



# Strawberry Hill Medical Centre Enter & View Visit Report July 2016

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Details of visit

Details of visit:	
Service Address	Strawberry Hill Medical Centre 2 Old Bath Road Newbury RG14 1JU
Service Provider	Newbury & District Clinical Commissioning Group
Date and Time	<b>18<sup>th</sup> July 2016, 16:15</b> <b>20<sup>th</sup> July 2016, 12:30</b> <b>22<sup>nd</sup> July 2016, 08:30</b>
Authorised Representatives (Lead in bold)	<b>Cléa Knight</b> , Annette Arlow, Karen Dodd, Jo Karasinski, Andrew Sharp, Amelia Smith, Martha Vickers
Contact Details	Healthwatch West Berkshire 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Broadway House 4-8 The Broadway Newbury RG14 1BA

### 1.2. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch West Berkshire would like to thank the service provider, service users, visitors, staff, and our volunteers for their contribution to the Enter and View programme.

### 1.3. Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific dates and times 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, and any feedback received relating to the visit.

## 2. 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, 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 Enter and Views 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.

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

*The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users to make recommendations.*

### 2.1. Purpose of Visit

- Engage with patients of GP surgeries and hear how they feel about the clinical and non-clinical care they receive
- Identify examples of both good and poor working practice
- Observe patients engaging with the staff and their surroundings
- Provide the opportunity for patients to give their feedback on the new Medical Centre and inform the surgery about their views
- Introduce Healthwatch West Berkshire as an independent champion who seek to make changes and improve communication between patients, carers, staff and management

### 2.2. Strategic Drivers

- The recent merger of Northcroft and St Mary's Road surgeries into Strawberry Hill Medical Centre
- Anecdotal evidence from multiple contacts to Healthwatch West Berkshire regarding access to the building, waiting times and communication about the merger
- The CQC have not inspected the new centre yet

## 3. Strawberry Hill Medical Centre

Strawberry Hill Medical Centre is one of the GP surgeries in the Newbury & District patch. Formerly Northcroft and St Mary's Road surgeries, the two merged and moved into a new building in April 2016. The CQC rated both of these surgeries as 'Good' overall in separate inspections, which both took place during the summer of 2015. At the time of the visits,

the CQC had not visited the surgeries in the new building, or as a combined practice. However, at the time of writing (August 15<sup>th</sup> 2016) Healthwatch West Berkshire were informed that the CQC had just inspected Strawberry Hill Medical Centre.

### 3.1. Methodology

This was an announced Enter and View visit.

A briefing took place before each visit, giving a background to the surgery, introducing specific themes and for the Authorised Representatives to have the opportunity to ask questions about anything relating to the visit or the Enter and View process in general.

On each arrival the Authorised Representatives made themselves known to the downstairs receptionists, and were directed to take a seat until the Practice Manager introduced herself. The Authorised Representatives were made to feel welcome by the Practice Manager on each visit, and felt confident about getting her attention should any issues arise.

Two Authorised Representatives attended the first visit, and split their time between the ground floor (nursing) and first floor (GP) waiting areas, as well as general observation of the entrance area, stairwells and areas relating to access in the building. The second and third visits were each attended by four Authorised Representatives. The second visit took place during a Doctor's training afternoon, meaning the first floor was not open to patients, so the Authorised Representatives stayed on the ground floor. Two Authorised Representatives left 45 minutes into the visit due to the waiting room being quite. The third visit was much busier and the Authorised Representatives split into two teams, switching between the ground floor and first floor waiting areas.

Authorised Representatives used anonymous questionnaires to capture patients' experiences of the clinical and non-clinical care they receive, making appointments, waiting times, access issues, communication about the merger and any further issues or comments. Also used were observation sheets to capture health and safety issues, interaction between patients and staff, accessibility, and any other comments about the building. There were also staff questionnaires, which asked questions concerning how supported they felt in the role and a friends-and-family-style test based on recommendation.

*“As with any Enter and View visit, Authorised Representatives attended to capture the experiences of patients...not to cause any distress or harm.”*

In total, 44 patient questionnaires were filled out to answer at least part of the questions, 10 observational sheets were completed by Authorised Representatives, and 3 staff questionnaires were handed back to the Enter and View team.

As with any Enter and View visit, Authorised Representatives attended Strawberry Hill Medical Centre to capture the experiences of patients, families, carers and staff, and not to cause any distress or harm to anyone in the service. This meant that Authorised Representatives respected the wishes of anyone who did not want to complete a questionnaire, and were mindful of making sure people were not late to their appointments by taking the time to speak to us.

The team of Authorised Representatives met for a short debrief following the visit, where observations and notes were collated and any issues discussed for input into the report.

### 3.2. Survey Results (from 44 Patient Surveys)



How satisfied are you with practice opening times?  
Average 4.3 out of 5



How happy are you overall with the quality of clinical treatment?  
Average 6 out of 7



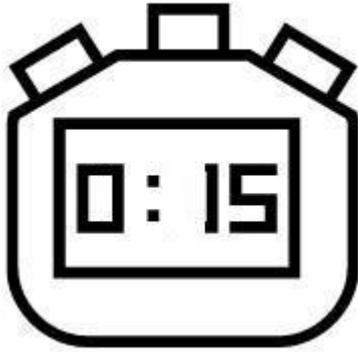
How happy are you overall with the quality of non-clinical treatment?  
Average 5.8 out of 7



How happy were you with the communication about the merger of the two surgeries and the move to a different centre?  
Average 5.2 out of 7 (Northcroft)



How happy were you with the communication about the merger of the two surgeries and the move to a different centre?  
Average 5 out of 7 (St. Mary's)



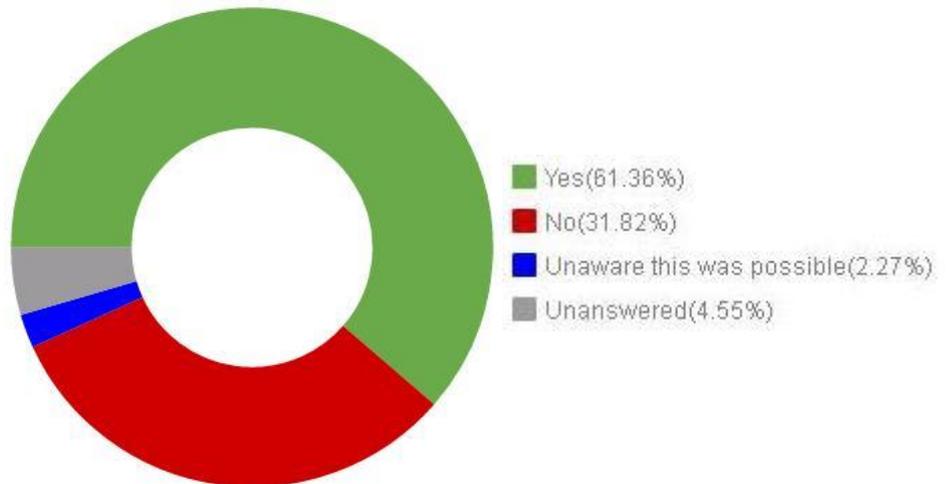
Average waiting time:  
up to 15 minutes



3 people said their waiting  
time was generally over 30  
minutes



How important is it for you to see the medic of your choice?  
Average 3.8 out of 5



When making an appointment did you get the  
option to see the medic of your choice?

Staff surveys:

One partly-completed and two completed surveys were received from administrative staff, meaning conclusions cannot be made representing the staff team as a whole. However, the responses received were positive in terms of recommending the surgery to family and friends and overall feelings about the surgery. The survey responses showed staff feel supported in their roles and feel they have accessed sufficient training. Reported positive aspects of the new centre included better facilities and accommodating staff, while improvements included better ventilation in warm weather and more advance-booking appointment times.

**3.3. Summary of Findings**

The people who took part in our survey were generally happy with both the clinical and non-clinical treatment they received at Strawberry Hill Medical Centre. However, many people spoken to highlighted that it was only their first or second time visiting the new centre, and so were not sure of their opinions on some matters.

*“Very happy with my Doctor, [he] always has time for me.”*

The comments made on the surveys were mostly positive about the surgery - the staff, the building and the systems in place. The negative comments related to making appointments in advance (especially on the phone), navigation of the website (on mobile), ventilation on hot days, lack of toys for children, and parking.

Many people were aware of 111 service and would use this to seek medical advice outside opening hours; others would phone the practice. People reported using a mixture of methods to book appointments - online, telephone and in person.

*“Service fantastic, lovely smiles from staff. Size better than St. Mary’s.”*

Observations made by Authorised Representatives:

Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No sign above the front door</li> <li>• Temporary signs inside saying where to go don't stand out</li> </ul>
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncovered electrical sockets at low level</li> <li>• Sufficient antibacterial hand gel points</li> </ul>
Atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet, but echoes when people speak - you can hear conversations from elsewhere in the waiting room</li> <li>• Organised, clean, open - clinical without being unfriendly</li> <li>• No water dispenser (staff will provide water if asked)</li> <li>• Lack of ventilation on hot days</li> <li>• Some seats do not face a screen</li> <li>• No clock</li> <li>• No children's area or toys</li> <li>• Good spacing between seats</li> </ul>

Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendly and helpful staff</li> <li>• Respectful, ensuring issues are dealt with effectively</li> <li>• Downstairs receptionists are patient in triaging patients who come to check in to tell them whether they need to be upstairs or downstairs</li> <li>• Practice Manager very friendly and helpful - she helped to answer other questions relating to feedback received</li> <li>• Clear name badges</li> <li>• Receptionists were chatting with each other on our first visit and we had to wait a while before they spoke to us</li> </ul>
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looking into providing a minibus for patients</li> <li>• Lack of markings to show edges of steps leading up to surgery (outside)</li> </ul>
Toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean</li> <li>• Accessible toilets and baby change facilities available</li> <li>• Information posters for victims of domestic violence displayed on the inside of toilet doors</li> <li>• No sign telling you how to lock the door - they are single toilets that open onto a corridor</li> </ul>
Screens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A lot of information on the screens - makes up for lack of posters around the waiting rooms</li> <li>• Alert sound is too quiet, meaning staff had to come out to collect patients</li> <li>• Patients' names flash up on screen but it is very brief and is not repeated</li> </ul>
Waiting Times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friday morning was very busy and people seemed to be waiting for a long time for their appointment</li> <li>• Long waiting times for booking a blood test</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Enter and View posters were displayed</li> <li>• There is a box and forms asking for feedback on reception</li> <li>• Many patients are not using the screen checking-in system</li> </ul>

*“Reception staff are really friendly and helpful...Happy so far!”*

Feedback also came to Healthwatch West Berkshire outside of the visits. This included confirmation of observations on the visits (for example, the sound alert for appointments not being loud enough), but also mentioned issues that were not able to be picked up through Enter and View. One of the most pertinent issues that was fed back this way was a case where a patient had an evening appointment with a GP, but this was actually conducted downstairs in what is usually the nursing area. The patient reported seeing no indication that this was where they were meant to be waiting, which caused undue stress and confusion to the patient.

### 3.4. Recommendations

This report highlights some great feedback received by patients and staff at Strawberry Hill Medical Centre. No concerns were highlighted regarding clinical or non-clinical staff.

Our recommendations are as follows:

- Improve the environment of the waiting room by *installing a water dispenser* and *looking at the ventilation* of the building
- Improve access by *adjusting the volume of the appointment alert* sound, *lengthening the time patients' names are on screen*, adding *visual tape to the edges of the steps* outside, and continuing to look at *setting up a minibus*
- Ensure *signs are clear and consistent*, displaying a *how-to-lock sign on the toilet* doors
- Install *plastic covers on patient-accessible electrical sockets*
- Look at *creating a children's area* or providing *children's books or toys*
- Revisit the appointment system to *adjust the number of appointments people can book in advance*

*“Cannot make advanced appointment...trouble getting through, on hold too long, too many patients, not enough doctors.”*

### 3.5. Service Provider Response

Strawberry Hill Medical Centre wrote back to Healthwatch West Berkshire on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2016, providing comments on the recommendations we made after circulating the draft report to all the doctors and staff at the practice. Strawberry Hill Medical Centre (SHMC) comments are in italics.

**Improve the environment of the waiting room by installing water dispenser and looking at the ventilation of the building.**

*SHMC comments: providing a water dispenser is deemed as a health and safety risk - as now, patients can ask for water as and when required and the practice will happily provide this. SHMC are currently looking into the various options of ventilation.*

**Improve access by adjusting the volume of the appointment alert sound, lengthening the time patients' names are on screen, adding visual tape to the edges of the steps outside, and continuing to look at setting up a minibus.**

*SHMC comments: the volume on the TV screen to alert patients has been amended as well as the length of time the names on the screen are displayed - this is being closely monitored by the practice. Adding visual tape to the edges of steps is being discussed and we are actively liaising with our patient group with regards to the minibus.*

**Ensure signs are clear and consistent, displaying a how-to-lock sign on the toilet doors.**  
*SHMC comments: notices have been placed on the inside of each toilet door informing patients/visitors how to lock the doors.*

**Install plastic covers of patient-accessible electrical sockets.**

*SHMC comments: as a practice we receive regular Central Alerts (MHRA) and in particular an alert issued on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016 clearly states that placing plastic covers within electrical sockets is safety risk and therefore the practice will adhere to the MHRA Safety Guidance (EFA/2016/002).*

SHMC provided a copy of these guidelines for Healthwatch West Berkshire's information. The Department of Health guidelines clearly state that electrical socket inserts (socket covers/protectors) should not be used in health and social care premises, such as GP surgeries, as they can overcome the safety features designed into socket outlets.

**Look at creating a children's area or providing children's books or toys.**

*SHMC comments: this area is being considered by the practice.*

**Revisit the appointment system to adjust the number of appointments people can book in advance.**

*SHMC comments: as a practice we are regularly reviewing our appointment systems and working hard to provide flexibility for appointment booking for all our patients.*

**Patient Feedback (page 8)**

The feedback from one patient regarding an evening appointment with a GP, this was conducted on the ground floor and the patient had no indication where they were meant to be waiting which caused undue stress and confusion for the patient.

*SHMC comments: we apologise for any confusion this may have caused for this patient and we are actively reviewing our signage and noted these comments.*

