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## Enter and View Report Willington Medical Group

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**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019, 9-12noon**



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## Acknowledgements, disclaimer and context

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Healthwatch County Durham would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

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 service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

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 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, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if patients 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 patients who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and View are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding 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.

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## Purpose of the visit

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We ran a successful pilot with surgeries in 2017 and 2018, where we used ‘appreciative questions’ to explore what was working well in surgeries as well as areas for improvement. Key themes that were important to patients were shared with all practices and Enter and View visits were identified by the Clinical Commissioning Groups as a positive way to gather independent patient feedback.

*‘Your visit has certainly helped us focus our minds not only on what we are doing well, but also on areas where we knew we needed to improve, in addition it has also highlighted further areas where we need to develop and improve our service to patients.*

*The whole experience, from the initial approach by Marianne through to our involvement with Claire and then the volunteers on the day has been extremely pleasurable and informative; the staff here on the day have all been extremely complimentary of your approach and methods.*

*In our opinion the Enter and View visits are a great way to break down barriers, give practices an independent view on the success of their service and help them highlight areas for improvement. We would recommend an Enter and View visit to any practice.’*

Brian Woodhouse, Practice Manager

We wrote to all Practice Managers and Patient Reference Group Chairs to offer them the opportunity to request an Enter and View visit, to either gather overall patient feedback or explore a particular topic.

Willington Medical Group requested a visit as they were keen to listen to their patients and learn from their feedback.

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## Planning and preparation

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Authorised Representatives who had taken part in the pilot were keen to be involved, as were new volunteers. The survey used was carefully put together beforehand to reflect the 'positive approach' to be taken. This was circulated to staff, Authorised Representatives and the practice manager for comment.

We realised that there might be patients who would like to make a comment about the services who were not going to be around on the day of the visit so the surveys were left one week before the visit in the waiting area, on a HWCD display table, with a box for completed surveys to be left in. We also prepared slips which could be handed to a user, if they were to leave mid conversation due to their appointment being called. This meant they could still complete the form, after they had been seen.

We advertised the visit in advance (Appendix C) and Julia Steele (Practice Manager) briefed the staff, before the day.

We carried out a preparation visit one week before the Enter and View to do a risk assessment and consider areas such as layout, introductions, venue space and safety procedures, the process for taking photographs and we agreed use of a private space for conversations if needed.

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## Information and data

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At this surgery we used an authorised representative and carried out 27 individual conversations with patients and staff, using a set of appreciative questions to give patients the opportunity to describe good practice they had experienced or seen.

No surveys were completed prior, by patients who wanted to feedback on the service but did not have a GP appointment, on the day of our visit.

We observed activity and spoke to patients during our three hour visit, to collect their own independent impressions of the practice and its services, which were recorded during and after the visit.

A private space was available if patients felt the need to talk in confidence to us.

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# What patients told us

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Patients shared their experience and opinions of the practice, all are noted in Appendix E. Some are unique to individuals but there were several trends that we heard numerous times, which include:

## Professionalism and Empathy of staff

‘When I see my ‘own’ doctor I feel more confident’

‘Value the staff as they are first rate-great surgery feel valued’

‘I can be honest with the doctor I know. The service-don’t have any issue and is local enough’

‘Always feel listened to. No problems at all even when my usual doctor is away haven’t had any glitches, continual care. Prevention also costs less’

‘If I ever disagreed-find that I am not pressurized and can be honest-it’s sorted out’

‘They put themselves out for you, go the extra mile. Any complaints are addressed straight away. Previous doctor was brilliant but retired, think they are nice and fair’

## Appointment availability/system

‘Always get appointment for kids, same day appointments which is also good, good surgery that has good doctors’

‘Quick reaction and diagnosis’

‘10 out of 10, get an appointment when I want one. Flexible around appointments (this is important because since my husband died I have to get the bus)’

‘Really good for me-very supportive which is important to me because of issues I’ve had recently. Ring at 8am-get an appointment here no problem’

## Services and the Environment

‘Good mostly see one doctor. Have special needs daughter-got upset with me when I was upset, understanding and patient with me and flexible with timings’

‘The doctor transferred me to another doctor in the surgery who was more specialized in the issue’

‘Advance notification via text (for my injection) and this works well for me’

‘Doctor comes to the house (came out to see my husband) no problem. All staff are very friendly with me. Very quick with me and pleasant so I feel comfortable’

‘Not been a problem, don’t see same doctor and it’s the same whoever I see so I feel I get a good consistent service’

‘Should have kept the Physio’

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## What we observed

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The patients we observed in Willington Medical Group appeared to be very happy with the services overall

Observations considered the physical space and how it was managed, as well as communication with staff and users

Key areas of observation were:

### **Effectiveness of the physical space and layout**

Signage from the road is fairly low down height-may be difficult to see by car, especially.

Automatic opening entrance doors brought us into a clean, bright, friendly and welcoming surgery with comfortable and tidy seating area (some wider and higher level seats for patients with mobility issues), good access and some parking at the front street.

Appropriate security, as we were asked to sign in and were given an ID visitor badge before being shown around the surgery and given information on where the appropriate areas were, to use.

A taped off reception area allowed for privacy plus there was also a notice in place asking patients to wait to be called (patient confidentiality)

Pleasant Children’s dedicated area with images on the wall and low seats, children’s books.

Lots of information on display however very well laid out and managed (with specific themed boards i.e. Breast awareness) and there were general magazines to use too.

Self-sign in system was available and being used.

Large screen calling patients to appointments (large scale text) and also ran relevant health related information i.e. advice on vaccinations.

Fruit, nuts and healthy snacks were on offer in staff areas (meeting rooms, kitchen).

Reception staff seemed clear about procedure and were friendly and welcoming with patients.

### **Service and Positive social interaction**

We saw patients being greeted in a friendly manner-reception staff were very polite, patient and respectful. We also observed that reception staff seemed confident in answering patient's queries.

We saw receptionists sharing a joke with a user.

Some staff called patients personally by Christian name rather than just relying on the formal name, coming up on the screen.

Patients talked to other patients about how they were -which created a lively, interactive atmosphere.

CQC rating was displayed at the entrance.

Two receptionists were busy at the reception desk dealing with patients when it was busy, which reduced to one when it became a little quieter.

We witnessed a nurse coming to personally bring patients to their appointment.

### **Other Observations**

Patients did not wait long at all to be seen and were happy to share their experiences here with Healthwatch County Durham representatives (other than three people who sat together at the beginning of the visit, who told us they were not interested in 'filling in another survey!').



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# Recommendations for Willington Medical Group

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We have listed the recommendations below based on what we were told and what we saw and heard, during the visit.

1. One of the most conveyed messages from the patients on the day, was how happy they were with the service that they receive at Willington Medical Centre. The patients very much valued and appreciated the “quick response time”, “prompt diagnosis” and very “good follow up” care. Whilst a couple of patients said that the appointments process could be better, on the whole patients thought that the appointments procedure met their needs. Appointments are always available for children and are offered in a flexible way (when possible). Even when on the telephone, people appreciated that they knew what number they were in the queue. Patients told us that they found advance notification by text useful and that complaints were dealt with quickly and professionally. Patients spoke of consistency in service even if a different doctor was seen. The loss of the physio service was raised by several patients as being unfortunate and stated how good it would be to have it reinstated. There were clear and safe systems in place to manage visitors, as we were asked to sign in, given visitor ID to wear and shown around the site, prior to starting the visit. The quality of services and systems in place are well managed and are very valued by the users-this should be maintained.
2. Linked to the good service that patients felt they got-we evidenced positive social interaction and clear empathy between patients and staff. Patients told us how important it was that they could “be honest” as they felt they were “listened to” and therefore felt that they “were supported” which, in turn instilled “confidence”. Patients understood and valued good communication here and the times where the service went over and beyond- yet retained a professional, confident and efficient ethos. This way of working should not be underestimated and should be upheld in order to ensure effective patient/service relationships.
3. Patients told us how the staff were “first rate” and that they had “good Doctors”. Patients very much appreciated where they could choose to see a particular doctor or were able to see the same doctor for a particular issue. Several patients mentioned that there were a higher turnover of doctors in recent times and saw the use of locums, more often but they seemed to understand the need for this. It was also conveyed that staff were all friendly and were utilised in appropriate numbers, according to the requirements of the service at any particular time. Wherever possible, patient requests to access a particular doctor, should be obliged. Quality and turnover of doctors should be monitored in order to maintain the high standard, perceived by patients.

4. Patients told us how important the location of the surgery was, especially being able to walk to it and having everything under one roof. We observed an accessible, comfortable clean surgery, well used self-sign-in, good children's dedicated area with well thought out and clearly managed information and notices being displayed. Appropriate seating, comfortable wider and higher level seating accommodating people with mobility issues. No glass/Perspex screen at the reception which allowed for informal and confidential interaction between patients and reception staff. The comfort and confidentiality of patients visiting the surgery should be monitored and patients consulted on change/updates, as the current set up seems to meet the need very well.

## Service provider response

### Response to Healthwatch Report

Willington Medical Group continues to work towards a best practice service for all our patients. We work closely with our very active Patient Participation Group and use all forms of feedback in order to identify good practice and areas for improvement. As part of this process of continuous improvement we requested Healthwatch Co Durham to carry out an Enter and View visit as it is a valuable opportunity to gain an independent view of the services.

The subsequent report has firstly, confirmed where we are doing well and meeting patient expectations and secondly, identified areas where we must improve. We were delighted that the empathy and professionalism of staff were so evident and this confirms the value and benefits of our recruitment, induction and staff development programmes. We have always prided ourselves on our appointment system and are glad this was supported by patient feedback. The advance notification of appointments by text - plus the facility to cancel in the same way - has also proved successful and has reduced the number of missed appointments. We were pleased to see that the investment we have made in the waiting area is recognised e.g. accessibility, children's area, the wider/higher chairs and the themed noticeboards.

The perceived loss of the in-house physiotherapy service is highlighted in the report and this is definitely an area where we should have communicated the changes much more effectively with our patients. As a Practice we continue to refer patients to physiotherapy services and patients may also self-refer. We will use both the monthly newsletter as well as the TV screen in the waiting room to highlight the changes. We will also ensure that in future, any similar changes are discussed beforehand at our Patient Participant Group meetings to ensure the patient views are taken into account and changes are handled appropriately.

The reference to the increase in Locum GPs is noted. In the past we rarely used locums as we were very fortunate to have a full complement of GP Partners - many patients having the same GP for many years. However, in the space of one year two long serving Partners retired and another resigned for family reasons. We need to manage patients' expectations as, with most other Practices in the country, we are finding it very difficult to replace them. One approach we use is to continue as a GP Training Practice; two of these trainee GPs have continued with the Practice and are now Partners. We do now employ Locums thus ensuring we have sufficient appointments available. This report has highlighted a need to communicate more effectively with patients that our Locums are all trained GPs - many with years of valuable experience. We need to discuss how we can do this with the GP Partners and the Patient Participation Group.

We noted the reference to the low signage from the road and that it may be difficult to see. We are currently addressing our signage - both internally and externally - and will discuss this issue with the contractor in order to improve the location of the signage so that it is much easier to see.

Overall we are delighted with the report and thank most sincerely the representatives of Healthwatch for their visit and their positive feedback. We certainly would recommend an Enter and View Visit to all Practices.

# Appendices

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## Appendix A: Letter

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Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Julia Steele  
Willington Medical group  
Chapel Street  
Crook  
DL15 0EQ

Dear Julia

### **Positive Enter and View Visit - Willington Medical group**

Healthwatch County Durham is the statutory, independent consumer champion for health and social care. It makes sure the views of patients and service users are heard by those who run, plan and regulate health and social care services.

Healthwatch County Durham may, under certain circumstances, enter and view premises where publicly funded health and social care services are provided. As we discussed at our recent meeting, the purpose of this visit is to observe good practice and hear the patient stories and views about services.

Healthwatch County Durham's Enter & View Authorised Representatives, as agreed, will visit on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019 from 9am-12 noon. There will be two authorised Representatives attending along with myself -Claire Cowell (Volunteer Support Lead)-we will all have ID badges.

During the visit we would like to speak to patients and staff, using a standard set of questions as prompts. We will provide a display stand and information prior to the visit (I will bring this along on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> August, in the morning).

We are happy to provide brief verbal feedback to you on the day if you are available. We will then write a report that will include examples of good practice that we have observed and heard about. You will receive this report 20 days before it is published on our website and shared with CCGs.

I will bring with me two large posters on the 13<sup>th</sup>, in the meantime will you promote the visit to the staff and patients please.

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this pilot. We look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely

Claire Cowell  
(Volunteer Support Lead)

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## Appendix B: Questions

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### Enter and View Questions for GP practices in County Durham

Thank you for your time today. Healthwatch are here to speak to patients about the GP practice and to hear the stories behind your views. We will share that learning with other practices, make recommendations about how others could achieve better results.

Please can you tell me about a good experience that you have had at your GP practice? (Prompt questions if needed: What made it a positive experience? Who was involved? How did you feel?)
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What is the best thing about your GP practice? (Prompts: What makes it stand out for you? Why have you chosen this?)

If you could make sure your GP practice kept one thing, what would it be? Why is that? (Prompt if needed: one thing could be a service, facility, process, behavior or person)

If your practice could do one thing to make it even better, what would that be?

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## Appendix C: Programme

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### Wellington Medical Group - Enter and View Programme - 21.8.19

9am	Photographs/Brief/Programme	
9-10.45am	Survey/Observe	Claire
	Survey/Observe	Jean
	Survey/Observe	Mervyn
10.50-11.00	10 minutes 'out' - thoughts/issues Survey	
11.00-12noon	Survey/Observe	Claire
	Survey/Observe	Jean
	Survey/Observe	Mervyn
12.00-12.30	Findings/Debrief Staff	

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## Appendix D: Poster

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### Tell us about Willington Medical Group!

Wednesday 21st August 2019

9am-12noon

Willington Medical Group

*Healthwatch County Durham is your local, independent health and social care champion. We are visiting Willington Medical Group to find out what you think about the services it offers and would like to hear from patients, visitors and staff about your experiences.*

**Come and tell us what you  
think is so good about  
Willington Medical group**

**[www.healthwatchcountydurham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchcountydurham.co.uk)**

Tel: 0191 3787695, Text: 07756 654218

Healthwatch County Durham  
Whitfield House  
Meadowfield Industrial estate  
Durham, DH7 8XL

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# Appendix E: Notes

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## Enter and View Notes (Willington Medical Group) - 21.8.19

### Preparation/before the day

- Survey used was carefully put together beforehand to reflect the 'positive approach' to be taken. This was circulated to staff, volunteer reps and lead receptionist for comment.
- Surveys were left one week before the visit in the waiting area with a box for completed surveys to be deposited in. We realised that there might be patients who would like to make a comment about the services who were not going to be around on the day of the visit.
- Posters were displayed in the doctors surgery two weeks before the visit
- The practice manager (Julia Steele) briefed the staff before the day
- Volunteer Support Lead (Claire Cowell) visited the surgery one week before, to consider areas such as layout, Introductions, venue space and safety procedures (CC carried out Risk Assessment), procedures for taking photographs and agreed use of a private space.

### Information gathering

- How we collected information, comments and observed!
- 3 Surveying/3 Observing/offering general info about HW

### Numbers/Data

- 27 written Surveys were completed on the day
- 0 written surveys were completed prior to us arriving
- Observation notes were taken by all reps.
- One Photograph of a patient was taken (with consent) and others of the building

### On the day

#### Volunteers were briefed on:

- The physical/available space
- How to introduce what we were doing
- The programme for the day
- Refreshments and toilets
- The use of photographs
- Introduced to staff
- Sensitivity on when and when not to approach a person/user



## Results/what patients said/what we saw

### Survey

#### Good Experience:

- Dr Chadwick was the best doctor
- All been mostly good-choosing own doctor, see doctor I choose to see. Staff generally friendly-but does clash with on staff, but more staff attitude than anything else
- Good experience is quick response, caught cancer early. Put themselves out for you, go the extra mile. Any complaints are addressed straight away. Previous doctor was brilliant but retired, think they are nice and fair
- Come down rarely to use the practice. Recently had a negative experience, is going to complain. Has been good in the past. Had some wonderful services in the past, but recent experience has upset her. Husband very ill, doctor called to house, doctor now left.
- Got shoulders done, waited 15 years, been here 50 years
- Good follow up
- Each visit is a good experience, able to see the same doctor
- Always get appointment for kids, same day appointments which is good, good surgery has a good doctor.
- How well a specific doctor related to my child and made a diagnosis
- Communication-medical to save the GP's time. Professional, confidential and efficient
- When I see my 'own' doctor I feel more confident
- Value the staff as they are first rate-great surgery feel valued
- The check in and general process of the surgery
- Quick reaction and diagnosis
- 3 Tier experience-quick consultant visit, see same doctors, easy appointments, don't seem a triage system.
- 10 out of 10, get an appointment when I want one. Flexible around appointments (this is important because since my husband died I have to get the bus)
- Friendly-not sure about management of systems (i.e. whether you can get an appointment). Some reception staff seem more aware than others
- Really good for me-very supportive which is important to me because of issues I've had recently. Ring at 8am-get an appointment here no problem
- Can normally get an appointment. Use the self-check-in, friendly staff
- Normally helpful-can normally get an appointment. Refer to consultant-go to RVI but the GP are careful not to step on anyone's toes
- Good mostly see one doctor. Have special needs daughter-got upset with me when I was upset, understanding and patient with me and flexible with timings
- Normally, staff ok do their job

- Professional and friendly, nice. Hard to get an appointment, can't book ahead but you get a number in the queue
- The doctor transferred me to another doctor in the surgery who was more specialized in the issue
- They listen
- One doctor has gone over and beyond call of duty for me
- Get appointment ok-no problem

### **Best thing about the practice:**

- Local practice for me
- Close only 3 minutes away
- Advance notification via text (for my injection) and this works well for me
- Local, easy access, easy and quick to get an appointment
- Set up efficiently-this surgery is local to me, even if I moved I would keep this surgery
- Efficient in everything I need, good services available. Have everything I need
- Friendly and helpful. Can't complain, can't think of anything that stands out but can't complain
- Difficult to say as don't access surgery very often
- Nothing to speak of. It's better than it was a year or so ago.
- Always get appointments, especially for the kids. Don't tend to use this much for myself.
- Can get an appointment but not necessarily with the doctor you want
- Basic set up of the surgery, info on view and availability, ease of access to the doctors
- Will give you a diagnosis
- Effective Communication
- At least you can get in
- I have confidence in this surgery
- Usually can get into the surgery and then can book with the actual doctor for a same doctor visit next time.
- Good staff-try to accommodate you. Good selection of staff for their abilities
- Doctor comes to the house (came out to see my husband) no problem. All staff are very friendly with me. Very quick with me and pleasant so I feel comfortable.
- Prefer to see the same doctor. Its local for me and local pharmacy which is very handy
- Not been a problem, don't see same doctor and it's the same whoever I see so I feel I get a good consistent service
- Local for me-I can walk here and nearby pharmacy
- The appointment system on a number order for the next answer, if prefer to ring back

- Friendly enough, near enough and local for me
- Once you're in the surgery and you see a doctor its good
- I can be honest with the doctor I know. The service-don't have any issue and is local enough

### If you could make sure your GP practice kept one thing, what would it be?

- Doctor quite good and nice, explains things to me
- Keep everything as it is, no changes to the services available
- Everything is needed, keep everything-please don't take away any of the services
- Keep everything as it is
- Just use the doctor-not aware of other services available through practice
- Anything to do with cancer of children don't take away
- Nothing to change, leave everything as it is
- Physio
- Good relationship with the docs-especially when trying to see the same doctor
- Physio
- Whatever is needed by the local population
- Smoking reduction
- Keep MHA and being able to transfer CAMHS
- Should have kept the Physio
- Always feel listened to. No problems at all even when my usual doctor is away haven't had any glitches, continual care. Prevention also costs less
- Important to get an appointment for me, confidence and peace of mind that I am being cared for
- Can see same doctor or if you're happy to see another-I'm happy with that
- Locality
- Nothing in particular
- If I ever disagreed-find that I am not pressurized and can be honest-its sorted out
- Get prescriptions sent by email to pick up-close by

### One thing to make it better:

- No happy with the service
- Can't get to see same doctor you want as doctor part time. Sometimes wait ages at desk before someone comes to see you. Waiting times can be long sometimes
- Good appointment system but if you don't ring first thing you can't get in. More general appointments-have reserve appointments
- Don't like seeing different doctors, just see one doctor all the time
- Not having to ring at 8am for an appointment, generally ringing and not getting appointments
- Could be a little bit bigger, as can get quite crowded when its busy

- Getting an appointment
- M/F doctor of own choice
- To remember about computer access
- The appointment system- too often cannot get to see a particular doctor
- Get the physio back
- More health info on TV
- To be able to get an appointment with same doctor
- No problems here other than an issue of children's toys all together here in waiting room
- Signage of where the surgery is placed
- Mental Health awareness
- No
- Noting to be improved here
- Never used the online part of the service but-whether extending this for children's care? Might be a god thing!
- Turnover of doctors, never same doctor, would like the same doctor. Just a little concerning as I feel having consistent doctor gives me confidence that they 'know' me and my child.
- System works, why change
- Lately lots of locums. Good doctors seem to have gone quickly
- Getting an appointment-I know the words to use to get to see a doctor (play the system)
- Ring up at 8am and all the appointments have gone, if you come and sit for one and a half hours plus
- Told to ring up previous day
- DO not know if a triage system exists
- Have to go through system again most of the time when doctor wants to see you again

### Observations:

- We observed a nice clean easy access, light/warm/welcoming open space that was clean and tidy.
- Open reception area with no barrier or screen and the entrance doors open automatically.
- We were given visitor badges and were asked to sign in for security reasons
- There were fruit/nuts prepared and placed in staff areas
- Comfy chairs were available in the area which included some higher level and wider ones for patients with mobility issues
- The reception area had a taped off area which assisted with privacy plus there was a notice which asked patients to wait to be called (patient confidentiality)

- There was a self-sign-in monitor which patients were using
  - Pleasant area for children-images on the wall and low level seats, children's books
  - Large screen calling patients to their appointment (large scale text) as well as informing patients about other health information (i.e. advice on vaccinations)
  - Lots of leaflets and information on display
  - Separate magazines displayed on the wall and elsewhere but seemed well laid out/managed
  - Good signage (signage from the road seems low down-difficult to see by car)
  - Nurse came to personally collect patients to go to their appointments
  - Two receptionists were working at the front desk which reduced to one when it quietened down
  - Witnessed receptionist sharing a joke with a patient
  - Patients talking to other patients about how they were, created a good atmosphere
  - Staff came across as friendly
  - Although there was a self-sign in system, the reception staff were good at answering patients queries
  - Staff called some patients personally to appointments as well as their name coming up on the screen
  - CQC rating was displayed at the reception area
  - Patient access appointments information on screen
  - Confidentiality at the reception area seemed effective
  - Patients did not seem to wait long at all from check in to being called to see the doctor or other professional
- 3 patients did not want to talk to us-they did not allow us to introduce who we were or what we were doing at the surgery.

### Photographs

- We took 1 photograph of a patient and several of the building (Inside and out)

### After the event

- We spoke to Practice Manager (Julia Steele), two reception staff and a GP to give an informal de-brief around what we'd generally heard and seen.
- Staff were happy to hear that patients had said nice things about the staff and the services.