



**Healthwatch Liverpool Enter and View Report
Princes Park Medical Centre
Bentley Road
Liverpool
L8 0SY**

Date and Time of Visit: Thursday 3rd July 2014, 8am to 9am.

Section A

Introduction

Princes Park Health Centre is a GP practice that provides general medical services.

Opening hours are Monday - Friday 8am - 6.30pm, closed on Saturday and Sunday.

Practice Manager: Ms. Ulrike Cope.

The reason for the Enter and View Visit

The reason to conduct the Enter and View visit to Princes Park Health Centre on this occasion was that Healthwatch Liverpool was specifically interested in following up and viewing any changes resulting from the implementation of recommendations previously made by Healthwatch after an Enter and View visit carried out in August 2013 at this service. Additionally the aim was to gather patient experience from service users.

This is part of a standard follow up procedure by Healthwatch, helping us to capture the effectiveness of previous Healthwatch recommendations, and does not indicate that Healthwatch has recently received negative feedback or concerns about this service.

This current Healthwatch report follows up on recommendations originating from a previous Healthwatch report:

Healthwatch Liverpool Enter and View Report, Princes Park Medical Centre, 13th August 2013.

This earlier report is available on the Healthwatch Liverpool website:

<http://www.healthwatchliverpool.co.uk/content/reports-publications>

Section B

The Methodology of the Enter and View Visit

The Enter and View took place on Thursday 3rd July 2014, between 8am and 9am.

The members of the Healthwatch Enter and View Team that undertook the visit were:

Inez Bootsgezel - Development Officer

Andrew Lynch - Development Officer

This was an unannounced visit, meaning that the service provider was not given notice prior to the Enter and View taking place. This is not an indication that Healthwatch has recent evidence of any pressing quality concerns at this service. Rather, it is a reflection of the fact that one of the main items that Healthwatch wanted to check progress about was the efficiency of the appointment booking system, and an unannounced visit would give Healthwatch Liverpool the best opportunity to observe the service under normal working conditions.

Section C

The Enter and View Observations

The following are selected extracts of recommendations from the Healthwatch Liverpool report of the Enter and View visit to Princes Park Health Centre carried out on 13th August 2013, together with the responses that Healthwatch received from the service provider to the recommendations.

Additionally the latest Healthwatch Liverpool observations and/or comments from the latest 3rd July 2014 Enter and View have been included. This constitutes the main substance of the follow up check that Healthwatch Liverpool desired to achieve during this latest Enter and View.

C1. Regarding the Appointment Booking System

Healthwatch Recommendation August 2013

Although the Healthwatch Liverpool team only spoke with 11 patients, it was noticeable that there was only one person who did not give negative feedback about the appointment system. It is clear that the current appointment system isn't working to patients' satisfaction. We recommend that the practice reviews its appointment system as a matter of urgency, ensuring that patients registered with the practice have input in the new system.

Service Provider Response August 2013

We have been looking at our appointments system and believe following consultation with our newly formed PPG, and speaking to clinicians, we will be able to offer a more "patient friendly" appointment system. I have consulted with other practices both locally and nationally to see what alternative systems are operating. The new appointments system will be reviewed regularly to ensure patient satisfaction.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

Healthwatch Liverpool is pleased to report that the secondary aim of our Enter and View; that of speaking to patients about the booking system as they used it, was obviated by the fact that there were no patients having to queue when Healthwatch observed the service open its doors at exactly 8am prompt.

This is an encouraging sign that the service does appear to have made some improvements regarding the appointment booking system. When Healthwatch spoke with the practice manager she explained that changes to the appointment system had been made in March 2014, with more pre-bookable appointments being made available, and that a patients' survey is underway to monitor satisfaction with the new system. Healthwatch would be interested to see the results of this survey.

Healthwatch did observe 3 patients who attended the surgery during our visit. Two were given a same day appointment, while the 3rd patient who asked for an appointment for the following day was offered the options of either an appointment on the Tuesday after (3 working days later), or to return the next day at 8am to book an appointment in person on the day.

During the observation telephone appointments were also being made for patients and all telephone calls that were observed were answered quickly. Healthwatch observed that people who were phoning in were generally being offered an appointment the following Tuesday because the appointment slots prior to Tuesday were filled.

The observation took place on a Thursday morning, which meant that these patients were being asked to wait 3 working days and 5 days in total to see their GP for a non-urgent appointment.

Healthwatch Liverpool has no evidence that such waiting times for appointments are peculiar to this particular provider. Indeed, there is some recent evidence from the BBC Health webpage that appointment waiting times are actually a national problem.

A BBC news article on the 3 July 2014 By Nick Trigg, entitled: *Seeing a GP 'getting more difficult'*, illustrated the point by quoting Dr Chaand Nagpaul who stated at the British Medical Association's (BMA) annual conference that

"waits of one or two weeks would "become the norm".

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-28142611>)

In view of this wider national concern about GP appointment waiting times Healthwatch Liverpool declines to make any recommendations about this issue to this service provider at this point, and can only make the general comment that though longer appointment waiting times seem to be becoming more prevalent across the country, this is clearly not in the interest of patients.

Healthwatch Liverpool has asked to be invited to the next Patient Participation Group meeting held by this practice to help measure current levels of satisfaction with the appointment booking system. The provider has agreed to the Healthwatch request.

C2. Regarding the Appointment Booking System

Healthwatch Recommendation August 2013

Healthwatch recommends that text and/or email reminders of appointments are sent to all those patients whose details are available.

Service Provider Response August 2013

We now offer the facility to both book appointments and order repeat prescriptions and have been advising patients of this for several weeks now. Our Princes Park Email system (nhs.net) will be set up to offer text service through SMS and this will make our DNA's more manageable.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

The Practice manager explained that patients can now book appointments online or cancel appointments via text message, but that one effect of having more pre-bookable appointments has been a rise in patients missing their appointments (DNA - did not attend), which the practice is working to reduce.

C3. Regarding the Appointment Booking System

Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013

To assist with this we recommend the practice regularly checks with patients that patients' details are still current, e.g. when a patient arrives for an appointment ask if they have a mobile phone number and/or email address, if it is still the same number, etc.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

As part of our patient care, we regularly ask patients both when they arrive in clinic and also when they telephone for correct details, check addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers including mobile numbers, this will also help with on-line booking and changing of appointments including text messaging.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

There were signs in various languages on notice boards asking patients if the practice had up-to-date contact details for them.

The observation did not yield any evidence that this continues to be an issue.

C4. Regarding Patient engagement

Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013

To assist with getting patient input and feedback, including about appointment systems, Healthwatch recommends that a patient participation group is set up as soon as practically possible.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

We have written a letter to patients and we are hoping our first meeting will be held Wednesday 18th December at Princes Park.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

Healthwatch was pleased to observe that one meeting of the patient participation (PPG) group has now taken place and that the recommended dialogue with patients has started. However, Healthwatch will be keen to see further evidence of consolidation on the start that has been made.

Healthwatch will be invited to attend the next planned PPG meeting. Healthwatch awaits venue and time details of the next PPG Meeting.

C5. Regarding Accessibility of Information

Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013

Provide more patient information in the waiting room, including a patients' leaflet, and ensure information is updated regularly.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

We are actively working through our leaflets and replacing them with current up to date information for patients and their carers. Our information boards are up to date and our DNA figures are updated on a weekly basis.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

Healthwatch was pleased to observe that there has been a significant improvement in the amount of information being made available to patients on notice boards around the waiting room. Information about the changes to the appointment system which were introduced in March was clearly displayed, as well as booking-in information. Some information was available in several languages (e.g. asking patients if the practice had up-to-date contact details for them).

On one notice board the chaperone policy was clearly visible in a larger font, however the patients charter and complaints information displayed on the same board were in a small font and more difficult to see. During the observation there were no copies available of the Practice leaflet, and only one copy of a leaflet explaining how to make a complaint.

The Practice manager assured Healthwatch that practice leaflets and information leaflets about how to complain would be provided. We will be interested to monitor progress on this.

C6.**Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013**

We recommend that information for current and future patients is added as soon as possible to the website set up for Princes Park Health Centre by the current provider.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

Our website will be constantly updated - to include information on how to register, on-line booking of appointments and ordering of prescriptions etc.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

More information is now provided on the Princes Park Health Centre website, however there still is scope for additional information to be added.

The practice could involve the Patients Participation Group in discussing the website and its contents.

C7.

Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013

Although probably not within Princes Park Health Centre's remit, we recommend every effort is made to remove the previous provider's website for the practice in order to avoid confusion; and that the information on the NHS Choices website is updated wherever possible.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

We have contacted Merseyside to see what if anything can be changed with respect to our NHS website. This will be updated as soon as practically possible.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

When carrying out an online search for Princes Park Health Centre the previous provider's website still appears more prominently, however as stated above to get this website removed is not in the current practice's remit.

C8.

Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013

We recommend that an interpreting service is provided as standard to those patients who require this, as relying on relatives can easily compromise patient confidentiality, dignity and privacy.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

We do offer an interpreting service - Global Accent and Language line for all patients that request it, however due to the sensitive nature and for patients personal beliefs, some patients do request that it is their representative that assists them during consultation, but for all other patients requiring interpreting service, this is

booked and appointment slots are adjusting accordingly (namely to take up two spaces for time.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014

The practice manager told Healthwatch Liverpool that the interpreting services are used a lot by the practice. Healthwatch did not have the opportunity to verify this during this visit.

C9.

Healthwatch Recommendations August 2013

Move the notice board(s) in the treatment room(s) to the desk.

Service Provider Responses August 2013

Management company have agreed to put up notice boards in clinicians rooms as requested.

Healthwatch Observations/Comments July 2014:

The practice manager confirmed that the notice boards had been moved.

Section D

Summary

Healthwatch Enter and View visits are not designed to be systematic inspections of a health or social care services. Such inspections are carried out by the Care Quality Commission and relevant service commissioners. The Care Quality Commission has the role of assessing and informing the public regarding the general standards of care provided by health and social care services.

Healthwatch conducts Enter and View visits in order to observe a service in action and where practicable, hear the voices of patients. At best, such Enter and View visits can only offer a strictly time limited snapshot of a service. Healthwatch Enter and View representatives are not health professionals and so undertake these Enter and View visits from the perspective of a lay-person.

Taking into account the parameters outlined immediately above, the observations from the Enter and View visit to Princes Park Health Centre on Thursday 3rd July 2014 raised no new issues, either positive or negative, regarding the quality of the service being offered by this practice. Nevertheless, Healthwatch Liverpool will be interested to receive future updates from the service provider regarding Patient Participation Group development and the appointments booking system as an indication of the services' commitment to continuous service improvement.

Healthwatch Liverpool is always keen to hear more from patients about services, whether those stories are about positive or negative experiences. Patient feedback helps Healthwatch to identify and acknowledge good practice, or issues that call for improvements. To give Healthwatch further information, or to discuss this report further please find us using the contact details below.

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