 respondents who answered this question) giving a rating of 'good' or 'very good', a further six respondents giving a rating of 'fair' and only two respondents rating 'getting an appointment' as 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Again getting through on the telephone received largely positive responses with nine of the 22 respondents who answered this question rating this as 'good' or 'very good', nine as 'fair' and four as 'poor' or 'very poor'. However, during our visit we observed one patient coming in to the Surgery to arrange an appointment and the patient informed Reception Staff that they had been trying to call the Surgery 'all morning'. We asked the Receptionist who answered the phones and arranged appointments for patients and were informed that they were answered by the Receptionists. On the day of our visit there were two Receptionists on duty. Given that the Receptionists staff the Reception and answer the phones, there is the potential for either phones not to be answered when the Reception staff are busy with patients at the Reception desk or for patients within the Surgery to have a wait at the Reception desk as phones are being answered. Given this we would recommend that consideration is given increasing the numbers of staff available for both answering the phone and greeting patients at the desk or that at peak calling periods staff are allocated to either the Reception desk or to answer the phone.

'Online appointments'

The survey further asked patients to rate their experiences of using the on-line booking service. However, only seven of a possible 22 respondents answered this question with three survey respondents rating their experience of the online booking service as 'good' or

‘very good’, three as ‘fair’ and one respondent as ‘very poor’. That fewer respondents answered this question may be indicative that fewer people make use of the on-line booking system. This is to some extent supported by our findings where a number of respondents told us that they do not book appointments on-line,

I was unaware that you could book appointments on-line

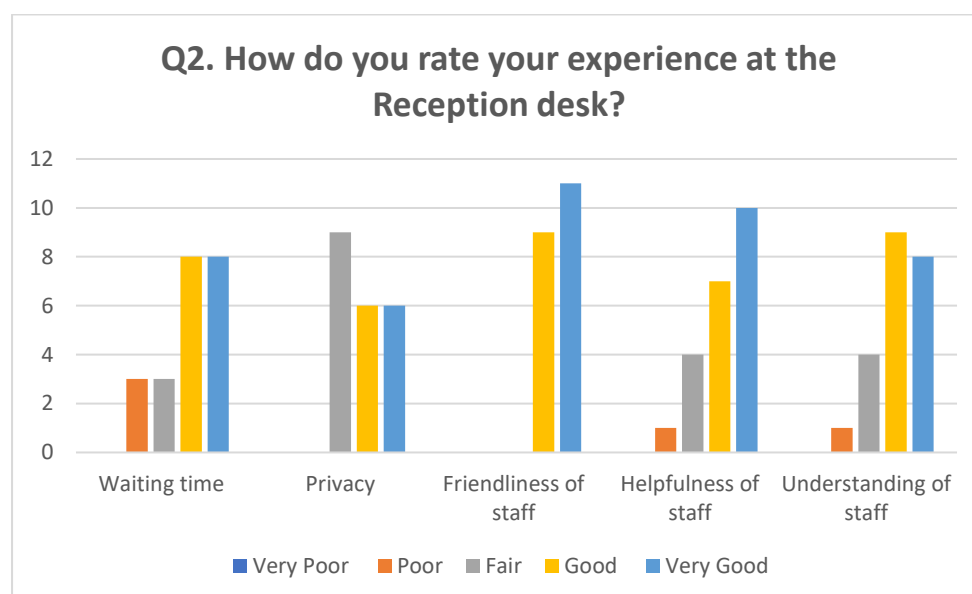
Never attempted an on-line appointment

Haven't tried on-line appointments

Have not booked appointment on-line so far

Don't use on-line booking

These findings suggest that awareness of booking appointments on-line is low and we would recommend that further consideration is given to promoting on-line booking which may in turn increase usage and uptake. This could perhaps take the form of a ‘promotional stand’ in the waiting area that provides information about on-line booking and guidance on how patients can register for the service.



Having explored patients’ experiences of accessing appointments, we were also interested in finding out more about patients’ experiences once they were at the Medical Centre. As first point of contact for patients is usually with Receptionists we asked patients about their experience of waiting times, privacy once at the reception desk and the friendliness, helpfulness and understanding of Receptionists.

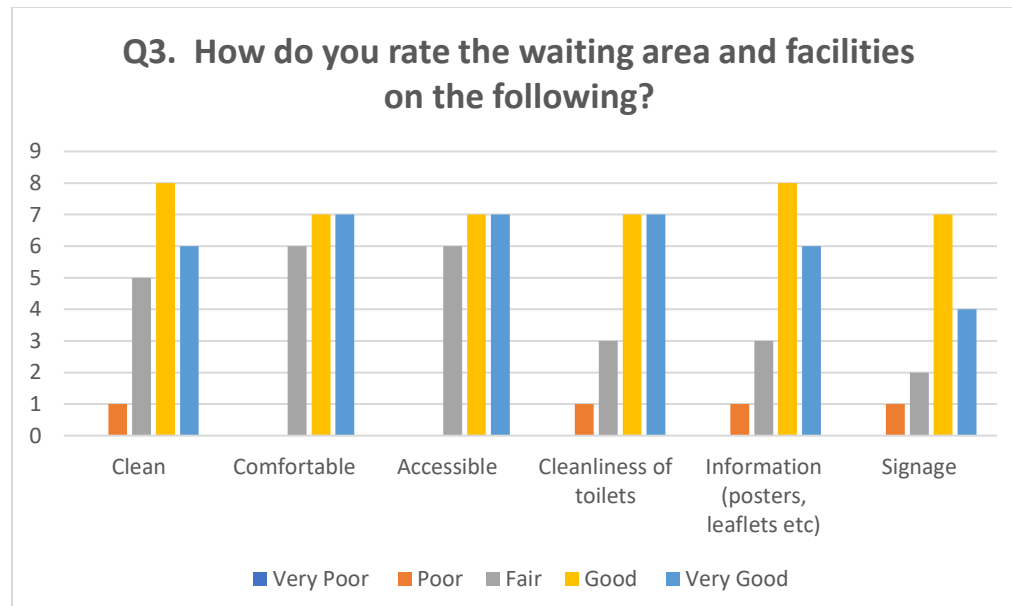
Overall, respondents who completed our survey reported positive experiences with more than 70% (N=16 of the 21 respondents who completed this question of the survey) rating waiting times at the Reception desk as ‘good’ to ‘very good’.

During our visit we observed
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that there was an electronic booking-in system available for patients to use and that patients did not appear to be waiting in the Reception queue for excessive periods of time. Similarly, respondents reported positive experiences when rating the friendliness, helpfulness and understanding of Reception staff with 100% (N=20) of the respondents who answered this question rating the friendliness of reception staff as 'good' or 'very good' and 75% (N= 17) out of the 22 respondents who answered this question giving a rating of 'good' or 'very good' for helpfulness and understanding. One respondent further told us that Receptionists *'always order a taxi for me'*.

Our survey further asked respondents how they rated the privacy of the Reception area and more than 75% (N=17 of the 22 respondents who answered this question) rated the privacy of the Reception area as 'fair' to 'very good'. During our visit, we noted that due to the open plan nature of the Reception area it may be possible that those in the waiting areas are able overhear conversations between Reception staff and patients however, we also noted that there was a sign in Reception informing patients to let Reception staff know if they wished to have a confidential discussion and that this would be accommodated.

During our visit we noted that the 'staff' side of the Reception was accessed through a door with a key pad lock. However, we noted that the key pad was not being used by staff and that the door to this area was unlocked. We would recommend that for issues of patient confidentiality i.e. confidential patient information being kept in this area and for staff members' Health and Safety that the door is kept locked and that access is gained by way of the key pad.



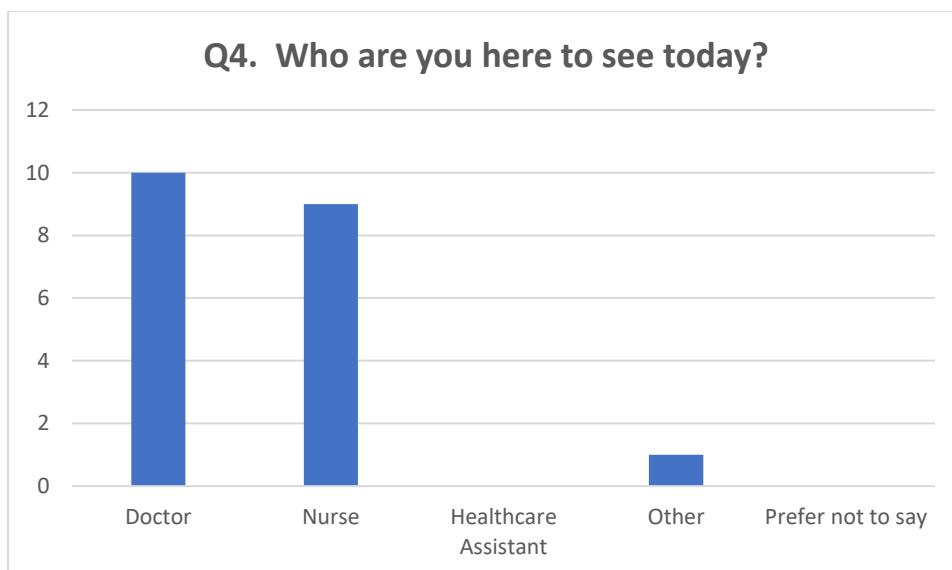
'Waiting area and facilities'

The responses relating to the waiting area and facilities were again positive with 14 of the 20 respondents who answered this question rating the cleanliness and comfort of the waiting area as 'good' or 'very good' and 14 of the 18 respondents who answered this

question rating the cleanliness of the toilets as 'good' or very good'. There are two waiting areas in Arran Medical Centre, one for GP appointments and one for patients with Nursing appointments, and we observed that whilst looking a little tired and dated, the waiting areas were clean and fairly comfortable.

Over 75% of respondents rated the information and signage within the waiting areas as 'good' or 'very good'. During our visit we also observed a range of information for patients including details of community activities and support groups, information on NHS111, condition-related health awareness and health promotion, information on health checks, screening and vaccinations and information on the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) rating of the Surgery. However, we noted that some of the information on the notice boards needed updating for example, the 'CQC rating poster' was from May 2015 however, the most recent CQC inspection of Arran Medical Centre took place in January 2018. We would recommend that the information in the waiting room is reviewed regularly and that any out of date information is removed.

Arran Medical Centre is located on one level and all of our respondents rated accessibility into the building and once within the building as 'fair' to 'very good'. We noted that whilst the building itself was accessible and there was a car park directly to the front of the building, the building is located in a new housing development that is currently under construction and access to the Medical Centre's grounds is through the housing development. Being a construction area means that the surrounding area does not have full footpaths and many of the buildings are 'fenced off' and we found the building a little difficult to locate at first. One of the Receptionists told us that Arran Medical Centre will be re-locating to a new purpose built building within the housing development in the near future. We spoke further with the Practice Manager about the move and were informed that they are hoping to have relocated by July 2019. The new site will house one other GP Surgery, a Dentist and other community services. The Practice Manager informed us that patients have been informed of the move and that the new site is less than five minutes from the current site.



We asked patients who they were at the Medical Centre to see that day and the majority of patients (N=19 of the 20 respondents who answered this question) were there for appointments with a GP or Nurse.



Of the 13 respondents who answered this question, six had been waiting for less than five minutes to be called for their appointment, five respondents for between six and ten minutes, two respondents between 11 and 20 minutes, one respondent for 21 and 30 minutes and no respondents reported waiting longer than 30 minutes. At the end of our questionnaire we asked respondents if they would like to make further comments and some of the comments received expressed concerns about waiting times within the Medical Centre,

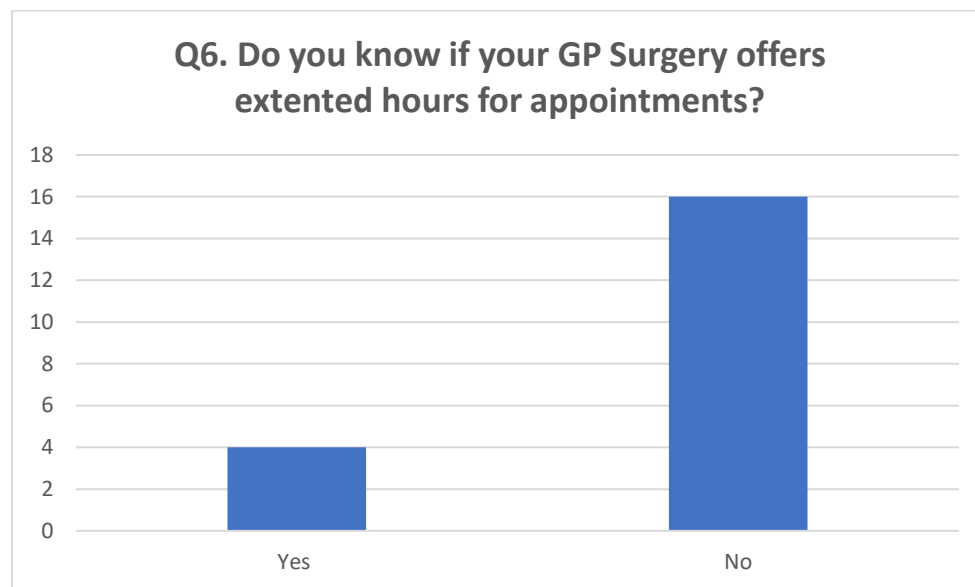
Normally long and a while

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Sometimes patients are fitted in and that means have to wait a little longer

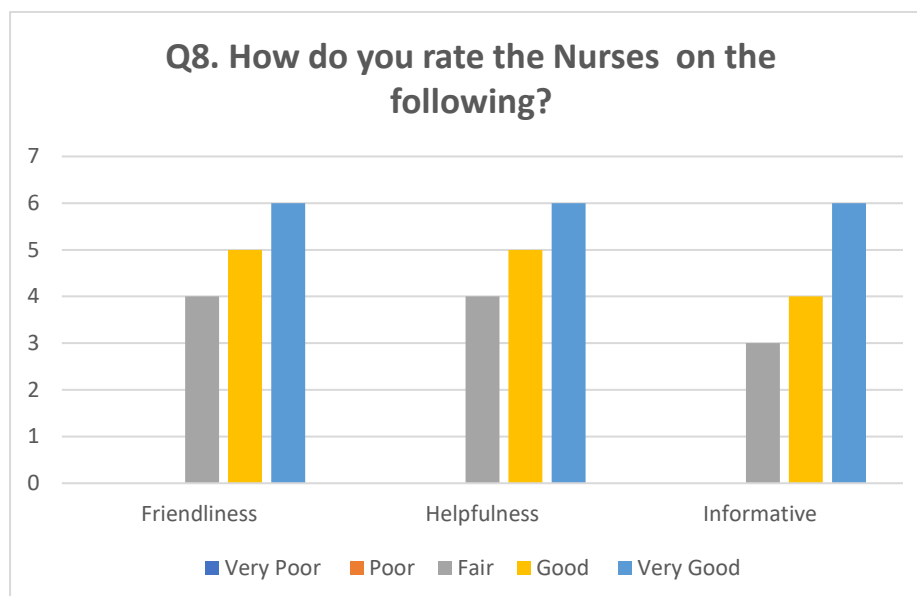
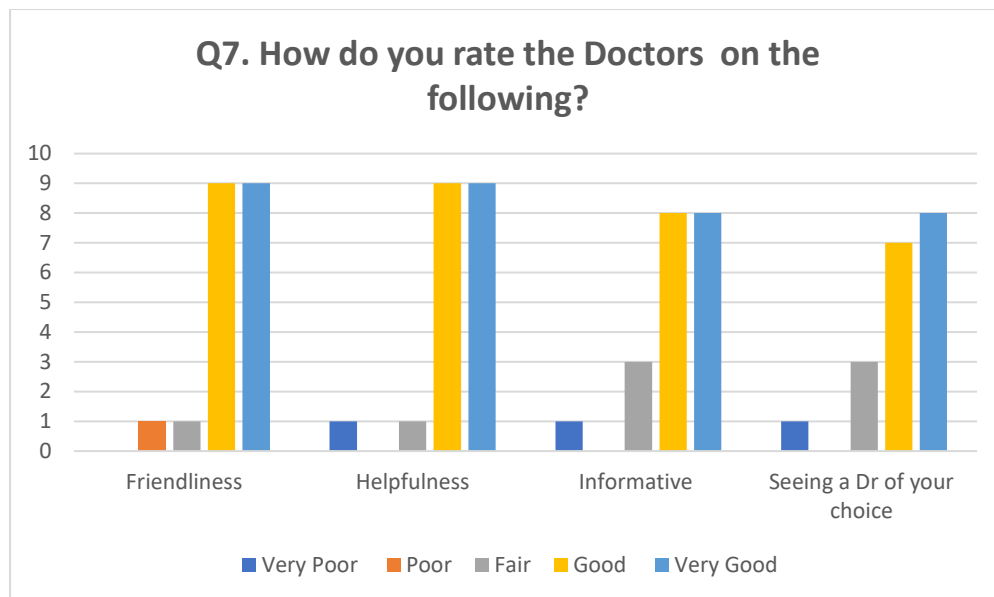
Depends on how many patients

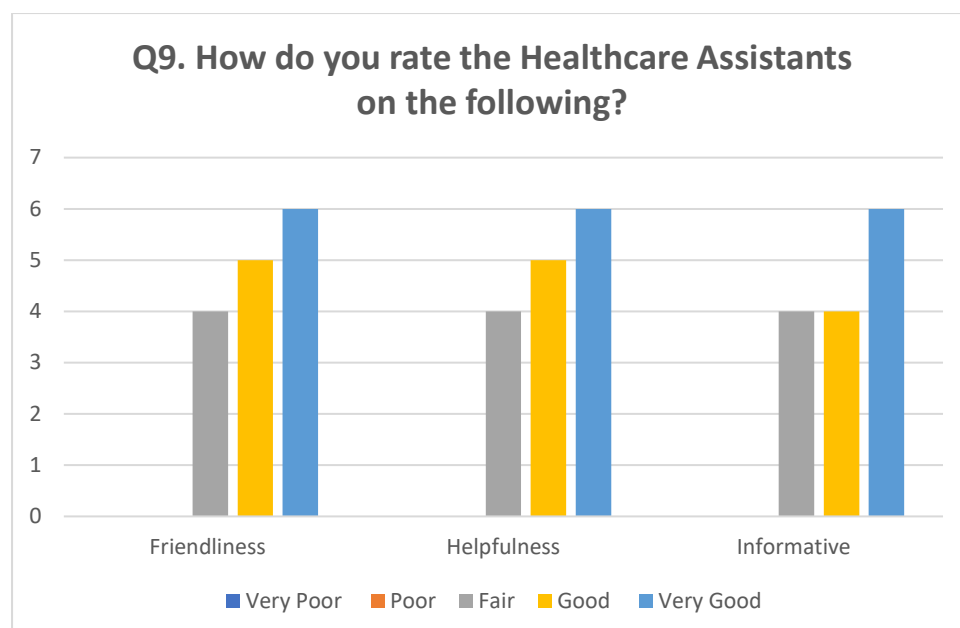
We spoke with the Practice Manager about waiting times and whether the Medical Centre had any procedures in place for informing patients if appointments were running late. We were informed that if appointments are running late Receptionists usually inform patients of this on their arrival.



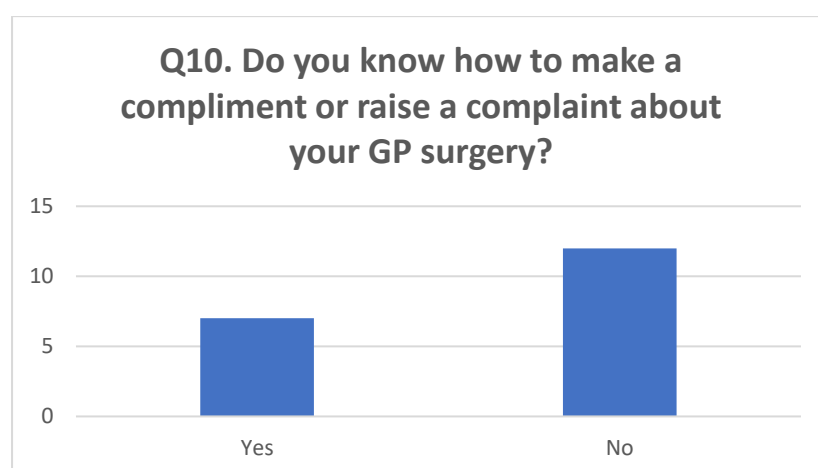
A recent initiative within Primary Care services has been the introduction of 'extended' opening hours to accommodate appointments for patients to fit in with their work, family and other commitments. We asked the Practice Manager how Arran Medical Centre was managing 'extended' opening hours and were told that the Medical Centre is part of the 'North Solihull Collaborative' that comprises 10 North Solihull GP Practices. Appointments are offered for all patients of Surgeries within the Collaborative at Bosworth Medical Centre between 6.30pm and 8pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 12pm on Saturdays and 9am to 11 am on Sundays.

However, despite the availability of extended opening hours appointments, only four of the 20 respondents who answered this question were aware of their availability. Given this finding we would recommend that the Medical Centre actively promotes and advertises the availability of extended hours appointments to improve patient awareness.





Overall, **Doctors** were ranked positively by patients with 18 of the 20 respondents who answered this question, rating the Medical Centre's GPs as 'good' or 'very good' for being friendly and helpful and 16 out of 20 for being and informative. Respondents further reported positive experiences in 'Seeing a Doctor of their Choice' with 15 of the 19 respondents who answered this question rating this as 'good' or 'very good' and a further three respondents as fair. As with GPs, again overall the **Nurses** were ranked positively by patients with all respondents rating the nursing staff as 'fair to very good'. **Healthcare Assistants** also received positive ratings from patients for being friendly, helpful and informative with no respondents rating them as less than fair. It is perhaps worth noting that slightly fewer respondents completed the question about Healthcare Assistants than for GPs and Nurses (N=15) as presumably not all of respondents had have contact with a Healthcare Assistant.

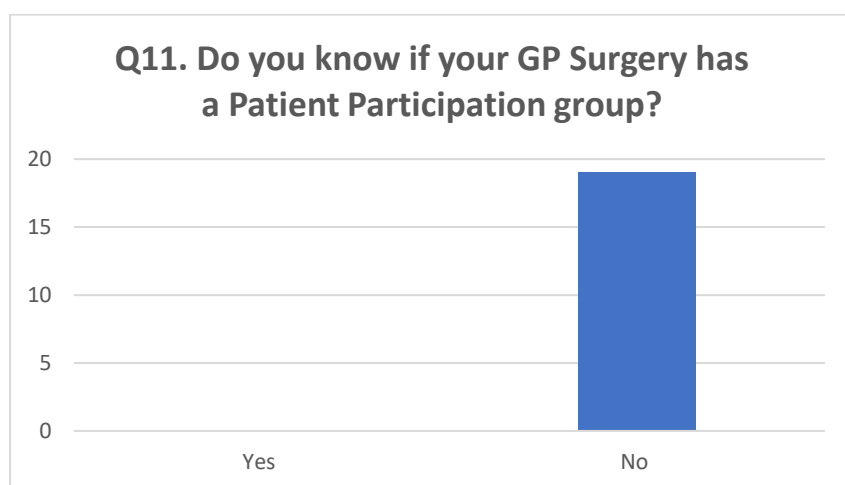


Question 10 of our survey asked respondents if they were aware of how to make a compliment or how to raise a complaint within the Medical Centre should they wish to do so. Of the 19 respondents who answered this question, seven were aware of how to do so

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and 12 respondents told us that they were not aware of the process. During our visit, we observed that information on how to make a complaint was included on the notice board in the main waiting area. However, despite this information being provided to patients, our findings indicate that awareness of the process for making a compliment or raising a complaint appears low among the respondents who completed our questionnaire and we would recommend that the Medical Centre actively promotes the compliments and complaints processes within the Medical Centre.

We further asked the Practice Manager how patient feedback is shared within the Medical Centre. We were informed that feedback is collected through 'Friends and Family Test' forms and through the National Patient Survey and that these findings are discussed in the monthly Practice meetings. However, on the day of our visit we observed that whilst the Medical Centre had provided a 'Friends and Family' test box, there were no forms available for patients to complete on the day of our visit. We would recommend that the Medical Centre undertakes regular checks to ensure that forms are available for patients' completion should they wish to do so. We would also recommend that the Medical Centre continues to encourage patient feedback and continues to share this feedback with staff at the Medical Centre. It may also be good practice to share this feedback with other patients and outline what actions the Medical Centre may have taken in response to the feedback received. This could be shared through Surgery newsletters or included on noticeboards and could take the format of 'You Said, We Did'.



We asked respondents if they knew whether the Medical Centre had a Patient Participation Group (PPG) and of the 19 respondents who answered this question, none were aware that the Medical Centre did have a PPG. We asked the Practice Manager about the Medical Centre's PPG and were informed that the Medical Centre does have an active and supportive Patient Participation Group (PPG) who meet quarterly and that the PPG are used as a 'sounding board' for the Medical Centre for example, discussing Patient Survey findings, giving advice on activities or campaigns that are current for example, during 'flu season'.

However, whilst we observed on our visit that there was a poster on the notice board informing patients that the PPG were looking to recruit new members, our findings show that awareness of the Medical Centre's PPG appears to be low among the respondents who completed our questionnaire. We would again recommend that the Medical Centre undertakes some work to raise awareness with patients of the role and function of the PPG and activities they may have participated in.



At the end of the survey we asked patients to rate their overall experience of their visit that day. In keeping with many of the findings discussed within this report patients reporting a positive experience with 12 respondents rating their overall experience as 'good' or 'very good' and four as 'fair' with no respondents rating their overall experience as less than fair.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions:

- That consideration is given to the answering of telephone calls by Reception staff and that during peak periods staff are allocated to either phone lines or staffing the Reception desk;
- That the Medical Centre actively promotes and advertises on-line booking facilities to improve patient awareness;
- For issues of patient confidentiality and for staff members' Health and Safety, the door to the private Reception area is kept locked and that access is gained by way of the key pad;
- That the information on notice Boards in the waiting room and other areas is reviewed regularly and that any out of date information is removed;
- That the Medical Centre actively promotes and advertises the availability of extended hours appointments to improve patient awareness;
- That the Medical Centre continues to encourage patient feedback and shares this feedback with staff at the Medical Centre and that patient feedback and any actions taken in relation to this feedback are also communicated to patients;
- That the Medical Centre ensures that and 'Friends and Family' feedback forms are kept stocked in the waiting areas;
- That the Medical Centre actively raises awareness of the Patient Participation Group and its role and function.

Provider's Response

- The Practice has two members of staff on the Reception desk and they are also answering phones. On busy days like Mondays we have third Receptionist answering the phone.
- The practice has sent an SMS to all the patients encouraging online registration and this is also advertised in the waiting area and on the website
- The Practice Manager has requested staff members to close the Reception area door and the Reception door is locked in the evening along with every single room at the end of Surgery hours
- The Practice reviews its noticeboards on a three monthly basis
- The extended opening hours are advertised in the waiting area, on the practice website and the Practice Manager has also sent an SMS to the patients about joining the PPG Group
- Forms are stocked on a regular basis. On the day of your visit the Friends and Family forms were missing as Children had taken them out of the box. Reception staff check the forms on a regular basis and they are also kept at the reception desk.

We thank the Provider for their feedback and look forward to working with them in the future.