

Enter and View Report

Dr Uppal & Partner, 1st November 2021



A report by Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham

“Once we get out of the pandemic and things return to a more normal way of living and working, we don’t want to see general practice become a totally, or even mostly, remote service.

So while the expanded use of video, online and telephone consultations can be maintained where patients find benefit from them, this should be done alongside a clear offer of appointments in person.”

Chair, Royal College of GPs

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Visit Details	
Service Visited	Dr Uppal & Partner, Park View Centre for Health and Wellbeing, 56 Bloemfontein Road W12 7FG
Manager	Nicola Johnston
Date & Time of Visit	1 st November 2021, 10.00am - 12.00pm
Status of Visit	Announced
Authorised Representatives	Mari Tiitinen, Nadia Taylor
Lead Representative	Mari Tiitinen

1. Visit Background

1.1 What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to undertake ‘Enter and View’ visits.

Mandated by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the visits enable trained Healthwatch staff and volunteers (Authorised Representatives) to visit health and care services - such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, 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.

During the visits we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families, and carers. We also engage with management and staff. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official ‘Enter and View Report’, will be shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators outlining what has worked well,

and give recommendations on what could have worked better. All reports are available to view on our website.

1.1.1 Safeguarding

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

1.2 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date(s) set out. 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.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this Enter and View visit to take place. We would also like to thank our Authorised Representatives, who assisted us in conducting the visit and putting together this report.

On this occasion, two Enter and View Authorised Representatives attended the visit. The Authorised Representatives spoke to patients and staff. Suggestions have been made on how to improve the service and good practice has been highlighted.

2. About this Visit

2.1 Dr Uppal & Partner

On 1st November 2021 we visited Dr Uppal & Partner, a GP practice located within Parkview Centre for Health and Wellbeing in White City. They have around 3000 registered patients.

The practice is in the Northern Primary Care Network. It has three GPs (two male and one female), a Practice Nurse, and a Nursing Associate/Receptionist. Clinical staff are supported by three receptionists as well as a Managing Partner.

2.2 CQC Rating

The CQC are the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourage care services to improve.

Dr Uppal & Partner was last inspected by the CQC on 19th May 2016. Their inspection [report](#) gave a rating of 'Good' - in all areas.

2.3 Online Feedback

The NHS [review page](#) contains four 5-star ratings and a 1-star rating.

2.4 Focus of the Visit

On 13th May 2021, NHS England issued a written [letter](#) to all GPs stating that GP practices must ensure patients' preferences in terms of consultation mode are sought and listened to, and face-to-face appointments are offered unless there is a good clinical reason not to. It further advised that patients should be treated consistently whether it is face-to-face or remotely, that practice receptions should be open to patients with social distancing in place, and posters should be displayed informing

patients of coronavirus symptoms and advising them not to attend the practice in person if presenting any of these symptoms..

The letter also contained a statement from the Chair of the Royal College of GPs noting that as things return to normal and while the remote appointment options can be maintained, GP practices should not become a remote service.

In March 2021, Healthwatch England reported on GP Access during the Coronavirus pandemic. The [report](#) concluded that people were confused about how to get in touch with their GP, whether they could make an appointment, and what to expect if they attended the surgery in person. It also stated that by autumn 2020, people had started reporting long waiting times over the telephone lines, and problems with booking appointments because of triage systems and not being sure when their GP or other healthcare professional will call them back.

The report also highlighted how the remote appointments have not met everyone's needs with some patients being worried that health issues will not be accurately diagnosed remotely, and disabled people, people without access to the internet and people whose first language is not English finding access to remote appointments particularly problematic.

People also reported struggling to get appointments for regular health check-ups, treatments, and medication reviews and as a result, were unable to get the medication and treatment needed to manage their condition.

Our questions to patients and practice staff were designed to address both the NHS England guidance, and Healthwatch England observations, in full.

3. Executive Summary of Findings

Our analysis is based on the feedback of 20 patients and 6 staff members in total. On the day of our visit, we spoke with 8 patients. In addition to this, we were given 12

patient questionnaires that were completed prior to our visit, and six staff members completed the questionnaire following our visit.

This is a summary of key findings - see sections 4 - 6 for findings in full.

Appointment Accessibility

Notes

- Patients are offered a choice of booking an appointment by telephone, in-person or through e-consult.

What has worked well?

- Patients are aware of the booking process.
- Same day appointments are available to those who need them.
- There are early morning and late evening appointments available to those who work or have school aged children.
- Several patients had positive comments about the reception staff and how accommodative they are to patients' needs.

What could be improved?

- A few patients mentioned having to wait before getting through to someone on the phone.

Consultations

Notes

- Patients can have a choice of an appointment method: telephone, video, or face to face.

What has worked well?

- While telephone appointments are offered initially, patient requests for face-to-face appointments are accommodated.
- Remote appointments typically seem to be on time and an effort is made to call back if no answer the first time.

What could be improved?

- A few patients had found their remote consultation either difficult or not appropriate and one patient mentioned that it is better to see a GP face to face.
- During our visit, we noticed that some patients appeared to be waiting for some time before being called in.

Environment

Notes

- The practice is located within the Parkview Centre for Health and Wellbeing which is a large, modern building.

What has worked well?

- The building is accessible, spacious, and clean - several patients had included positive comments about the cleanliness of the practice in their feedback.
- It is family friendly, with room for pushchairs and a play area provided.
- Covid-19 measures are in place - all visitors are temperature checked on entry, hand sanitiser is available, and staff appeared to be wearing masks.
- Security guards are on site.

What could be improved?

- While Covid-19 procedures on-site are clear, we did not see the official poster referenced by NHS England that informs patients not to enter practice if they show symptoms of Covid.

- We observed a lack of noticeboards, leaflets, flyers & general information. Therefore, while waiting, patients have limited opportunities for educating themselves on conditions, local services, support, and initiatives. Although we do acknowledge that this has been restricted due to Covid.
- The signs indicating the individual reception desks for each practice are quite small, and some staff members commented how patients can get confused about where to go.

Access to Treatment, Tests and Medication

Notes

- Staff member commented on how a lot of the information in the media regarding the delays is exaggerated and not directly related to primary care.

What has worked well?

- The Nurse Associate has been seeing patients throughout the pandemic to carry out regular health checks that are necessary.

What could be improved?

- Some minor delays to services, such as referral services were reported, and one patient commented on a lack of availability for check-ups.

Engagement and Feedback

Notes

- Patients can leave feedback directly to staff members, or by leaving a review on NHS Choices website.

What has worked well?

- Staff members encourage patients to leave feedback.
- Some patients mentioned that they had been encouraged to give feedback.
- Some patients mentioned that they were aware of PPG.

What could be improved?

- Not everyone was aware of the PPG.
- Not everyone knew how to give feedback.

Staffing

Notes

- Staff appeared to have a good rapport as a team, and to be mutually supportive and well-co-ordinated.

What has worked well?

- Patients expressed positive experiences and opinions on the staff and the care they had received at the practice.
- Staff members expressed positive views on the team as a whole and how well the practice is run.
- Staff reported having received training recently.

What could be improved?

- We observed only one receptionist behind the reception desk taking calls and checking in patients for their in-person appointments.

Based on findings, we have made several recommendations (see section 7).

4. General Observations

During the visit, the Authorised Representatives made the following general observations:

Location and Signage

Observations

- The Parkview Centre for Health and Wellbeing - where the practice is located - is easy to locate as it is on a main road and there is a large sign outside the building.
- It is some way away from any tube stations but has multiple bus stops right outside.
- The building has three other GP practices.
- Upon entering the building, we were directed to the reception area by the security guard at the door.
- We observed a general sign that directs you to the GP surgeries, but no individual practices are mentioned by name.

Accessibility

Observations

- The building is accessible for wheelchair users as the entrance is on the ground level and there are automatic doors.
- There is a security guard at the door.

Covid-19 Protocols

Observations

- We did not observe any Covid-19 posters at the main entrance, but a security guard took our temperature as soon as we entered the building.
- There were posters asking people to wear face masks at the reception area.

- We observed that the patient waiting area had hand sanitising stations and seats were spaced out to allow social distancing.
- Staff were wearing face masks.

General Environment/Reception

Observations

- The building is spacious, modern, and clean.
- The reception desk is shared by four GP practices.
- Each practice has their name above their dedicated reception desk area; however, these signs are quite small and are not immediately noticeable.

Waiting Area

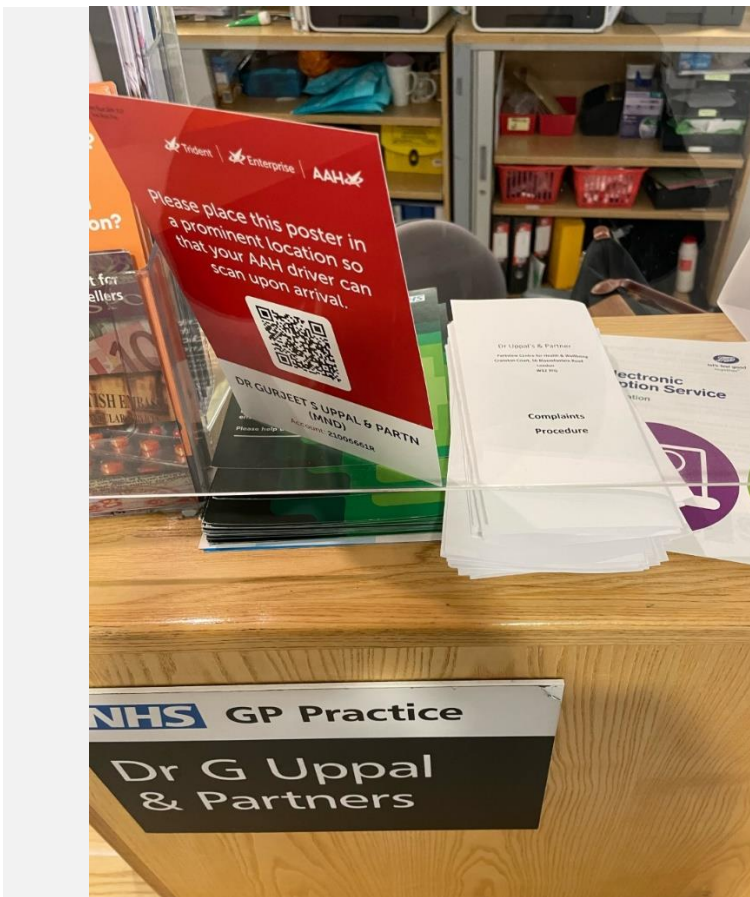
Observations

- The waiting area is large, airy, and very clean.
- There is plenty of seating available, but the seats are shared by all four practices and there are no dedicated seating areas for individual practices.
- There is a children's play area.
- There are TV screens, but they were turned off during our visit.
- There are toilets next to the reception.

Noticeboard/Information

Observations

- Displaying information leaflets and posters seems to be restricted as there is no noticeboard nor information leaflets available in the reception and waiting area.
- Information about complaints process are displayed at reception.



- We did not see information about Patient Participation Group (PPG) or how to join.

Additional Observations

Observations

- During our visit, we noticed that some patients appeared to be waiting for some time before being called in.
- We observed only one receptionist behind the reception desk taking calls and checking in patients for their in-person appointments.

5. Patient Feedback

During the visit on 1st November 2021, we engaged with 8 patients in total. A further 12 completed the questionnaire prior to our visit.

This report is based on their collective feedback.

We asked questions around the booking process and appointment accessibility, the experience of remote consultations and triage, the environment including Covid-19 protocols, engagement, and complaints.

5.1 Booking Process and Appointment Accessibility

We asked patients how the day's appointment had been booked, and whether they knew what to do, were given options and felt respected. We also asked if working or parenting commitments have caused any issues - either when booking or attending.

Majority of the patients who shared their feedback had booked their appointment over the phone and some had done it in-person. A few patients mentioned having to wait before getting through to someone on the phone. All were aware of the booking process.

The waiting time for an appointment seems to vary depending on the nature of the appointment. For emergency appointment, patients can get a same day appointment, but for non-emergency appointment the waiting time is around 1-2 weeks.

Majority of patients reported receiving their preferred method of consultation - although it should be noted that a few of the patients we spoke to on the day had come in for a blood test and therefore had to be seen in person. Some patients had been offered a telephone appointment at first but had been given a face-to-face appointment when asked.

Those patients who work and/or have school aged children told us that the practice is accommodating in terms of the appointment times.

Selected Comments

Booking the Appointment

“Usually I telephone, and I don’t have to wait long.”

“3 days for a blood test.”

“It’s easy to book an appointment, you usually have to wait a week.”

“I waited 2 and a half weeks.”

“Since Covid-19, you sometimes can’t get through on the phone. I once called and was in the queue when the call dropped and then the phone was left off the hook. Today they seem to be short staffed, and I had to wait to speak to the receptionist.”

“I waited 1 hour.”

“I usually call at 8am to book an appointment but sometimes there are not enough slots when you call in the morning.”

“2 weeks.”

“Dressing change so needs doing so they fitting me in.”

“About a week if not emergency.”

“Same day for emergency appointment.”

“It was booked for specific date.”

“Short wait on the phone.”

“I got through easily.”

“I got through lovely receptionist, easy to speak to.”

Choice of Consultation

“Yes, they gave me a same day appointment to see the nurse.”

“I was given the option to see the doctor face to face as I wanted them to see my hand.”

“It’s a blood test, so has to be face to face.”

“Yes, face to face.”

“Telephone if non urgent otherwise face to face.”

“Always, reception very helpful.”

“I did find the member of staff very helpful in accommodating.”

“Had to request in person.”

“Telephone appointment, very helpful when dealing with mainly my daughter.”

“Yes offered a selection suitable for my needs.”

Working and Parenting

“Yes, they are flexible.”

“No issues, don’t mind when my appointment is.”

“I work but the receptionist always does her best to work around this issue.”

“Yes I work, but finding suitable appointments is manageable for myself.”

“Sometimes” (when asked about whether having school aged children or working has caused any issues when booking or attending appointments.)

“I did find the member of staff very helpful in accommodating.”

“Sometimes for one child due to his skin condition I need face to face but usually offered video or phone calls.”

Any Other Comments

“All positive the receptionists and nurse are fantastic.”

“Lovely receptionists.”

“I did find the member of staff very helpful in accommodating.”

“Depending on if needed urgent, quite straight forward.”

“Always very accommodating when I call.”

“Positive experience as always.”

5.2 Experience of Remote Appointments/Triage

For those experiencing remote appointments, we asked about punctuality, whether they felt the consultation was effective, and if any particular needs (such as disabilities, conditions, internet access and languages) were accommodated.

One patient reported having experienced a month long wait for a telephone appointment due to the doctor calling their home telephone instead of a mobile phone when they were away. Others reported small delays to remote consultations, but we were told that there is an effort to call back if patients do not pick up the phone the first time.

In terms of remote consultation meeting patient needs; majority commented positively on this, but one patient told us that during her medication review, their dosage was not lowered as was expected which meant that they had to keep taking the same dose for another month. Another patient mentioned that their daughter’s telephone appointment had not been appropriate for their needs.

On access issues, one person mentioned that they find it difficult to climb the stairs in their building, so it makes it harder for them to come to the practice. No other comments were made on access issues.

A few patients positively commented on the choice of appointment methods.

Selected Comments

Punctuality/Timing

“Yes usually they are on time and if I miss their call they call me back, even 3 times.”

“I had a phone appointment, and I told the doctor I was going to be away so they needed to call my mobile, but instead they called the house phone so I missed the appointment. I then had to wait a month to speak to a doctor.”

“Yes, they called within the timeslot.”

“Yes, or later, unless misunderstanding regarding date.”

“Yes most of the time.”

“A few minutes late on a few occasions.”

Meeting Needs/Effectiveness

“Yes, it met my needs.”

“Half and half, they were meant to lower my medication dose, but instead they left it as it is, so I had to continue to take the same dose for another month.”

“Yes, it was quick.”

“Sometimes.”

“It was a lot harder to do over the phone but the doctor accommodated me.”

“For my first child, the phone call was not appropriate and had to take drastic needs after call as the doctor refused to see my child face to face.”

“Not always.”

“Lovely GP.”

Support for Additional Needs

“No difficulties.”

“It’s difficult for me to climb stairs, so it makes it harder for me to come to the practice.”

Any Other Comments

“It’s good and convenient, the staff are always helpful.”

“Good to have a choice.”

“Better to see GP in person.”

“A variety of appointments is always good.”

5.3 Environment

We asked patients whether they knew about the Covid-19 procedures, and if they felt safe.

All patients appeared to be comfortable and relaxed while waiting - with good knowledge of the Covid-19 procedures and confidence in the arrangements. Several people commented on the cleanliness of the practice.

Selected Comments

Covid-19 Awareness and Safety

"I feel safe."

"Yes, it's socially distanced. This is the most people I've seen in a while in the surgery."

"Staff members seem to be wearing masks when outside the reception room and I see them rubbing their hands when using hand gel."

"Sometimes I've noticed social distancing."

"Very safe."

"Staff let me know."

"Yes, asked if I have Covid symptoms, told to wear a mask."

"Pretty safe, distancing is good."

"Yes I know, work in NHS. Safe in building - no need for extreme precautions - security on point."

"Yes all staff wearing PPE."

General Environment

"Well organised and everyone seems well trained and professional. They seem to know what they are doing."

“Very clean.”

“Always very clean and more seating has been added to social distance better.”

“All GPs adhering to Covid protocols.”

“Always clean.”

“Clean and calm.”

5.4 Access to Regular Treatment and Medication

We asked patients about any delays they may have experienced in accessing medication, treatment, or tests.

Some minor delays to services, such as referral services were reported, and one patient commented on a lack of availability for check-ups.

Selected Comments

Treatment/Medication Delays

“No difficulties.”

“They got my prescription wrong.”

“Yes, no problems.”

“No delays.”

“Not enough availability for check-ups.”

“Always got appointments when needed and always on time with medication.”

“Some delays.”

“Slight delays in referral services, other than that been ok.”

“As normal.”

“Yes, always got my medication.”

“At times.” (When asked if they have been able to get medication as normal and if there have been any delays or difficulties.)

5.5 Engagement and Feedback

We asked patients if they have been encouraged to give feedback, know about the Patient Participation Group (PPG) and the complaints policy.

Some patients were aware of PPG while others were not. This was also the case in terms of the complaints policy and how to give feedback.

Selected Comments

Encouragement to Give Feedback

“They sent me a link in a text a long time ago, not sure if it was because of Covid.”

“I speak to the reception and they point me to the right direction.”

“I don’t have any feedback.”

“Not sure.”

“First time.”

“Asked to complete survey.”

“None.”

PPG Awareness

“No.”

“Yes I know what it is but I’m not part of it.”

“Yes.”

“No.”

“Vaguely.”

Complaints Policy Awareness

“I would complain online.”

“My pharmacist advised me how to complain about the prescription mess up.”

“Yes.”

“I don’t have any complaints.”

“No.”

“Yes.”

“I would call and ask.”

5.6 Any other Comments...

Finally, we asked for any other comments.

Patients expressed positive experiences and opinions on the staff and the care they have received at the practice.

Selected Comments

Any Other Comments

"I'm happy enough."

"I have been with the surgery for 20 years and I haven't seen Dr Uppal for about 10 years."

"Not really, the surgery is very clean."

"All positive."

"Lovely practice, lovely staff."

"Very polite staff."

"This doctor's surgery has always been great with me."

"Sometimes doctor runs late."

"Super service. Thanks!"

*"Always good service, have been a patient here for almost 24 years. No complaints!
Always top service!"*

"Very positive, staff is always helpful."

"Very good GP and service. Thank you!"

6. Staff Feedback

We received feedback from two GPs, the Nursing Associate/Receptionists, two Receptionists, and the Managing Partner.

6.1 GP

The GP has been working at the practice since 2017.

Appointment Booking

On booking appointments, do patients get a choice of method (for example can they phone, walk-in or complete an online form)?

Yes - mixture.

Is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties (such as disabled people, those without computers/phones, or foreign language speakers)?

Yes.

What do you feel works well about the booking system?

Patient choice.

What do you feel could be improved?

Better portrayal in the media.

Consultations

NHS England's guidelines urge practices to provide face-to-face appointments where required, or desired. What do you think are the main challenges you face - as a practice, around this?

Poor media coverage.

Are patients asked if they have any preferences about the consultation method (such as in-person, telephone, or video)?

Yes.

If preferences are expressed, is this taken into consideration?

Yes.

Again, is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties?

Yes.

Is there also any flexibility for people who work, or look after school-aged children (either when booking or attending appointments)?

Yes - varied time.

Do you know if remote appointments are generally on time, and is there any procedure if running late?

Yes, on time. Allowance within reason.

What do you feel works well about the consultation system?

Once again - patient choice.

Environment

Can you tell me about the Covid-19 procedures in place?

Masks, social distancing.

Are patients aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Are staff aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Regular Treatment and Medication

Some of the recent reports (mentioned earlier) highlight delays with regular health checks, treatment, and medication. Is this the case at this practice - if so, are there any measures in place to address this?

A lot is exaggerated and not directly related to primary care, unfortunately we are the accessible frontline.

Engagement and Feedback

Are patients encouraged to give general feedback (such as compliments or concerns)? If so, how?

Yes - feedback box.

Is there a clear complaints process in place? Is the complaints policy on display in the waiting area?

Yes, poster about complaints.

Staffing

Do you recall having received an induction?

Yes.

Have you received any training, including recently?

Yes.

Do you feel that management are supportive towards staff generally?

Yes.

On your work and working conditions, do you feel that anything could be improved?

Less external pressure and political point scoring and let us get on with our work.

Can you tell me what you enjoy most about your job?

Variety of work.

And what do you find most difficult?

Having to deal with work that is not related to primary care.

6.2 GP

The GP has worked at the practice for 2 years.

Appointment Booking

On booking appointments, do patients get a choice of method (for example can they phone, walk-in or complete an online form)?

All above.

Is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties (such as disabled people, those without computers/phones, or foreign language speakers)?

Yes Silent Sounds.

What do you feel works well about the booking system?

Easy for patients to get appointments.

Consultations

NHS England's guidelines urge practices to provide face-to-face appointments where required, or desired. What do you think are the main challenges you face - as a practice, around this?

Everyone wanting appointments.

Are patients asked if they have any preferences about the consultation method (such as in-person, telephone, or video)?

No.

If preferences are expressed, is this taken into consideration?

Yes, receptionist will always ask the GPs.

Again, is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties?

Yes.

Is there also any flexibility for people who work, or look after school-aged children (either when booking or attending appointments)?

Yes, extended hours every Monday and Friday.

Do you know if remote appointments are generally on time, and is there any procedure if running late?

Yes, 10 minutes' grace.

What do you feel works well about the consultation system?

We get to triage appointments.

What do you feel could be improved?

More appointments.

Environment

Can you tell me about the Covid-19 procedures in place?

Screens, masks, before entry temperature checks, one person at reception rest in rooms, increase on anti-bacterial wipes.

Are patients aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Are staff aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Engagement and Feedback

***Are patients encouraged to give general feedback (such as compliments or concerns)?
If so, how?***

Yes.

Is there a clear complaints process in place? Is the complaints policy on display in the waiting area?

Yes.

Staffing

When you started here, do you recall receiving an induction?

Yes.

Have you received any training, including recently?

In the past 6 months, yes.

Do you feel that management are supportive towards staff generally?

Yes.

On your work and working conditions, do you feel that anything could be improved?

Yes.

Do you feel that anything works particularly well?

The team during Covid.

Can you tell me what you enjoy most about your job?

The team.

And what do you find most difficult?

Incentives for QOF (Quality and Outcomes Framework) targets.

6.3 Nurse Associate/Receptionist

The Nurse Associate has been with the practice for 8 years as a receptionist and has recently qualified as a Nurse Associate.

Appointment Booking

On booking appointments, do patients get a choice of method (for example can they phone, walk-in or complete an online form)?

Patients are able to book telephone, face to face, e-consult or virtual upon request.

Is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties (such as disabled people, those without computers/phones, or foreign language speakers)?

Yes there is, we offer interpreters, double appointments for patients with disabilities / learning disabilities. We were able to take request via telephone or in person for patients without computers/phones.

What do you feel works well about the booking system?

We offer a wide variety of options regarding appointments and accommodate all patients.

What do you feel could be improved?

Normality for the sake of patients.

Consultations

NHS England's guidelines urge practices to provide face-to-face appointments where required, or desired. What do you think are the main challenges you face - as a practice, around this?

50% of our appointments are face to face. So patients are still able to see a doctor. We screen patients before seeing the GP for any symptoms of Covid.

Are patients asked if they have any preferences about the consultation method (such as in-person, telephone or video)?

Patients are offered telephone if they do not need to be examined. If they do or have any disabilities or learning disability issues, they are given a face-to-face appointment.

If preferences are expressed, is this taken into consideration?

Yes it is.

Again, is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties?

Yes they are able to see a GP face to face if they need to.

Is there also any flexibility for people who work, or look after school-aged children (either when booking or attending appointments)?

We offer appointments from 8am until 7.30pm two days a week and 9.30am-6.30pm three days a week. Patients can also ask out of hours on the weekend and late evenings until 8pm.

Do you know if remote appointments are generally on time, and is there any procedure if running late?

Remote appointments normally run on time.

What do you feel works well about the consultation system?

Patients are able to discuss or video call via telephone or face to face so they have a few options.

What do you feel could be improved?

Nothing.

Environment

Can you tell me about the Covid-19 procedures in place?

We have a security that checks temperatures when patients enter the building, patients are screened before seeing a doctor. Alcohol gel and face masks are provided.

Are patients aware of what to expect and do?

Yes patients are advised. We have posters and a recorded message when they call.

Are staff aware of what to expect and do?

Yes, we have completed training and have screening questions and prompts and regular updates.

Is there anything that works well, or could work better about the general environment?

We have screens now that protects staff from germs and airborne viruses.

Regular Treatment and Medication

Some of the recent reports (mentioned earlier) highlight delays with regular health checks, treatment and medication. Is this the case at this practice - if so, are there any measures in place to address this?

I as a Nurse Associate have been seeing patients to carry out regular health checks that are necessary.

Engagement and Feedback

Are patients encouraged to give general feedback (such as compliments or concerns)? If so, how?

Yes we have comments and complaints leaflet at reception and patients are advised they can leave a review on our NHS Choices website.

Is there a clear complaints process in place? Is the complaints policy on display in the waiting area?

Yes we have a complaints leaflet at reception and all staff are clear on the process.
Patient will put in writing and manager will respond within 28 days.

Staffing

When you started here, do you recall receiving an induction?

Yes.

Have you received any training, including recently?

Yes.

Do you feel that management are supportive towards staff generally?

Yes.

On your work and working conditions, do you feel that anything could be improved?

I'm happy within work and working conditions.

Do you feel that anything works particularly well?

We are lucky to have such a nice, modern building.

Can you tell me what you enjoy most about your job?

Interacting with the patients. Providing a service and helping when I can.

And what do you find most difficult?

When patients sadly leave or pass away.

6.4 Receptionist

The receptionist has worked at the practice for 3 months.

Appointment Booking

On booking appointments, do patients get a choice of method (for example can they phone, walk-in or complete an online form)?

Patients can call to book an appointment, walk in or complete an e-consult.

Is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties (such as disabled people, those without computers/phones, or foreign language speakers)?

For patients whose second language is English we have a translator system. Patients without a phone we can send letters or they come in. We offer double appointments for patients with disabilities. We have a hearing loop. People to guide blind patients.

What do you feel works well about the booking system?

We offer a variety of telephone calls, face to face and emergency on the day appointments.

Consultations

Are patients asked if they have any preferences about the consultation method (such as in-person, telephone or video)?

Yes we offer them face to face or telephone appointments.

If preferences are expressed, is this taken into consideration?

Yes.

Again, is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties?

Yes, we can offer double appointments or based on their needs, we will take it into account to offer help.

Is there also any flexibility for people who work, or look after school-aged children (either when booking or attending appointments)?

Yes, we have late appointments until 7.30pm. We also have emergency appointments you can book at 1pm for the afternoon if you are not available in the morning.

Do you know if remote appointments are generally on time, and is there any procedure if running late?

Yes, generally on time.

Environment

Can you tell me about the Covid-19 procedures in place?

Face masks, screens, temperature taken at the door, hand sanitiser and social distancing.

Are patients aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Are staff aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Regular Treatment and Medication

Some of the recent reports (mentioned earlier) highlight delays with regular health checks, treatment and medication. Is this the case at this practice - if so, are there any measures in place to address this?

We offer out of hour appointments. We have a 48-hour policy for medication. I do not believe we have delays.

Engagement and Feedback

Are patients encouraged to give general feedback (such as compliments or concerns)? If so, how?

Yes, they can email, leave a review on Google or phone us.

Is there a clear complaints process in place? Is the complaints policy on display in the waiting area?

Yes, we have a complaint leaflet at reception area. You can make a written complaint or email.

Staffing

When you started here, do you recall receiving an induction?

Yes, received the induction by Nicola (Managing Partner).

Have you received any training, including recently?

- Bluestream
- Infection, prevention and control service.

Do you feel that management are supportive towards staff generally?

Yes, always supportive.

Do you feel that anything works particularly well?

Yes, I feel we are a supportive team.

Can you tell me what you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy everything, especially engaging with the patients.

And what do you find most difficult?

When patients have unrealistic expectations.

6.5 Receptionist

The receptionist has worked at the practice for 2 years and 6 months.

Appointment Booking

On booking appointments, do patients get a choice of method (for example can they phone, walk-in or complete an online form)?

Yes, all of the above. Telephone us for appointment, use e-consult online, walk in and book at reception.

Is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties (such as disabled people, those without computers/phones, or foreign language speakers)?

Reception team will always do our best to ensure patients are helped appropriately. Translators and double appointments will be offered to patients whose first language is not English. Patients without phones have been offered face to face appointments during Covid.

What do you feel works well about the booking system?

We offer a variety of options in regards to booking appointments. I feel the whole system works very well.

What do you feel could be improved?

I do not feel the need for improvement. I feel the practice is run really well.

Consultations

NHS England's guidelines urge practices to provide face-to-face appointments where required, or desired. What do you think are the main challenges you face - as a practice, around this?

Screening patients before face-to-face appointments was sometimes challenging. Apart from that I think we worked very well during such a challenging time.

Are patients asked if they have any preferences about the consultation method (such as in-person, telephone or video)?

Yes, we offer telephone and face to face appointments.

If preferences are expressed, is this taken into consideration?

Yes.

Again, is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties?

Depending on their needs, we will accommodate as best we can.

Is there also any flexibility for people who work, or look after school-aged children (either when booking or attending appointments)?

Yes, we have evening clinics for both nurse and GP.

Do you know if remote appointments are generally on time, and is there any procedure if running late?

Yes, they generally run on time.

What do you feel could be improved?

I do not think we require improvement.

Environment

Can you tell me about the Covid-19 procedures in place?

Screening patients, face masks, temperature taken at the door, social distance in the waiting area, hand sanitiser stations throughout building.

Are patients aware of what to expect and do?

Yes, or if unsure will be advised by staff.

Are staff aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Is there anything that works well, or could work better about the general environment?

The system in place works very well.

Regular Treatment and Medication

Some of the recent reports (mentioned earlier) highlight delays with regular health checks, treatment and medication. Is this the case at this practice - if so, are there any measures in place to address this?

I do not think this applies to this practice. I feel we offer a great standard of care to our patients at Dr Uppal and Partner.

Engagement and Feedback

Are patients encouraged to give general feedback (such as compliments or concerns)? If so, how?

Feedback is always welcome. Patients leave reviews via NHS Choices or on Google.

Is there a clear complaints process in place? Is the complaints policy on display in the waiting area?

Yes, we have complaints procedure leaflets on display at reception.

Staffing

When you started here, do you recall receiving an induction?

Yes.

Have you received any training, including recently?

Yes, Bluestream training, and Basic life support training (CPR). My most recent training was an online course IRIS (domestic violence).

Do you feel that management are supportive towards staff generally?

Yes, very supportive.

On your work and working conditions, do you feel that anything could be improved?

No, I am very happy.

Do you feel that anything works particularly well?

The whole system we use works very well.

Can you tell me what you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy all aspects of my job, in particular dealing with patients.

And what do you find most difficult?

Patients can be difficult at times, this can be challenging.

6.6 Managing Partner

The managing Partner has worked at the practice for 8 years.

Appointment Booking

On booking appointments, do patients get a choice of method (for example can they phone, walk-in or complete an online form)?

Book at reception.

Telephone the surgery.

Online booking has been stopped due to covid as advised by NHS England.

Is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties (such as disabled people, those without computers/phones, or foreign language speakers)?

Silent Sounds -for interpreting and sign language.

Hearing Loop in the practice.

All areas of the practice are accessible for wheel chair users.

Double appointment for carers and vulnerable patients.

What do you feel works well about the booking system?

That patients have the choice of how they book their appointment.

What do you feel could be improved?

Secondary Care / NHS 111 - services direct patients back to GP practices for things outside our control, i.e. patient referred to the hospital, appointment not allocated and when patient calls for an appointment they are told to go back to GP practice, knowing full well an appointment has been made and there is nothing else we can do.

Consultations

NHS England's guidelines urge practices to provide face-to-face appointments where required, or desired. What do you think are the main challenges you face - as a practice, around this?

No challenges faced as we offer 50% pre-bookable face to face appointments. GPs review their lists when they come in and see a problem booked in a telephone consultation which they feel will require a face to face, the patient will be contacted and asked if they can attend in person, rather than having a telephone consultation.

Are patients asked if they have any preferences about the consultation method (such as in-person, telephone or video)?

Yes.

If preferences are expressed, is this taken into consideration?

Yes, patients will be asked covid screening questions before booking a face to face.

Again, is there any special provision in place for people known to have difficulties?

Double appointments.
Vulnerable registers / more frequent reviews.

Is there also any flexibility for people who work, or look after school-aged children (either when booking or attending appointments)?

Yes. Extended hour appointments.

Telephone / virtual apps - convenient for people that work / or staying with family / not able to get to the surgery due to other commitments.

Do you know if remote appointments are generally on time, and is there any procedure if running late?

Generally, on time.

What do you feel works well about the consultation system?

That patients have a choice and we are a practice that offers face to face appointments, unlike lots of practices that don't.

What do you feel could be improved?

Secondary care services and NHS 111 diverting patients back to GP practices for things that should be dealt with by their services.

Environment

Can you tell me about the Covid-19 procedures in place?

All Staff and patients expected to wear masks whilst in the building.

Posters up at the front of the building and in reception.

Covid information on websites and answering service.

Text messages sent out to patients informing them of changes to the services due to covid and advises not to attend if they have symptoms etc.

Are patients aware of what to expect and do?

Yes. Staff reiterate procedures when booking face to face appointments.

Security at the door giving masks to patients who may present without a mask.

Are staff aware of what to expect and do?

Yes.

Is there anything that works well, or could work better about the general environment?

The downside of being in a shared building is that you cannot control what other services do and how they operate.

Engagement and Feedback

Are patients encouraged to give general feedback (such as compliments or concerns)? If so, how?

PPG, Website, complaint procedure.

Is there a clear complaints process in place? Is the complaints policy on display in the waiting area?

Yes. Leaflets in reception.

Staffing

When you started here, do you recall receiving an induction?

Yes and a handover from previous business manager.

Have you received any training, including recently?

Yes. Finance, annual mandatory training. Covid training modules and webinars.

Do you feel that management are supportive towards staff generally?

Yes. We work as a team and work very well together.

On your work and working conditions, do you feel that anything could be improved?

We have limited areas to displays posters etc.

Do you feel that anything works particularly well?

Yes. I am very proud of my team. I have excellent GPs and staff and we work well as a team.

Can you tell me what you enjoy most about your job?

The variety of my role and the staff that I work with. I am very fond and proud of my team.

And what do you find most difficult?

It has been challenging for my team dealing with disgruntled patients who have been misinformed and asked to go to their GP practice, It seems that throughout covid NHS 111 and secondary care services are bouncing everything back to primary care. It's unfair on the patients and staff.

7. Recommendations

Based on the analysis of all feedback obtained, Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham would like to make the following recommendations.

We make 2 recommendations on the environment.

7.1 Environment

We observed a lack of noticeboards, leaflets, flyers & general information. Therefore, while waiting, patients have limited opportunities for educating

themselves on conditions, local services, support, and initiatives. Although we do acknowledge that this has been restricted due to Covid.

7.1.1 This is a missed opportunity, as condition specific information - especially local, will have clear health benefits. While the overall environment is not controlled by the practice, it may be possible to work in partnership with the other practices, and building management, to increase volumes of information, particularly near the seated areas.

The reception desk is shared by four different practices and while there are signs indicating the individual reception desks for each practice, these are quite small and not immediately noticeable.

7.1.2 This might not be possible due to the building regulations; however, we would encourage that the individual practice signs above the reception desks are made larger or perhaps are placed in front of the desks so that they are more noticeable.

We make 1 recommendation on engagement and feedback.

7.2 Engagement and Feedback

We did not see a reference to the Patient Participation Group (PPG) in the waiting area.

7.2.1 Information regarding the PPG (what it is and how patients can join), should be made available in the reception so that it is visible to all patients who come to the practice. A PPG poster, and/or flyers would certainly help to raise awareness.

We make 1 recommendation on staffing.

7.3 Staffing

Some patients reported having to wait to get through to someone on the phone and on the day of our visit, we observed only one staff member answering the phone and checking patients in for their appointments.

7.3.1 We would recommend that where possible and during peak times, the practice would have more than one person present at the reception. Other things to consider could be an additional phone line or a self-check-in option available for patients once Covid safety measures allow.

8. Review of Website

In addition to the visit, we have reviewed the [practice website](#) to assess its overall accessibility and effectiveness.

8.1 Accessibility and General Information

We start by looking at accessibility - is the website easy to navigate (colours, font, logic), compatible with mobile devices and able to translate? Is basic information - such as contact details, opening times (including out of hours) and the CQC (Care Quality Commission) rating clearly displayed? Is there a list of practice staff, and a full list of services on offer?

We use a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) traffic light system to highlight findings.

Attribute	RAG Rating
Is the website easy to navigate?	Green
Is it mobile compliant?	Green

Is translation available?	
Is the CQC rating displayed?	
Are the contact details and opening hours clearly displayed?	
Is there information on out-of-hours help?	
Is there information on extended hours?	
Is there information on the catchment area?	
Are you able to register online?	
Is there a full list of practice staff?	
Is there a full list of services provided?	

For accessibility and general information, we consider the website to be 100% compliant. The layout is concise, well presented and proportioned, and all items were found easily.

8.2 Service Access and Support

In this section we examine the ability to book appointments, assessing levels of information and choice, and whether there is a clear process and route in accessing the variety of online services (appointments, prescriptions, test results and referrals).

We also consider general information on self-help, community support, and awareness of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and the evolving primary care roles.

Attribute	RAG Rating
Is the route to booking clear?	Green
Is there a choice when booking?	Green
Is the online pathway clear?	Green
Is there background information on the online pathway?	Green
Is there an eConsult pop-up?	Green
Is there background information on PCNs?	Red
Are there self-help resources?	Green
Is there information on local including community support?	Green
Are information sources clear and reliable?	Green

For service access and support, we consider the website to be 89% compliant. While online pathways are live, there is a lack of clear background information. There is also no clear mention of the Primary Care Network and its role.

8.3 Engagement and Involvement

In this section we examine the visibility of the Patient Participation Group (PPG), complaints process and ability to give feedback, including access to the Friends and Family Test (FFT).

Attribute	RAG Rating
Is the PPG clearly visible?	Green
Is PPG content adequate and up-to-date?	Yellow
Are patients encouraged to give general feedback?	Yellow
Is the complaints procedure visible?	Green
Is the Friends and Family Test visible?	Green

On engagement and involvement, the website is 40% compliant. While there is an online form to join PPG, we did not see information about what PPG is or details of previous or upcoming meetings. Patients are also encouraged to give feedback, but when you go to the Feedback and Complaints section of website, it doesn't display any information on how to give feedback or make a complaint.

9. Glossary of Terms

- AIS Accessible Information Standard
- BSL British Sign Language
- CQC Care Quality Commission
- FFT Friends and Family Test

HCA	Health Care Assistant
PCN	Primary Care Network
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RAG	Red, Amber, Green
UCC	Urgent Care Centre

10. Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the general public and is shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available.

If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences, please contact us.

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