

# St Luke's Primary Care Centre

## Patient Survey Report

### Introduction

In September 2014 Healthwatch Northamptonshire visited St Luke's Primary Care Centre in Northampton as part of a county-wide survey of GP practices. The survey aimed to find out about access to services, the patient experience, good practice and what pressures there are within the practice. A summary report of the findings from the county-wide survey, including good practice and recommendations, is available on our website<sup>1</sup>.

We spoke to five patients at St Luke's Primary Care Centre about their views, experiences and satisfaction. By speaking to patients face to face we could add depth to the findings of the National GP Patient Survey<sup>2</sup>. We also spoke to the practice manager to find out about services currently being provided, how they are accessed, what they felt worked well and what pressures there were. The questions used are in Appendix 1 and 2.

All information and figures quoted below were correct at the time of the site visit. This report does not reflect any changes or improvements to procedures since that date.

## 2. Practice information

### 2.1 Practice size and staffing

St Luke's Primary Care Centre is a large-sized practice (approximately 20,900 patients) with 12 partners and two registrars. One GP is the CCG lead for learning disability.

One GP is about to retire which was advertised for without an acceptable response, and one of the registrars has subsequently taken the post. Most staff have a long association with the surgery.

### 2.2 Services provided

The practice provides a range of services, including minor surgery.

**Specialists:** The practice does not have any specialists. A consultant for mental health was considered but it was decided that it would not be cost effective.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/about/docs](http://www.healthwatchnorthamptonshire.co.uk/about/docs)

<sup>2</sup> <http://gp-patient.co.uk>

**Shared services:** The surgery does not share any services with other practices, and the practice manager did not feel that shared services would work.

**Extended opening:** The practice stays open until 6:30pm one evening a week and provides flu jabs at the weekend.

**Home visits:** Home visits are administered via a telephone system with a doctor assessing whether a visit is needed.

### **2.3 Appointment booking system**

The patient phones the surgery leaving their details and a GP or appropriate practitioner will ring them back usually within 2 hours. The problem is either dealt with over the phone or a consultation offered for the same day.

#### **Missed appointments**

The practice does not have a problem with Did-Not-Attends and has a low rating on the primary care development scheme.

### **2.4 Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

The PPG meets bimonthly, and quarterly with the practice manager. There is also an online virtual group.

### **2.5 Complaints system**

All complaints are dealt with initially by the practice manager, and passed on to a GP if necessary, all within an agreed time scale.

### **2.6 Equality and Diversity**

We asked the practice about their equality and diversity policy and how the practice met additional needs of patients. The following were mentioned:

- translation system and loop system
- spacious building with wheelchair access and lift available
- provision for learning disabilities
- wellbeing clinic

## **3. Patient experience**

### **3.1 Appointment system**

Of the five patients surveyed four found it easy (two) or very easy (two) to book an appointment, and one person found it difficult.

- Three of those who found it easy or very easy cited the telephone triage system.
- The patient who experienced difficulty did not like the telephone triage system having found it difficult to convince the surgery that they needed an appointment. They were also concerned at the lack of available appointments when they were phoned back.

### **3.2 Choice of doctor**

One patient was able to see their preferred doctor, two were not but did not mind, and one person would have liked to choose who they saw depending upon the issue.

### **3.3 Treatment and quality of care and service**

Four patients were either always satisfied (two) or usually satisfied (two) with the treatment and service provided. One person commented that receptionists were occasionally rude.

All three patients who responded on what worked well or could be improved said that they were very or quite satisfied and thought no improvements were necessary.

### **3.4 Communication and additional needs**

One patient said that they had additional needs and that they were being met.

### **3.5 Additional comments**

We asked people if they had any other comments to make about the practice. There was one additional comment:

- The person who disliked the telephone triage system thought that if questions were asked in a different way communications could be improved.

We also asked the Practice Manager if there were any more issues, pressures or examples of good practice that they wanted to tell us about:

#### ***Issues/pressures***

It can take a long time to get discharge letters from Northampton General Hospital.

## **4. Highlights**

According to the results of both our patient survey and the National GP Patient Survey the practice's appointment booking triage system has its positives and negatives. Most of the patients were able to book an appointment when they needed it, although most did not get to see their preferred doctor. Nearly all patients were satisfied with their treatment at the practice and nobody thought improvements were needed. Additional needs of patients were also being met.

## **5. Recommendations**

1. The practice should consider whether their patients would benefit from being offered a wider range of services or specialist. They may find benefit in trying to share services with other practices.
2. The practice could trial weekend opening for appointments other than flu vaccinations.

3. Increasing the ease at which patients can see their doctor of choice may improve the experience for some patients with certain conditions or illnesses, specifically long-term conditions.
4. We carried out deaf access mystery shopping at 5 of the 25 practices we visited across the county and have found the access and provisions for deaf and hard of hearing patients could be improved. Whilst we did not specifically assess this practice for deaf awareness and access we recommend that the practice carries out a self-assessment of their deaf access and shares the findings with Healthwatch Northamptonshire and Deafconnect with a view to improving deaf access and awareness.

## **6. Thanks and acknowledgements**

Healthwatch Northamptonshire would like to thank the Practice Manager of St Luke's Primary Care Centre for taking the time to talk to us and facilitate our visit, all the patients who were willing to take part in our survey and the Healthwatch Northamptonshire volunteers who visited the practice.

## Appendix 1 - Patient survey questions

<b>Q1: How easy is it to get an appointment when you need it? (Please tick one)</b> Very easy                      Easy                      OK                      Difficult                      Very difficult <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Q2: Please tell us more about your experiences of getting an appointment, <i>including how it is easy or difficult, how long you have to wait to get an appointment, and whether the system works well for you:</i></b>				
<b>Q3: Do you usually get to see the doctor/nurse/health professional of your choice?</b> Yes                      No, but I'd like to                      No, but it doesn't matter to me <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Please tell us more about how this is important to you or not:</b>				
<b>Q4: Are there any problems when communicating with staff or doctors?</b> Yes                      No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Please tell us more:</b>				
<b>Q5: Are you satisfied with the treatment and service you receive here?</b> Yes, always                      Yes, usually                      No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Please tell us more:</b>				
<b>Q6: What do you think could improve the patient experience at your GP practice and what do you think works particularly well?</b> <b>Improvements:</b> <b>Works well:</b>				
<b>Q7: Do you have any additional needs that require support? Such as hearing or visual impairment, learning or physical disabilities, English as a second language, etc.</b> Yes                      No <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>If so, are they met?</b> Yes                      No                      Don't Know <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>Please tell us more:</b>				
<b>Q8: Is there anything else you would like to tell us?</b>				

## Appendix 2 - Practice Manager survey questions

<p><b>Q1: What is the staff makeup of the surgery (+ see briefing)? Do you have any nurse practitioners / prescribers and do you provide a mental health service? E.g. Have there been any changes to the surgery staff since the briefing? What are they? E.g. Which staff provide mental health care and advice?</b></p>
<p><b>Q2: Have you any GP or staff vacancies? How long have these posts been vacant?</b></p>
<p><b>Q3: How does your appointment booking system work? (only need to ask about what is different to the briefing)</b>  <i>E.g. the role of the receptionist, whether there is online booking, how far in advance patients can book appointments, how much choice patients have over time and GP, whether they use an 0845 number, how many phone lines they have, telephone triage? What do you do with temporary or unregistered patients?</i>  <b>Have any significant patient criticisms of the appointment system been reported by the PPG and how have these been addressed?</b></p>
<p><b>Q4: Does the practice conduct home visits?</b>  Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  <b>How are these organised?</b></p>
<p><b>Q5: What additional facilities does the practice have? (only need to ask about what is different to the briefing) (E.g. specialist clinics, counsellors, blood tests, specialist doctors, dressing changing facilities, drop in sessions)</b>  <b>Do you share facilities with any other GP practices in your locality? Or does your practice or GP cluster have any specialisms/clinics or specialist doctors?</b>  <b>If so, what and is this working? Would you like to see any more?</b>  <b>Is there anything else working well in your locality? Are there any plans for further sharing of resources?</b></p>
<p><b>Q6: Does your practice have any extended opening hours or do you plan to (if not mentioned in briefing)? Has this been requested by your PPG?</b></p>
<p><b>Q7: Is the 111 Service prominently advertised by the Practice and does the service provide adequately for your patients and for their out of hours requirements? (Also see PPG and Patient Surveys and Reports)</b></p>
<p><b>Q8: Do you have an active patient engagement group? How is advertised and how can people join? Is it funded by the practice and how often do they meet? (Other than what is mentioned in the briefing)</b></p>
<p><b>Q9: Where is your complaints system publically displayed?</b>  <i>E.g. Is it in the patient information leaflet, noticeboard, reception desk?</i>  <b>How are complaints dealt with?</b></p>
<p><b>Q10. How else do you communicate with patients?</b>  <i>E.g. noticeboards, leaflets, website, guidelines about best times to call</i></p>
<p><b>Q11: What is your equality and diversity policy? How is it implemented? E.g. How provide access for those with physical, visual, hearing, and/or learning disabilities and autism and non-English speakers. BSL/interpreters? Is there staff training or understanding of obligations?</b></p>
<p><b>Q12: What other staff training does your practice have?</b>  <i>What decision aids/training are receptionists given?</i></p>
<p><b>Q13. Are there more patients attending your practice than there used to be? Have you any thoughts on why that is or why there is pressure on GP practices?</b></p>
<p><b>Q14: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about? E.g. things that are working well, challenges the practice faces, additional support needs they have, thoughts about A&amp;E attendance, etc.</b></p>