

# ENTER AND VIEW VISIT REPORT

## Kingshurst Medical Practice 27 March 2019

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, and the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding team will also be informed.

# GP Surgery – Kingshurst Medical Practice

**Service Address:** 40 Gilson Way, Kingshurst, Solihull, B37 6BE

## 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 Wednesday 27 March, 2019. 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 Kingshurst Medical Practice, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Solihull MBC, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Solihull website ([www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk)).

## Background

At the end of our visits we usually speak with the Practice Managers of the Surgeries we have visited. When asking for the Practice Manager at the end of our visit, we were told that the Medical Practice did not have a Practice Manager in post at present but that one had been appointed and is due to start work imminently. Following their appointment, we telephoned the Practice Manager who told us that the Medical Practice had not had a Practice Manager in post for two years and that they were unable to give comprehensive feedback on actions the Practice had taken in response to our feedback.

Kingshurst Medical Practice, located within North Solihull, has a practice list of 6671 patients (<https://www.nhs.uk/Services/GP/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=42800>). The Practice Manager told us that they been appointed in April, 2019, and prior to their appointment, the Practice had not had a Practice Manager in post for two years.

The Surgery's opening times are:

Monday	08:00 - 18:30
Tuesday	07:30 - 18:30
Wednesday	08:00 - 18:30

Thursday	08:00 - 18:30
Friday	08:00 - 18:30
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

The Practice is one of ten local GP surgeries that form the 'North Solihull Collaborative'. Each of the ten surgeries can book extended opening hours appointments for its patients. These are held at Bosworth Medical Centre (the Collaborative's extended hours hub) - and available between 6.30 pm - 8.00 pm each weekday; 9am - noon on Saturdays and 9am -11am on Sundays.

### **Purpose of our visit**

Healthwatch Solihull visited Kingshurst Medical Practice on Wednesday 27th March, 2019. This was a follow-up to our previous Enter and View visit that took place on 15th December, 2017 (to see our previous report please visit our website - [www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk](http://www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk)).

At the time of our first visit (December, 2017), the Practice's most recent CQC report (December, 2015) had rated the Practice as 'Good' overall and specifically, 'Good' across the domains of safety, effectiveness, being caring, being responsive to people's needs and being well-led (Source: [https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new\\_reports/AAAD7739.pdf](https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAD7739.pdf) ). However, despite achieving an overall rating of 'Good', our first visit was prompted in response to both poor feedback Healthwatch Solihull had received from the public regarding the Practice, especially around issues of accessing appointments and getting through on the telephone, and concerns regarding the Practice's feedback to comments posted by patients on the NHS Choices website that were, at times, unsympathetic.

The Practice's most recent CQC report (based on an inspection undertaken in November, 2018) has recently rated the Medical Centre as 'Requires Improvement' overall and specifically 'Requires Improvement' across the areas effectiveness, being caring, being responsive to people's needs and being well-led with a rating of 'Good' for safety (Source: [https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new\\_reports/AAAH9629.pdf](https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAH9629.pdf)). In addition, Healthwatch Solihull continue to receive consistently poor feedback from members of the public regarding their experiences of Kingshurst Medical Practice.

Given the above, the purpose of our re-visit was to explore any actions the Practice had taken in response to the recommendations made in our previous report (December, 2017) and to explore first hand with patients present on the day of our visit, their experiences of the Practice.

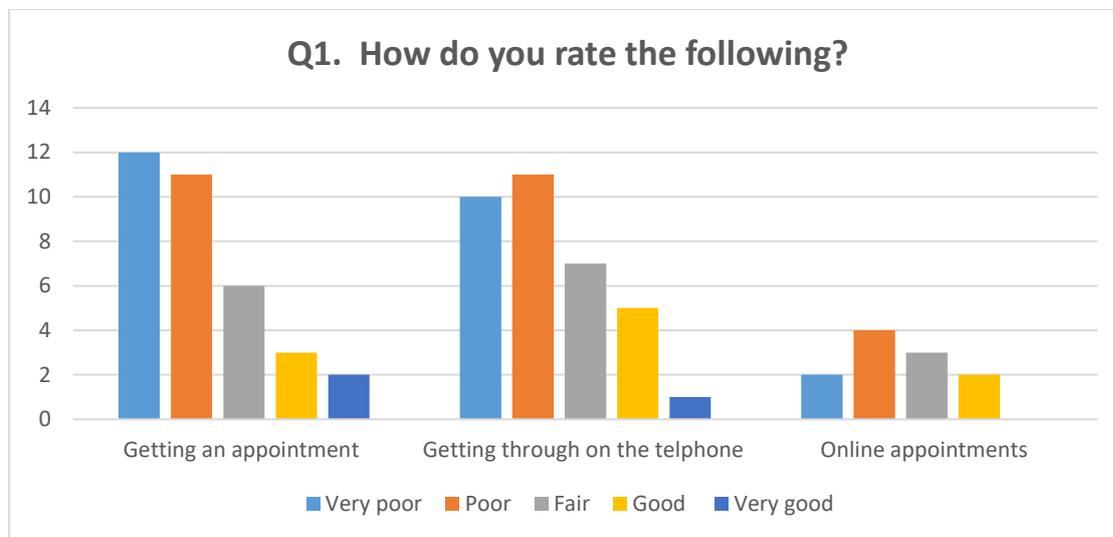
### **What we did**

Two Authorised Representatives visited the Practice from 10.00am to 12.30pm on 27th March, 2019. During our visit, we administered 34 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 Practice and, in turn, service experience for registered patients.

## Findings:

- Please note not all patients answered all questions



### ***'Ease of getting an appointment'***

In our previous Enter and view report (December, 2017), 'ease of getting an appointment' received largely negative responses with responses with 46% (N=12 of the 26 respondents who answered this question giving a rating of 'poor' to 'very poor', 23% (N=6) as 'fair' and only 30% (N=8) as 'good' or 'very good'. Overall, less positive ratings emerged during this visit with more than 67% (N= 23 of the 34 respondents who answered this question) rating 'ease of getting an appointment' as 'very poor' or 'poor' and only five respondents (N=5) giving a rating of 'good' or 'very good'. These findings are reflected in some of the further comments provided by survey respondents:

*'Trying to get appointment now for 3 weeks – can't get one...My Wife came in to book appointment but was told by receptionist that cannot come in and have to phone.'*

*'Over 2 weeks wait for appointment - blood test.'*

*'No appointments available 9 times out of 10.'*

*'The system isn't flexible enough for people working full-time. Even a telephone appointment would be appropriate but I've never been offered anything.'*

*'My mother has a long term illness and is sometimes made to wait 2 weeks for an appointment.'*

*'I've been trying to get an appointment since Monday – it's now Wednesday. I was advised if you think your illness is that bad, to go to A&E. I did go and spent 6 hours in A&E and was issued a letter for referral. I phoned reception today to confirm they will be receiving the letter and they advised that I still need to see GP to action it.'*

*'Often told no appointments left.'*

During our visit, we observed a sign by the Reception desk explaining the appointment booking system to patients. We asked the Receptionist about this sign and they explained that all appointments are 'released' in the morning and that patients can call up until 3pm to access appointments. However, one patient told us that they found the sign confusing and they had thought it meant that there were no appointments available after 3pm. Despite telephone access for appointments being available until 3pm, as our survey findings have shown, appointments are usually allocated early in the morning. One patient reported that they were unhappy that the system had changed and that appointments were no longer allocated in the afternoon:

*'Kingshurst Medical Practice is getting ridiculous with appointments and they have now stopped being able to call for afternoon appointments which are needed for mums like me who are always busy and children are in school.'*

Survey findings have shown that survey respondents, as with our previous visit, are still experiencing difficulties in accessing appointments and we would recommend that the Practice reviews both access to appointments and also the times at which appointments are released and can be booked by patients, along with clearer information for patients advising them of the process for booking appointments.

#### ***'Getting through on the telephone'***

Similar findings emerged when we asked patients about their experiences of getting through on the telephone, with findings demonstrating a reduction in patients' ratings from those in our previous Enter and View visit in December 2017:

<b>Getting through on the telephone</b>	<b>December, 2017) (N=26 respondents who answered this question)</b>	<b>March 2019 (N=34 respondents who answered this question)</b>
<b>Very poor or poor</b>	53% (N=14)	62% (N=21)
<b>Fair</b>	15% (N=4)	20% (N=7)
<b>Very good or good</b>	32% (N=8)	18% (N=6)

Comments received from respondents to this question elaborated on difficulties they had experienced in 'getting through on the telephone':

*'Phone at 8 so first in queue then told when get through that appointments gone.'*

*'Very hard to get through - ring at 8 and by 8:30 fully booked.'*

*'Waiting too long on phone.'*

*'20/30 minutes on phone. Patient has arthritis - seems to keep us hanging on so give up.'*

*'Often appointments all gone.'*

*'Phoned for appt at 9:20 and got one straight away! Usually you can phone at 8 and they say they have already gone.'*

*'No appointments available 9 times out of 10, calling 20+ times to get through to be spoken to rudely and rushed off the phone line.'*

*'They don't answer - other day for 3/4 of an hour.'*

Findings from the surveys completed on the day of our visit are indicative that patients are still experiencing issues with getting through to the Surgery by telephone and we would recommend that the Practice reviews its telephone access for appointments.

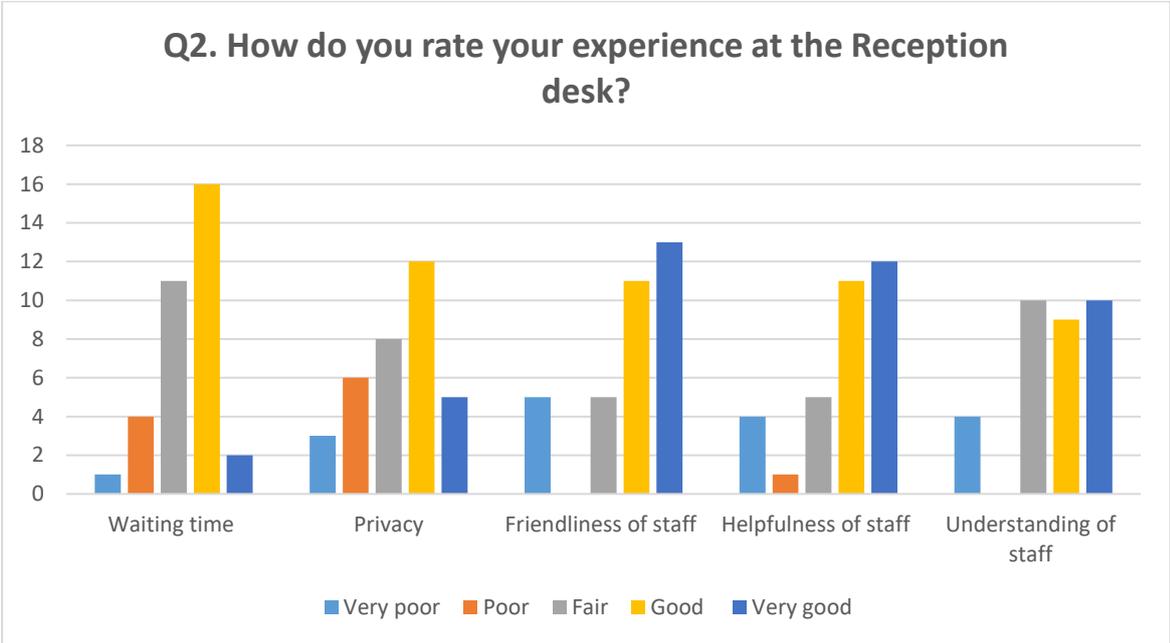
### ***'Online appointments'***

The survey further asked patients to rate their experiences of using the on-line booking service. Six survey respondents rated their experience of the on-line booking service as 'very poor' or 'poor', three respondents as 'fair' and two as 'good' with no respondents rating on-line booking as 'very good'. However, only 11 of a possible 34 survey respondents answered this question. That fewer respondents answered this question may be indicative that the on-line booking system is under-utilised. This is, to some extent, supported by our findings where some of our respondents told us that *'I wasn't aware I could make online appointments'*. For some respondents, not using on-line booking was related to awareness of how to book appointments on-line for example, *'I would say online appointments is better but I was never advised to try online or how to do it'* whilst for others it was related to the availability of on-line appointments, *'Online appts have to be made sometimes 2 weeks later'*.

In our previous Enter and View visit (December, 2017), similar findings emerged in relation to patients' use of on-line booking facilities and our report recommended that *'the online appointment booking service should be explained and promoted to patients to increase usage and take pressure off the telephone booking system'*. We asked the Practice Manager about any actions the Medical Centre had taken in response to our recommendation but given their recent appointment, the Practice Manager was unable to advise us of any information about actions the Practice may have taken.

Given that the respondents who completed the survey on the day of our visit are still reporting an under-use of the Practice’s on-line booking facilities, we would again recommend that further consideration is given to promoting on-line booking which may increase usage and uptake and in turn, reduce pressure on the telephone booking system. 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.

We also recommend that the Practice undertakes an evaluation of any recent initiatives they may have implemented for increasing the use of on-line booking facilities to better understand patients’ experiences of on-line booking and identify any barriers to its usage. Given their role as a vehicle for providing a voice for, and understanding the experiences of patients, the Practice’s Patient Participation Group (PPG) may be ideally placed to undertake this work.



Having explored patients’ experiences of accessing appointments, we were also interested in finding out more about patients’ experiences once they were at the Practice. 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, patients reported positive experiences of waiting times at the Reception desk, with 29 of the 34 respondents who answered this question rating this as ‘fair’ to ‘very good’. During our visit, we observed 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. Our survey further asked respondents how they rated the privacy

of the Reception area and 71% (N=25 of the 34 respondents who answered this question) also rated this as 'fair' to 'very good'. During this visit, we noted that, owing to the open plan nature of the Reception area, it may be possible that those in the waiting areas are able to overhear conversations between Reception staff and patients. However, we also noted that there was a sign requesting patients to let Reception staff know if they wished to have a confidential discussion and that this request would be accommodated.

As with our previous visit (December, 2017), overall the friendliness and helpfulness of Reception staff was rated fairly positively by patients with 71% of respondents during this visit rating the friendliness of Reception staff 'good' to 'very good' with slightly fewer respondents (55%) rating the helpfulness of reception staff as 'good' to 'very good'. Some of the further comments that we received from respondents however, were also less positive than the survey data suggests:

*'Their word goes - no leeway... Receptionists ask personal questions - lack of privacy.'*

*'Rude!'*

*'Reception staff when calling are always rude and impatient.'*

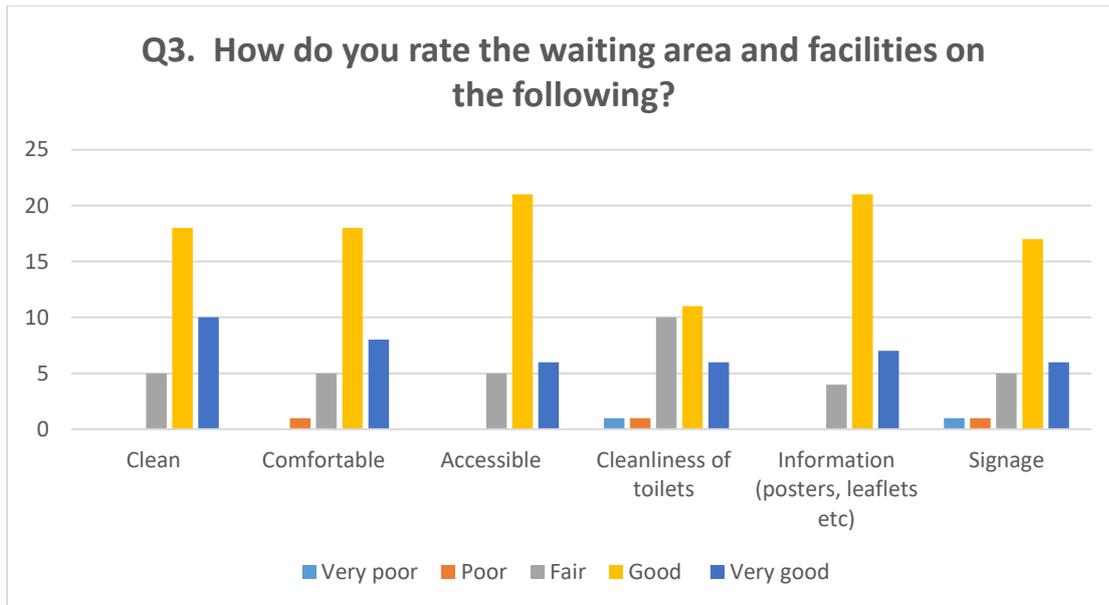
*'Reception rude.'*

*'Several times been spoken to rudely and refused to be seen or issues resolved.'*

*'Receptionist very rude.'*

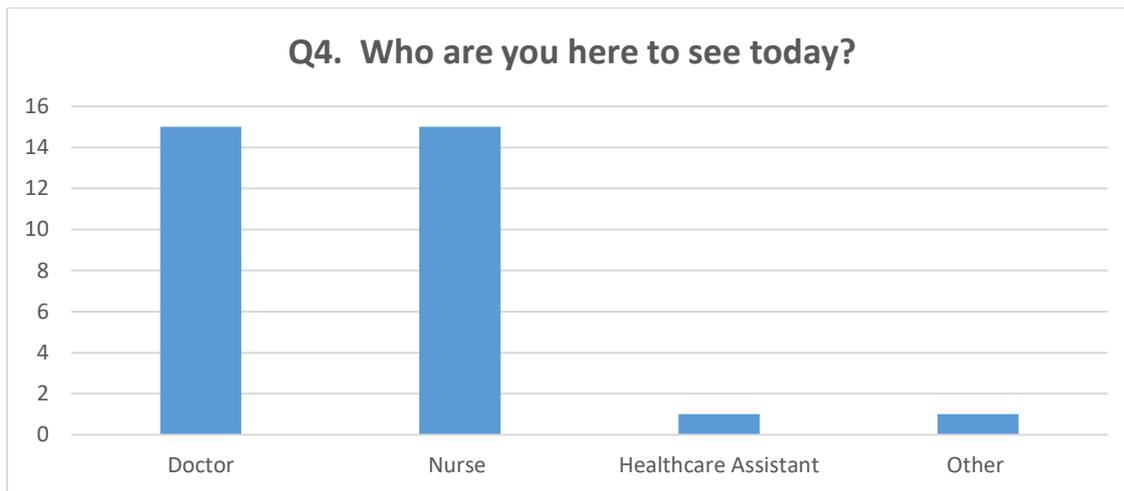
*'Improve the way people are spoken to.'*

During our visit, we also observed Reception staff at times being slightly abrupt with patients. These findings indicate that there appears to be a level of inconsistency with patients' experiences of Reception Staff and we would recommend that a review of the training or support needs of Receptionists is undertaken.



The responses relating to the waiting area and facilities were again positive with all respondents rating the cleanliness of the waiting area as ‘fair’ to ‘very good’ and all but two respondents rating the cleanliness of the toilets as ‘fair’ to ‘very good’. During our visit, we observed that the toilet facilities were clean and well stocked and that there were accessible toilets for disabled people and baby changing facilities available. There is one waiting area in Kingshurst Medical Practice and we observed that, whilst looking a little dated, the waiting area was spacious, clean and fairly comfortable.

Kingshurst Medical Practice is located all on one level and 84% of respondents (N=27 of the 32 respondents who answered this question) rated accessibility into the building and once within the building as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ and we noted that all consulting and other rooms were clearly signposted. We also observed a number of notice boards in the waiting area displaying a range of information including details of community activities and support groups, information on NHS111, condition-related health awareness and health promotion information, including cancer awareness information, information on health checks, screening and vaccinations.



We asked patients who they were at the Surgery to see that day and the majority of patients were there for appointments with a GP or Nurse. During our visit, a number of patients reported concerns to us that they find it difficult to access appointments with GPs and that usually in the first instance they are offered appointments with Nurses or other Clinical staff as highlighted in the following comments:

*'Rarely see GP and never the same one.'*

*'Never able to see a GP - always get asked what the issue is and told only have nurse available.'*

*'Only seen one doctor in years - don't know who they are - see nurse practitioner.'*

*'Once you see a Doctor they are fab - being able to get an appointment with them is near impossible, always sent to Nurse.'*

*'Don't see them. Very difficult to see.'*

The NHS Plan advocates the key role of Nurses at the forefront of Primary Care Services and Advanced Nurse Practitioners have been seen as having a central role in increasing access to appointments and improving patient satisfaction with waiting times (Source: <http://www.independentnurse.co.uk/professional-article/advanced-practitioners-improve-efficiency-and-patient-satisfaction/159765/>). However, despite the potential for the use of Advanced Nurse Practitioners in improving access to appointments, some of the patients we spoke with on the day of our visit expressed concerns that they rarely see a GP and we would recommend that, where possible, in the interest of patient choice, if patients have a preference for an appointment with a GP that this be accommodated where possible.



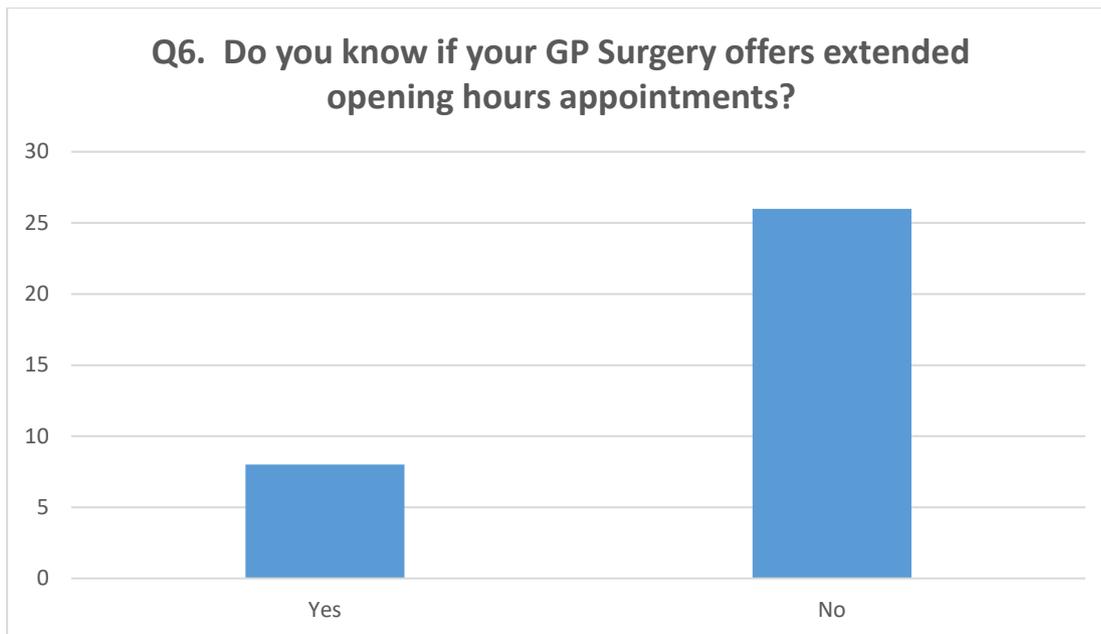
During our previous visit, respondents reported poor experiences of waiting times with 38% (N=10 of the 26 respondents who answered the survey question times) rating waiting times as 'poor' or 'very poor', a further 38% as 'fair' and only 6 respondents (23%) giving a rating of 'good' or 'very good'. During this visit, we asked respondents how long they had been waiting to see the person they were at the Medical Centre to see that day. Of the 24 respondents who answered this question, 18 had been waiting for up to 10 minutes to be called for their appointment with a further six reporting waiting times of over 10 minutes. On the whole, patients reported to us that they were generally seen on time with a couple of exceptions:

*'If one minute late past time of appointment they will not see you but if they are late 40 minutes its ok!'*

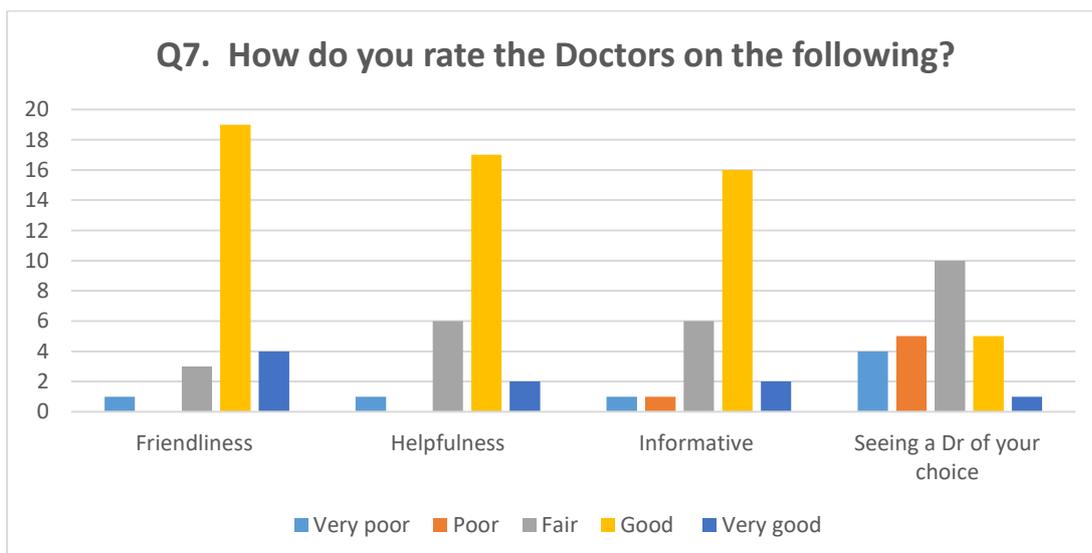
*'Always late - been known several times to be waiting 30-60 minutes.'*

*'Left waiting after time of appt to be seen with my son who was ill and fed up.'*

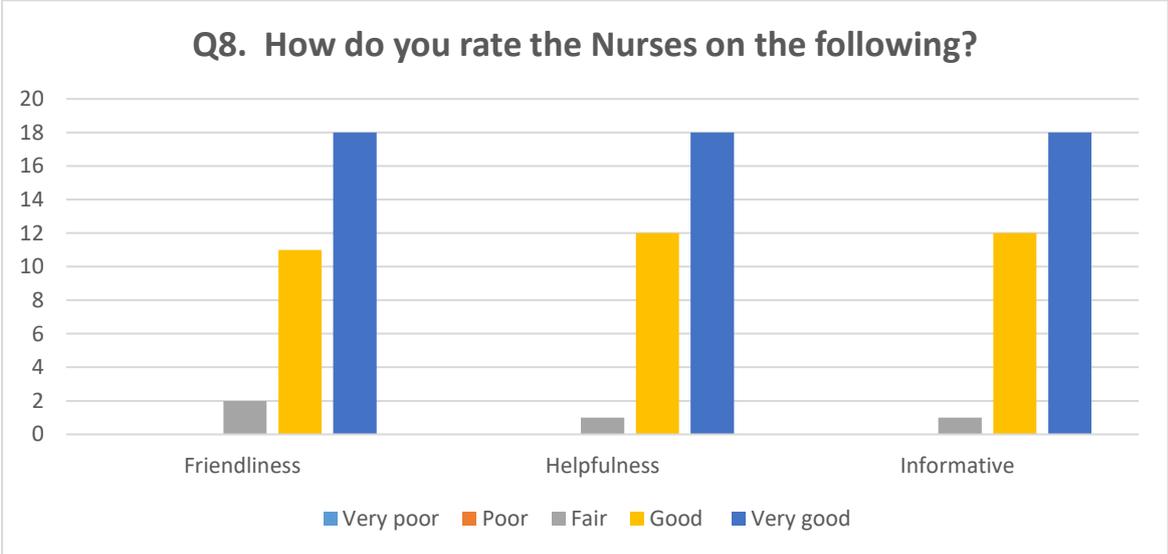
During this and our previous visit, we asked the Practice Manager whether they had any procedures for informing patients if their appointments were running late. We were told that, on the occasion where appointments are running late, "the reception staff are required to inform the patients, when they come in for their appointments, or if they are sat in the waiting area. The patients are informed right away if ever any of the GP or Clinical staff have to deal with any emergencies". The Practice Manager told us that they are putting a policy in place that will be sent to Reception staff with a memo for all Reception staff to sign just to make sure that they are all aware.

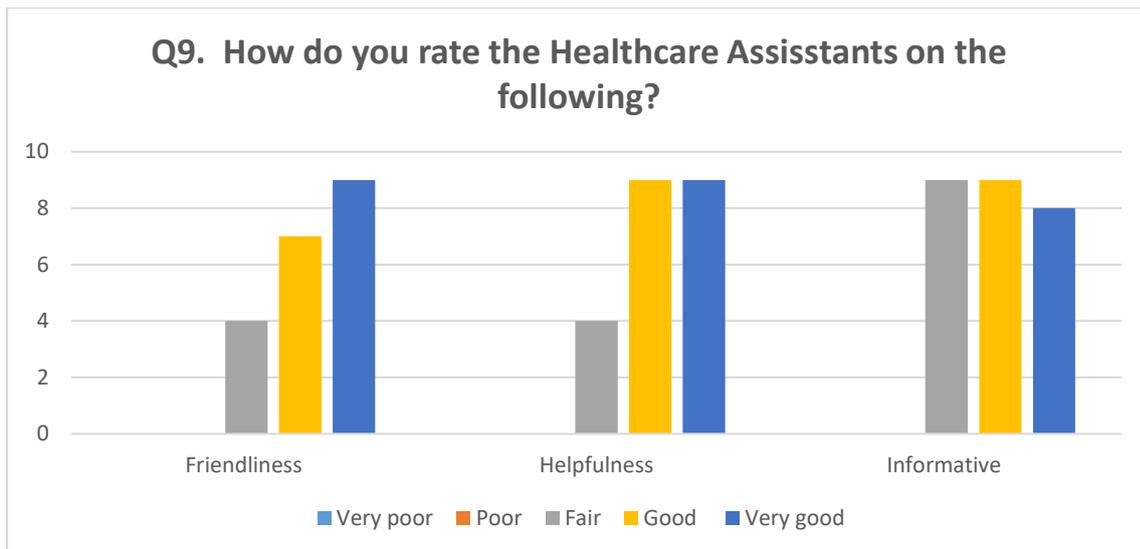


A recent initiative within Primary Care services has been the introduction of ‘extended’ opening hours to accommodate appointments for patients to fit in with their work, family and other commitments. As discussed earlier in this report, Kingshurst Medical Practice is part of the ‘North Solihull Collaborative’ and patients of the Practice can access ‘extended’ opening hours appointments at Bosworth Medical Centre between 6.30pm - 8.00pm each weekday, 9.00am -12.00am on Saturdays and 09.00am -11.00am on Sundays. However, despite the availability of extended opening hours appointments, only eight of the 33 respondents who answered this question were aware of their availability. Given this finding, we would recommend that the Medical Practice actively promotes and advertises the availability of extended hours appointments to improve patient awareness.

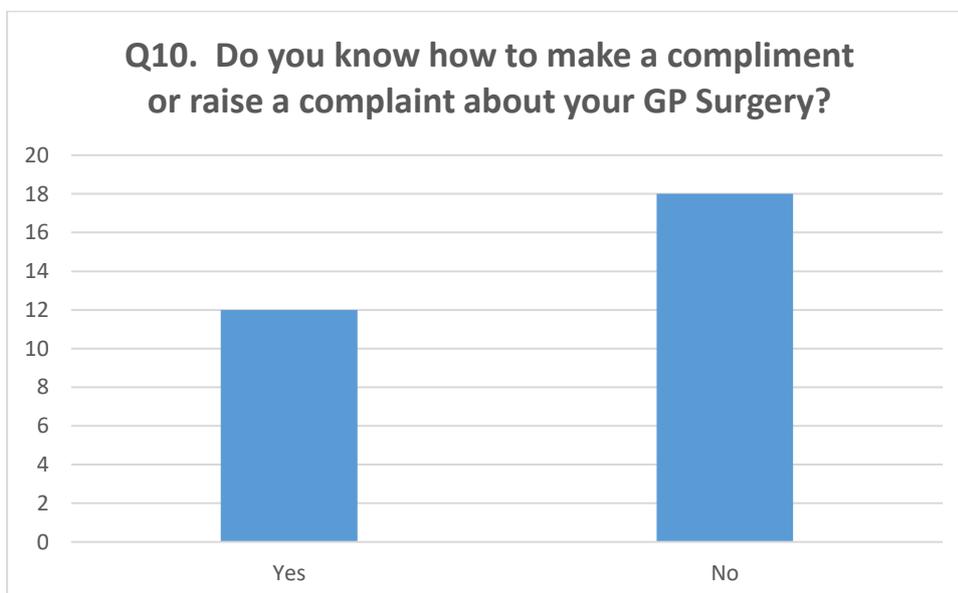


Overall, the Doctors were ranked positively by patients with 23 of the 27 respondents who answered this question rating the Medical Centre’s GPs as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ for being friendly, 19 out of 26 rating the GPs as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ for being helpful and 18 out of 26 respondents giving GPs a rating of ‘good’ to ‘very good’ for being informative. However, more mixed experiences were reported by respondents when rating ‘seeing a Doctor of your choice,’ with only six of the 25 respondents who answered this question giving a rating of ‘good’ or ‘very good’, ten as ‘fair’ and nine as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’. Patients reported similar finding during our previous visit and we previously recommended that where possible appointments are made with patients’ GPs of choice where this can be accommodated. Findings from this visit suggest that satisfaction with seeing a Doctor of choice is still fairly low among those who completed our questionnaire and we would again recommend that where this can be accommodated, appointments are arranged with patients’ GPs of choice.





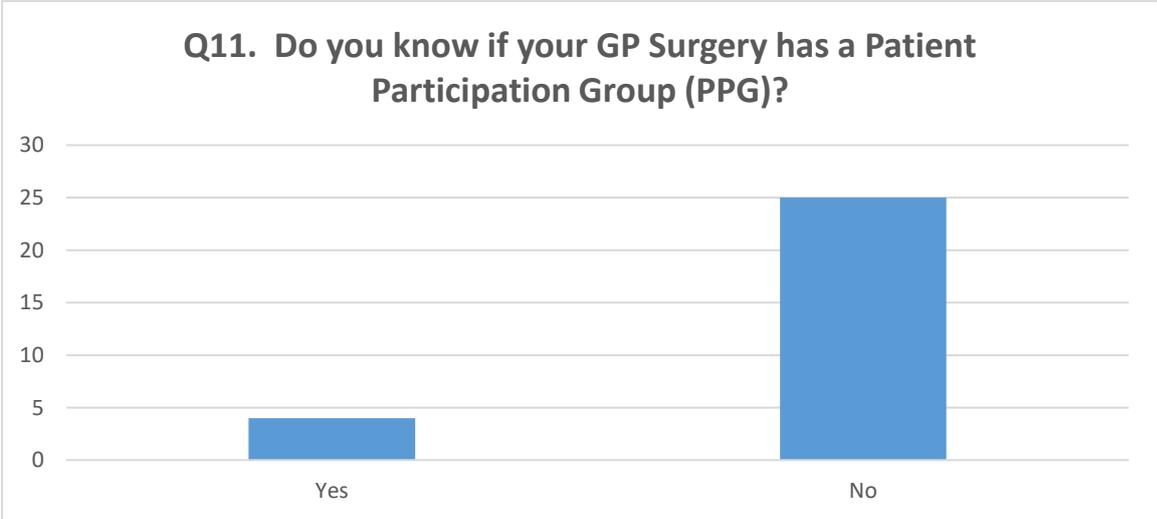
As with GPs, again overall the Nurses were ranked positively by patients with the majority of respondents rating the Nurses as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ for friendliness, helpfulness and being informative. Further comments received from respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the Nurses, for example, ‘*Nurses are great at their job*’. 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 fewer respondents completed the question about Healthcare Assistants than for GPs and Nurses as presumably not all respondents will have had 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 Practice should they wish to do so. Our findings indicate that awareness of the process for making a compliment or raising a complaint appears mixed among the respondents who completed our questionnaire, with 12 out of the 30 respondents who completed this question reporting that they were aware of the process and 18 reporting that they were not and we would recommend that the compliments and complaints processes are actively promoted within the Medical Centre.

We also asked the Practice Manager how patient feedback is collected and shared within the Practice and were informed that the Practice has recently undertaken a mystery shopper exercise and patient experience surveys had been administered with patients of the Practice by 'Intra-health'. The Practice Manager told us that findings from the Intra-Health Surveys are shared at Practice Meetings. On the day of our visit, we also did not observe any 'Friends and Family' feedback forms available for patients to complete.

Given these findings, we would recommend that the Practice continues to encourage patient feedback and continues to share this feedback with staff. It may also be good practice to share this feedback with other patients and outline what actions have been taken in response to the feedback received. This could be included on noticeboards and could take the format of 'You Said, We Did'. We would also recommend that the Practice ensures that 'friends and family' feedback forms are available for patients and that feedback is shared with staff at the Practice.



Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are groups of patients working together with GP surgeries to improve services and quality of care and provide a forum for interested patients to be actively involved in supporting their GP practice. Given the importance of these forums for strengthening the patient voice within service delivery, we asked respondents if they knew whether the Medical Centre had a Patient Participation Group (PPG) and the majority of patients told us that they were not aware of the Practice having a PPG. We asked the

Practice Manager whether the Practice did have a PPG and were informed that currently the Practice does not have a PPG but a meeting is being held between interested patients and the Practice Manager on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2019, with a view to establishing a PPG at the Practice. Given this, we would recommend that the Surgery continues with its work to establish a PPG and ensure that interested patients are provided with opportunities to become members of their PPG.



At the end of the surveys we asked patients to rate their overall experience. This question was answered by 27 patients 15 of whom rated their overall experience as 'good or 'very good' and nine as 'fair'.

#### **Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions:**

- That the Practice reviews both access to appointments and also the times at which appointments are 'released' and can be booked by patients, along with clearer information for patients advising them of the process for booking appointments;
- That the Practice reviews its telephone access for appointments;
- That the Practice promotes on-line booking facilities and undertakes an evaluation of on-line booking facilities to better understand patients' experiences of on-line booking and identify any barriers to its usage;
- That a review of the training or support needs of Receptionists is undertaken;
- In the interest of patient choice and experience, if patients have a preference for an appointment with a GP rather than an Advanced Nurse Practitioner or other clinician, that this be accommodated where possible;
- Where this can be accommodated, appointments are made with patients' GPs of choice;
- That the Practice actively promotes and advertises the availability of extended hours appointments to improve patient awareness;

- That the Practice continues to encourage patient feedback and shares this feedback with both patients and staff of the Surgery, and that patient feedback and any actions taken in relation to this feedback are also communicated to patients;
- That the Practice provides 'friends and family' feedback forms to patients and share findings from these forms with staff at the Practice;
- That the Medical Practice continues its work to establish a PPG, actively raises awareness of the role and function of PPGs and promotes opportunities for involvement in the Group with patients.