


**Details of visit****Service address:****Ringmead Medical Practice (Great Hollands)  
Great Hollands Square, Bracknell, Berkshire,  
RG12 8WY****Service Provider:****Ringmead Medical Practice****Date and Time:****7<sup>th</sup> January 2016, 9.00am – 11.45am****Authorised****Mark Sanders, Muriel Hanley, Sharon Bowden  
and John Baster****Representatives:****Contact details:****[enquiries@healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchbracknellforest.co.uk)****Acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest would like to thank the service provider, patients and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

**Disclaimer**

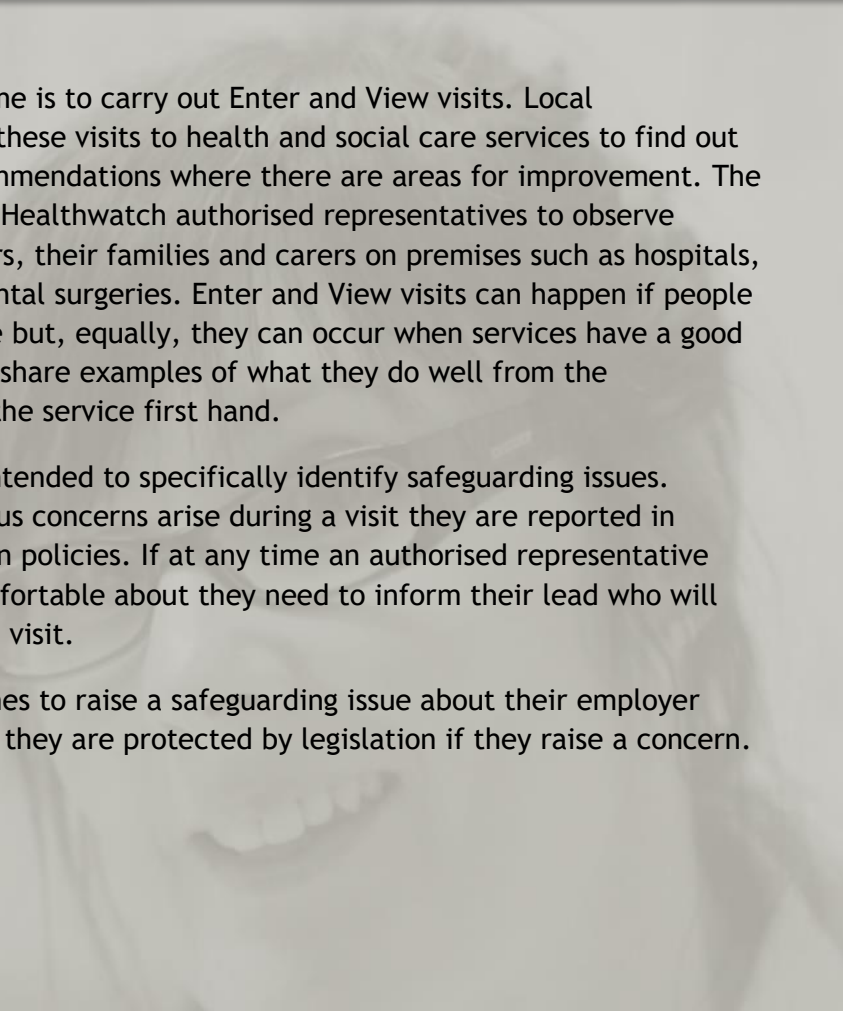
Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time - supported by data drawn from an online patient survey, general feedback on the surgery that Healthwatch Bracknell Forest has received in the last 6 months, NHS Choices and a review of the surgery website.

**What is Enter and View?**

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices and dental surgeries. 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 Enter and Views are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding or other serious concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch escalation policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about they need to inform their lead who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.



## Purpose of the visit

- Observe patients engaging with the staff and their surroundings.
- Capture the experience of patients and to record any ideas they may have for change to improve patient experience.

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## Strategic drivers

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest collects and collates feedback and intelligence on local services. Primary care, i.e. GP surgeries, is the service we receive the most information about. This is not surprising as it is the health service that the majority of the public access regularly. Over the last 18 months trends have been identified including issues with - booking and access to appointments, waiting times, privacy (reception), staff attitudes, cleanliness and suitability of waiting areas, disability access and communication.

A programme of Enter and View visits to all surgeries in the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group (BACCG) area was initiated in November 2015. All surgeries will receive an individual report and, at the end of the programme (March 2016), these will be collated to form one report to BACCG to inform future commissioning (such as extended hours), identify issues - specific to individual surgeries and also across the whole primary care service and finally, highlight areas of good practice leading to positive patient experience which can be shared across the area.

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## Methodology

*This was an announced Enter and View visit.*

Two weeks prior to the visit a notification letter was delivered to the Practice Manager via GP Council. Information posters and flyers about the visit, intended for distribution to patients, were also delivered. An online survey was published on the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest website and notifications sent via e-bulletin and social media. The practice shares premises with another local practice so, logistically it was easier to conduct visits to both practices at the same time. Patients were asked which practice they were a member of.

On arrival the Enter and View authorised representatives were greeted by both Practice Managers and refreshments were provided.

A short survey, which will be used in all GP Enter and View visits, had been prepared by authorised representatives and Healthwatch Bracknell Forest staff prior to the visit. The survey contains questions to capture equalities data, questions regarding appointment booking, waiting times, appointment time suitability, awareness of extended hours opening, patient satisfaction of any consultation time and awareness of named GPs in the over 75s. There were also two questions which allowed for open ended text responses (these were also asked of the wider patient group online). In total we were able to speak to 25 patients on the day and ask them to complete the survey. An additional 2 online surveys were also completed. At the start of all



interactions, the authorised representatives introduced themselves, showed their identification and spoke about the purpose of both Healthwatch and the reasons for the visit. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest information leaflets were available for individuals.

The member of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest staff, Mark Sanders, was able to meet with the Practice Managers from both surgeries being visited, to discuss a standard set of questions and requests for information (which will be used in all GP Enter and View visits) including GP rotas, emergency appointments and how these are triaged and accessed (where applicable) and charging policy for letters/services,

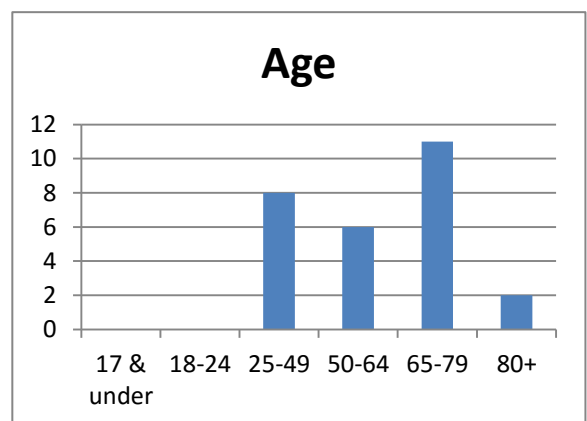
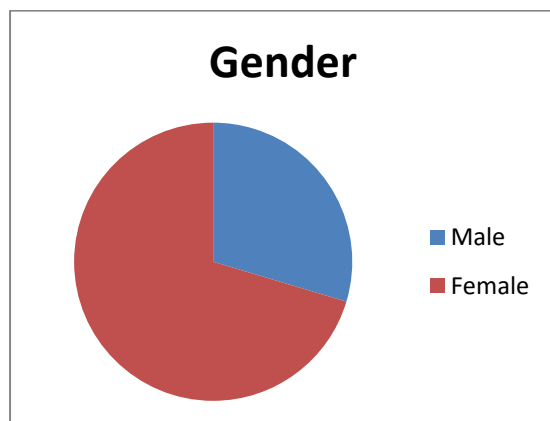
A proportion of the visit was also observational, allowing the authorised representatives to assess the environment and how patients engaged with staff members and the facilities.

Alongside the visit Healthwatch Bracknell Forest staff reviewed NHS Choices reviews for the surgery over the last 6 months and the practice website.

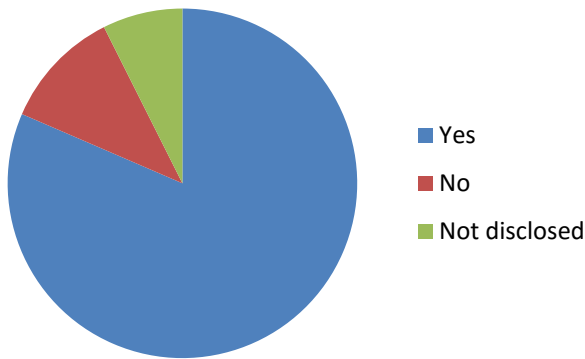
## Results of Visit

### Equalities data

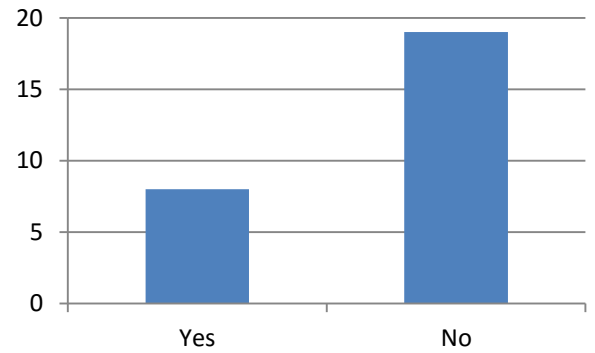
25 surveys completed on the visit + 2 online



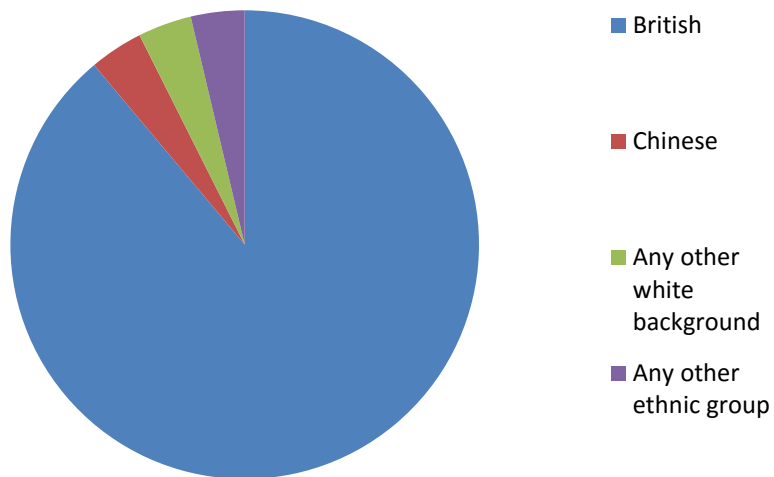
**Do you have a disability or long-term health condition?**



**Do you consider yourself to be a carer?**

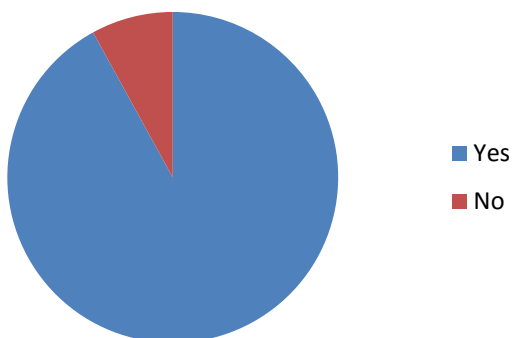


**Ethnic Origin**

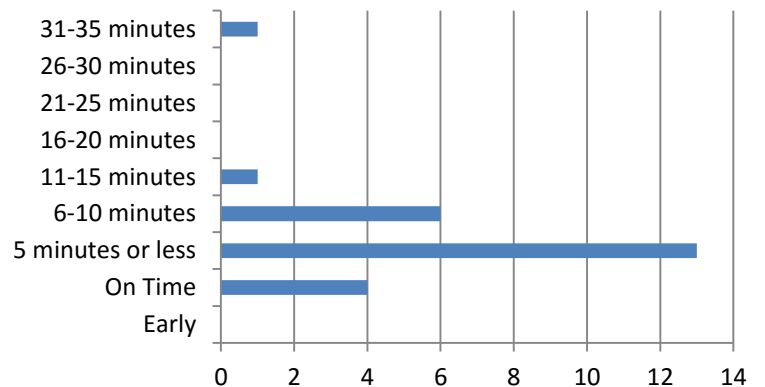


Survey questions (25 responses)

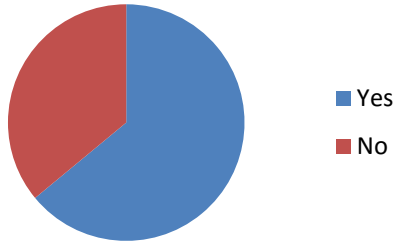
**Did you get an appointment when you wanted/needed one?**



**How long did you wait today for your appointment?**

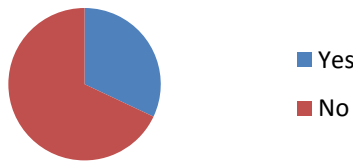


**Did you use the electronic booking in system today?**



If YES, was it easy to use?	
Yes	15
No	1
If NO, why did you not use it?	
Not Specified	7
Not used to computers	1
Visual impairment	1

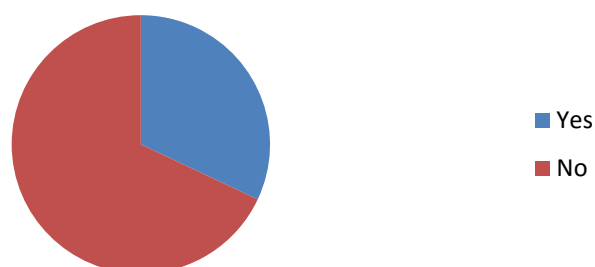
**Did you have difficulty fitting the appointment time given into your day?**



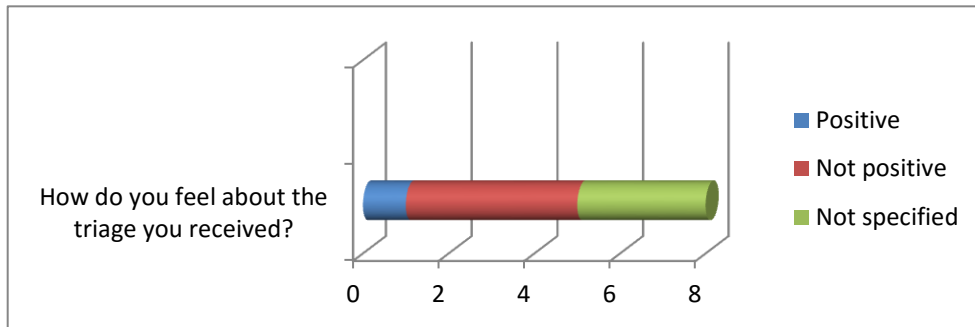
If YES, why?	
Not specified	3
Need a friend to bring me	1
Unable to get through on phone (to make apt)	1
Personal reasons	1
Wanted appointment with certain doctor	1
Needed a longer appointment	1

Do you know whether you could have made an evening and/or weekend appointment?		Would you have used this if an option?			
Yes	11	Yes	8	No	3
No	14	Yes	14	No	0

**Were you triaged before you received your appointment?**



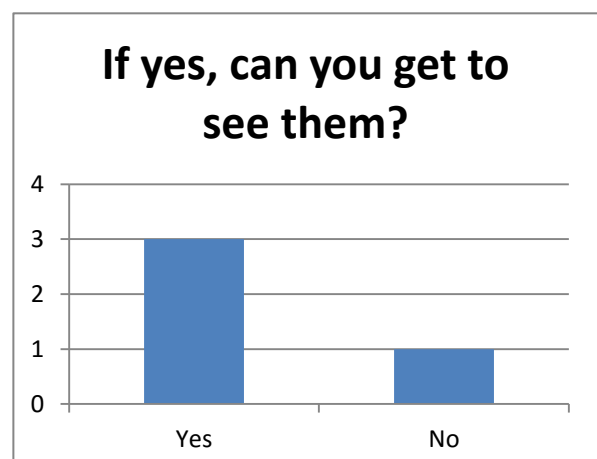
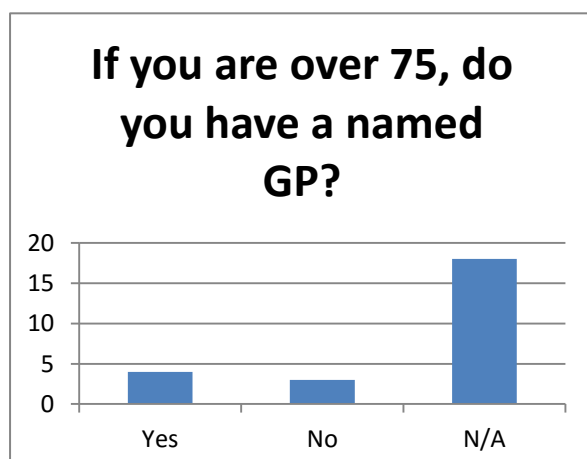
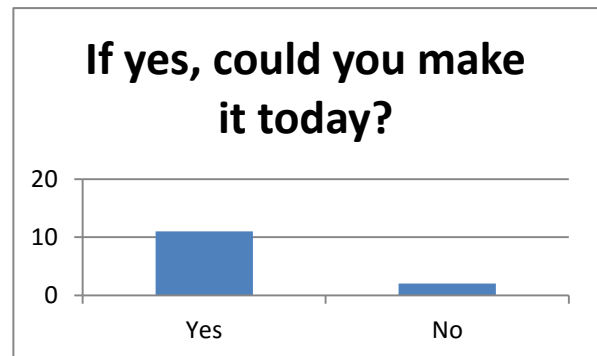
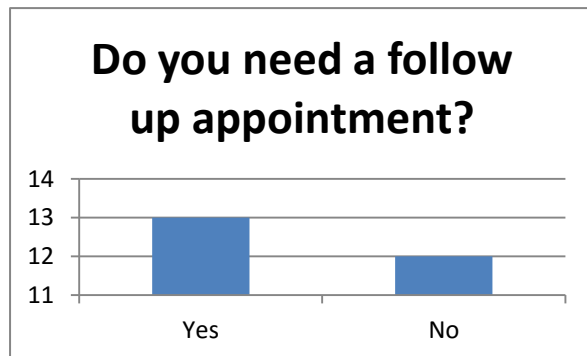
Of the 8 patients who stated they received triage, 1 said this was carried out by a doctor, four said this was carried out by a receptionist and 3 did not specify.



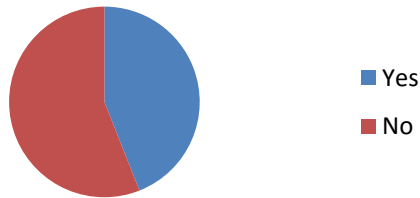
The positive experience was reported by a patient triaged by a receptionist.

**During your appointment do you feel you had enough time to address your concerns? Did the GP/Nurse listen to you? Did you feel you received all the information you needed etc.**

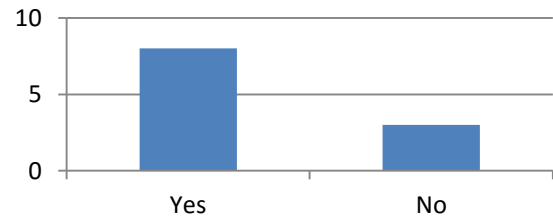
Yes	23	No comments made
No	2	No comments made



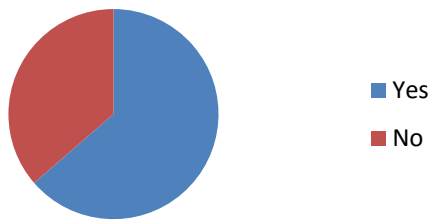
### Have you visited the surgery website?



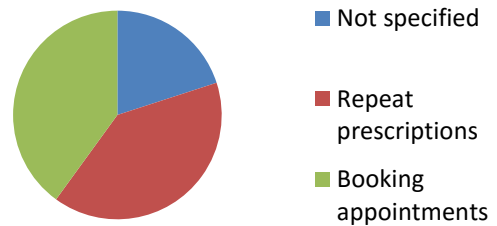
### If yes, was it easy to navigate?



### Have you used any of the online functions?



### If yes, what have you used?



Comments about the website	Number of comments
Very good	1
Didn't know there was one	1
Overcrowded	1
A bit of a parlarva	1
Last time the website was down	1
Useless; tried booking	1

### Are you aware of the Surgery Patient Group?



Patients were more likely to be aware of the SPG if they were aware / used the website.

## Text comments

27 patients (25 during the Enter and View visit and 2 online) were asked two questions - what was good about the surgery and what could be improved - allowing them to give feedback on the surgery beyond the scope of the questions already asked in the survey.

The text comments were coded into categories. The number of comments did not equal the number of participants as some individuals did not provide responses (to one or both questions) and some participants gave more than one comment per question. The total number of comments from the responses that were coded was:

What is good? 31

What could be improved? 43

<i>What is good about the surgery?</i>	
<b>Comment category</b>	<b>No. of comments</b>
General comments (helpful, friendly etc.)	10
Doctors	7
Receptionists *	5
Phlebotomist *	3
Telephone consultations	2
It is improving	2
Nurses	1
Appointment accessibility	1

Lisa from reception and Hannah the Health Care Assistant received very positive comments about their inter-personal skills

<i>What could be improved at the surgery?</i>	
<b>Comment category</b>	<b>No. of comments</b>
Appointment access (routine/follow-up)	7
Waiting times	7
Telephone access	5
Not enough consultation time	4
Appointment access (same day/urgent)	3
Doctors	2
Triage system	2
Seeing named GP / continuity of care	2
Repeat prescriptions (access and availability)	2
Disability access (for those on mobility scooters/wheelchairs)	1
Facilities need updating	1
Booking appointment by email/online	1
Receptionists	1
Concerns about capacity	1
Appoint access (with nurse)	1
Access to extended hours appointments	1
Access to a female doctor in an emergency	1



## **Authorised representative observations**

The authorised representatives made the following observations:

- The surgery is accessible; doors, toilets and accessible reception desk
- The waiting room is shared with another practice (and managed by another provider). Reception desks, booking in consoles, visual patient calling in systems are separate but the patient information resource (alcove in the waiting room) is shared.
- The patient information resource overall, which is shared between both practices, has good content but not all leaflets are current and logically placed.
- There is a box for surgery feedback situated on the reception desk.
- The accessible reception desk is slightly cluttered with leaflets.
- The waiting room was clean and bright but the décor looked tired.
- A notice regarding patients' rights to a chaperone was displayed.
- Information about the different ways patients can book appointments is displayed.
- Due to the shared waiting room there are two television screens displaying patient information. The television linked to the Ringmead practice displays national information and is used to call patients in to see the doctor.
- For patients and visitors not familiar with the surgery the room lay out / numbering is not totally clear.
- There did not appear to be any books or toys for children in the waiting area.
- Positive interactions were observed between patients and reception staff.
- Although there is a private back office, conversation at the reception desk can be heard by about a third of the waiting area as there is no background noise.

## **Meeting with Practice Manager**

Information about GP rotas and charging for services was requested and was provided. This information request will be made of all surgeries and will be utilised in the final, combined report to help inform BACCG and NHS England in future development work.

During the meeting the system for emergency/same day appointments was discussed. Twice a week (Mondays and Fridays) there is a duty doctor with no pre-booked appointments who deals with all emergency/same day appointments - this includes telephone consultations. This seems to work well as usually there is adequate appointment capacity. Triage - receptionists ask for details but clinical assessment is carried out when the GP calls back. Other types of appointment (routine/follow up etc.) can be booked up to four weeks in advance. Appointments can be made at either site (The practice also has a surgery in Birch Hill) and all doctors spend time in both surgeries.

## **Healthwatch Bracknell Forest feedback**

In the six months prior to the Enter and View visit Healthwatch Bracknell Forest received 8 pieces of feedback about the surgery. 5 of these were positive and mentioned good doctors and accessibility of appointments. One piece of negative feedback was concerning

records management and being called up for follow-up checks after cancer. The other piece of feedback was actually a concern raised by a local councillor, on behalf of residents, after the new triage (receptionists) system was put into place in September 2015.

### **Website review**

The Ringmead Medical Practice website was reviewed on the 22 January 2016. The site has a really good layout with lots of useful information for patients. In particular we like the way information has been categorised and laid out. However there is an over use of the colour green. Green on green is not particularly easy to view particularly for those with visual impairment; some alteration of the colours would greatly aid accessibility.

Information such as surgery opening times, staff and new patient registration was easy to find.

The online services available were also well placed for easy navigation.

The site has good accessibility functions for those whom English is not their first language and the accessibility statement includes details for configuring web browsers to further aid accessibility. The accessibility statement would benefit from the inclusion of the information about changing the language.

We like that a detailed complaints process is included along with ways to feedback and the list of contacts for other local services is all helpful information for patients. Out of hours is directed to 111, we would like to see an explanation/examples of what a patient could expect when calling out of hours.

All in all we consider this to be a good useful website with lots of information for patients.

### **NHS Choices reviews**

Healthwatch Bracknell Forest staff looked at the surgery's reviews on NHS Choices for the last 6 months and overall statistics.

## **Key facts**

Registered patients

**15,633** patients

There is no Friends and Family Test score data available on NHS Choices.

## Ratings

4 Stars



### NHS Choices users' overall rating

Based on 26 ratings for this GP surgery

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Telephone access



(27 ratings)

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Appointments



(27 ratings)

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Dignity and respect



(27 ratings)

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Involvement in decisions



(27 ratings)

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Providing accurate information



(27 ratings)

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The practice received 8 reviews in the six months prior to the Enter and View visit. 1 of these did not award any stars and was negative about the receptionists carrying out triage and appointment accessibility. 4 reviews awarded one star and feedback was mainly around telephone access, appointment accessibility, receptionists and complaints

procedure. 1 review awarded 4 stars and 2 reviews awarded five stars. These, on the whole, praised the doctors and treatment received.

The reviews were responded to, usually in a timely manner. The responses were full but in our opinion there was an unnecessary emphasis on national NHS capacity and pressures. NHS Choices allows local people to feedback on local services. In all cases people were referred to the Practice Manager and this is a positive but there is a slightly negative tone when people have posted negative reviews anonymously. Healthwatch are aware that some patients are still nervous about providing negative feedback or complaints directly to a practice and take the view that all feedback is useful. We also feel that in one case, where a patient did disclose their name and medical issues the response should not have included details of their treatment; it would have been better suited to an offline discussion.

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## Summary of findings

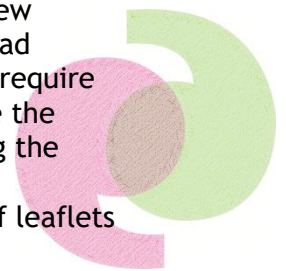
At the time of our visit, the evidence is that:

- All of the patients we spoke to on the visit and who completed the survey online were over 25 and 70% were over 50; this may explain the high rate of self-declared disability or long term health condition (81.5%)
- On the day of our visit, 92% patients were seen within 10 minutes of their appointment time. However 2 patients had a longer wait - 1 waiting 35 minutes. Waiting times has been highlighted as an area of concern by some patients.
- The majority of patients are happy with the quality of the care and treatment they receive.
- There is some feedback to suggest this level of satisfaction and continuity of care is diminished due to difficulties accessing GP of choice/named GP.
- In September 2015 the surgery introduced a new triage system for those requesting urgent/same day appointments. This involves receptionists. There have been concerns raised by patients about this.
- The surgery is fully accessible for patients with mobility issues but the accessible reception desk is not kept clear.
- Patients are concerned with appointment accessibility; both same day/urgent appointments and those booked in advance. However, during our visit, the majority of patients who required a follow up appointment were able to make it then and there.
- During our visit 36% of patients did not use the electronic booking-in system. This may be because of location and the age of the patients may have been a factor.
- There is lots of information available for patients and how to feedback about the service is clear. However there does not appear to be any Friends or Family score data published on NHS Choices.
- The surgery website is a really good, practical and useful website for patients but could benefit from some changes to aid accessibility.
- Of the patients we spoke to during the visit, less than half (44%) had visited the surgery website. But the majority that had said it was easy to use and had used the online functions such as repeat prescriptions.
- There was a very low (28%) level of awareness of the Surgery Patient Group (SPG) in the patients we spoke to. There does appear to be a correlation between use of the website and awareness of the SPG. With the exception of 1 patient, all those who were aware of the SPG had used the website.

- The surgery layout affords as much privacy as possible but the lack of background noise means that conversations at the reception desk can be clearly heard from some sections of the waiting room.
- The surgery appears very clean and tidy but the décor looks like it would benefit from a refresh.
- The waiting room does not have any activities for children waiting for appointments.
- The signage for locating consulting rooms is not immediately clear.
- In the last 6 months the surgery has responded to reviews on NHS Choices usually in a timely manner.

## Recommendations

- Despite some patients having to wait for over half an hour, the majority of patients are seen within 10 minutes of their appointment time. As covered by a response from the practice to an NHS Choices review about this issue, there is little that can be done to rectify this but it could communicate with patients about unexpected waiting times via the television screen.
- Concerns have been raised about continuity of care and triage since the new system was introduced in September 2015. However the new system has had positive impacts on appointment accessibility - particularly for those who require same day treatment. Healthwatch Bracknell Forest recommends that once the system is embedded, further patient feedback is gathered (maybe utilising the Patient Survey).
- The accessible area of the reception desk should be kept clear (removal of leaflets etc.)
- To encourage patients who want to book in at reception to use the electronic booking in system instead and offer support where necessary.
- To promote collection of Friends and Family data.
- To change the colour scheme of the website and expand the accessibility statement.
- To run an awareness campaign for the website.
- To run awareness campaign for the Surgery Patient Group with high visibility in the waiting room and other channels other than the website.
- The surgery layout and the use of the private office affords patients some privacy. However the introduction of some background noise would increase privacy for patients at the reception desk.
- To discuss the possibility of decorating with the surgery landlord.
- The waiting room would benefit from a small children's activity table.
- Improve the signage to waiting rooms.
- To continue to respond to NHS Choices reviews in a timely manner but with a focus on the services the practice provides rather than national NHS pressures and issues.



## Service Provider response



This report was agreed with Steph Thorns as factually accurate and the following response to the report and recommendations was received on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2016.

Recommendation	Practice Comments
Despite some patients having to wait over half an hour, the majority of patients are seen within 10 minutes of their appointment times. As covered by a response from the practice to an NHS choices review about this issue, there is little that can be done to rectify this but it could communicate with patient about expected waiting time via the television screen	Our waiting times for each Doctor are displayed on our check -in screens. Reception staff are required to make announcements to the waiting patients if the time exceeds 30 minutes
Concerns have been raised about continuity of care and triage since the new system was introduced in Sept 2015. However the new system has had positive impacts on appointment accessibility - particularly for those who require same day treatment. Healthwatch BF recommends that once the system is embedded, further patient feedback is gathered (maybe utilising the patient survey	The Practice has planned to utilise the patient survey gather feedback on the new appointment system.
The accessible area of the reception desk should be kept clear (removal of leaflets etc.)	We will review the area and utilise the alcove with help from BHFT staff
To encourage patients who want to book in at Reception to use the electronic booking in system instead and offer support where necessary	Reception staff should support those patients
To promote collection of friends and family data	Posters are clearly displayed and there are paper copies next to the collection box. At a recent staff meeting, all staff were reminded to encourage patients to feedback on their experience
To change the colour scheme of the website and expand the accessibility statement	We will review this
To run an awareness campaign for the website	With help from the PPG and use of the patient newsletter
To run an awareness campaign for the Surgery Patient Group with high visibility in the waiting room and other channels other than the website	There is a strategy meeting booked on 25th Feb for members of the PPG - a small working group to devise how to promote the PPG Posters to be developed? Note on prescriptions maybe?
The surgery layout and the use of the private office affords patients some privacy. However the introduction of some background noise would increase privacy for patients at the Reception desk	This would be a cost for a licence and we are not the only service that use Great Hollands health centre so not sure how realistic this would be to implement. Will discuss with other tenants.

To discuss the possibility of decorating with the surgery landlord	Have emailed Director at BHFT end of January and asked for a programme of works to be developed with the practice manager - to arrange meeting asap.
The waiting room would benefit from a small children's activity table	Dr Arora's practice was heavily criticised in their CQC report for having toys and were strongly advised not to have any toys or books for infection control reasons. Although I note Mark's comments at GP council next week. CQC have provided us with clarification: Activity tables and hard toys are fine as long as they are cleaned daily and this is evidenced on a cleaning schedule. HWBF
Improve the signage to the waiting rooms	Requested from Landlord 18 months ago!
To continue to respond to NHS choices in a timely manner but with a focus on the services the practice provides rather than National pressures and issues	Point taken