



**healthwatch**  
Greenwich

Enter and View

# Ferryview Health Centre - Valentine Health Partnership



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Practice Manager: Laura Snow

# 1. What is an Enter and View?



Part of the local Healthwatch programme is carrying out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives visit health and social care services to discover the patient and service user experience and make recommendations for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) provides local Healthwatch the right of entry to observe service delivery and talk to service users, patients, their families and carers in any publicly funded health and adult social care service (including hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dentists, optometrists and pharmacies). Enter and View visits help us to identify issues and share good practice from the perspective of people who use the service.

## 1.1. Our approach

To collect information, our Authorised Representatives complete an observation form and speak to residents, service users, patients, and staff as appropriate. We emphasise to all patients that participation is voluntary. We always check with staff if there are individuals who we should not approach or who are unable to give informed consent. We follow our safeguarding policy at all times.<sup>1</sup>



## 1.2. Disclaimer

Our reports relate to findings observed on specific dates and are not necessarily representative of the experiences of all patients, service users and staff, simply an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

## 1.3. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Greenwich would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution to the Enter and View programme. Healthwatch Greenwich would also like to thank the Healthwatch volunteers who assist with the visits.

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<sup>1</sup> Our safeguarding policy can be accessed here:  
[www.healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/safeguardingconcern](http://www.healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/safeguardingconcern)

## 2. Visit details

Date and time of visit	24 July 2018
Provider	Valentine Plus PMS
Authorised Representatives	Rikki Garcia and Anna Jones
Number of registered patients	25605 (across Valentine Health Partnership) <sup>2</sup>
Number of employed staff	11 GPs, X NPs, X TBC
Who we spoke to	10 patients

### 2.1. CQC Ratings

On 10 August 2018 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out a comprehensive inspection of Ferryview Health Centre, where they rated the service as ‘good’ across all areas of: safety, effectiveness, care, responsiveness, and leadership.

<b>Overall Good</b>  Read overall summary	Safe	Good ●
	Effective	Good ●
	Caring	Good ●
	Responsive	Good ●
	Well-led	Good ●

<sup>2</sup> Figure from NHS Choices - <https://www.nhs.uk/Services/gp/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=40417>

## 3. Our observations

### 3.1. Building observations



Ferryview Health Centre is located on a main road, in central Woolwich, close to the town centre, Woolwich Arsenal DLR and train station (about a ten-minute walk away). There are numerous local buses which stop near by. The building itself is large and easily identifiable with the name of the surgery written on a large sign above the main entrance. Although the outside of the surgery was clean and tidy when we visited, the building itself was somewhat worn and dated. The surgery is wheelchair accessible at the main entrance. There is also a pay-and-display car park to the rear of the surgery, although this is more difficult for disabled visitors to use as it involves walking up a set of stairs or going around and up a hill.

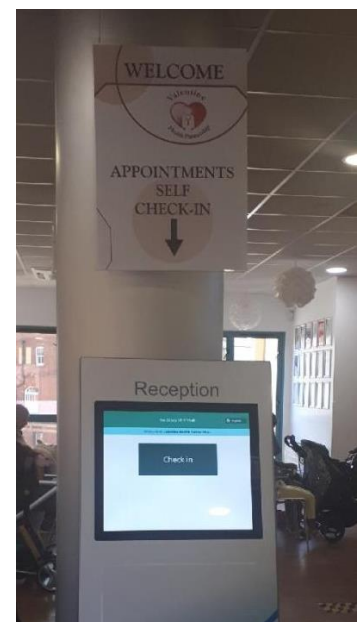


### 3.2. Arriving at the surgery



The inside of the building has a modern feel and was predominantly clean. On arrival there are two electronic self-check-in machines placed directly in front of the main entrance which are clearly signposted.

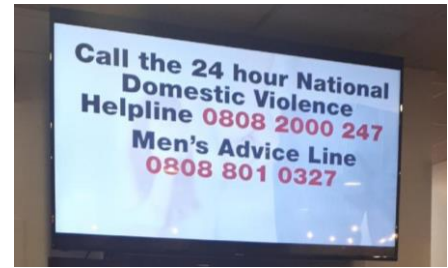
The reception area is clearly identifiable to the left of the entrance, with a queuing area. An electronic call system is in operation, using TVs in multiple locations. The chairs in the waiting room face away from the reception desk and were slightly apart, which offered patients more privacy when speaking to reception staff. Reception staff were helpful on our arrival, although we did have to wait a little while as the surgery was busy.



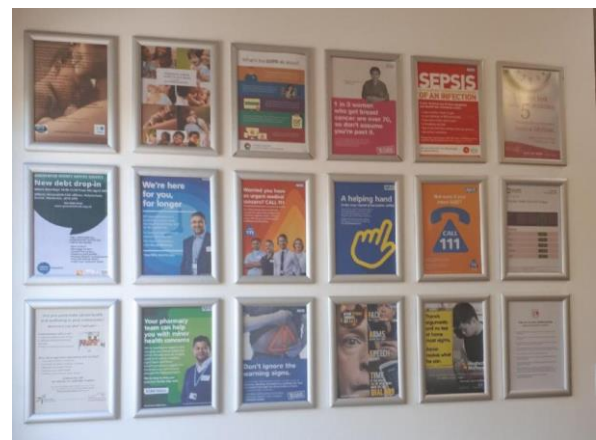
### 3.3. Waiting for an appointment



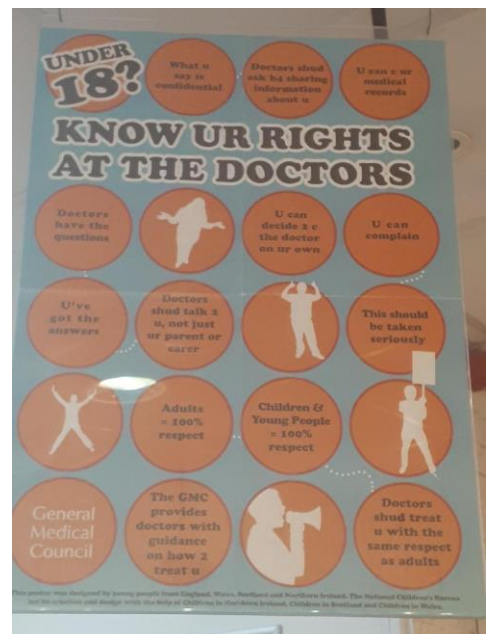
The waiting room is large with plenty of seating. Most of the chairs face two large TV screens; one was being used as a call system for patients' appointments and in-between displayed relevant health signposting. The other TV screen was showing popular day time TV shows with the sound at an appropriate volume. Some seating was placed in quieter parts of the waiting room further away from the TV screens.



Waiting times and delays were not being displayed in the waiting area, although are usually available on request from reception staff. Signposting in the waiting area was extensive and well-organised, with information that was relevant and up-to-date. It included information on NHS 111 and online booking of appointments, as well as the surgery's most recent CQC ratings.



We particularly liked a large hanging sign placed near the reception telling children and young people what their rights were when visiting the doctor's surgery:



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There are separate waiting areas aside from the main waiting room. One of these was a small children's waiting area, which was located at the end of a short corridor. This was an attractive, child-friendly



area with a children's table and toys, as well as its own TV screen to call patients for appointments. It was well decorated and very tidy. The signposting on the walls had been well thought through, and included information for parents, for example on breastfeeding and child accident prevention strategies. No one was using the area on the day we visited.

There was a separate 'isolation room' which the practice manager later told us was used in part for those with contagious illnesses, such as chicken pox. The name and sign for this room felt a little imposing.

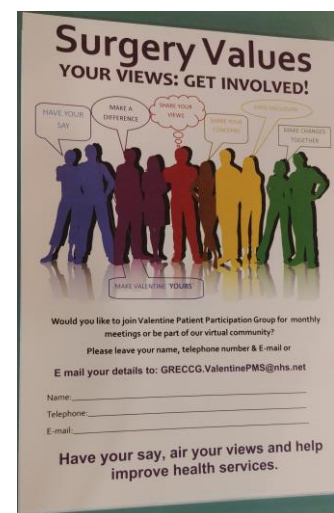


We did not see any signposting for translation services such as Language Line (the CCG commissioned translation service available to all GPs) in any of the waiting areas.

### 3.4. Ways to feedback

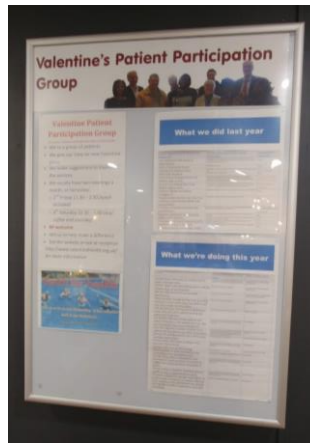


We were very impressed to see that the waiting area had an excellent display advertising the surgery's Patient Participation Group (PPG). This had information on what the role of the PPG was and how to join. It also explained what they achieved last year and what they hope to address going forwards. There was an additional, large banner advertising the surgery's PPG placed very visibly in another area of the waiting room. Leaflets on how to join the surgery's PPG had been left on the reception counter; these were eye-catching and informative.



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There were forms and a box for the Friends and Family Test placed visibly just outside of the corridor leading to the consultation rooms. We did not see any other comments or suggestions box in the waiting area.



The area outside of the consultation rooms was clean and tidy, and doors were clearly numbered for patients. There were hand sanitisers available around the waiting and communal areas.

## 4. Patient feedback

### 4.1. Access and hygiene



The patients we spoke to were happy with the opening hours of the surgery, as well as how accessible it was by transport or by foot. Similarly, everyone we asked felt that the surgery was clean and tidy, although one person noted that there was no running water in the toilet. We checked the toilets and found that they seemed to be working, although one had been closed with an 'out of order' sign.

### 4.2. Appointment booking and punctuality

The patients we spoke to gave mixed feedback about booking appointments. Although three people told us that appointment booking was either 'very good' or 'excellent', another three said it was 'poor' or 'very poor'. Several people told us that there was often a two to three week wait before appointments could be made, which led them to attend the walk-in regularly instead. One person told us that appointments were usually so far away that they often did not bother to make one, and another told us: 'trying to get an appointment to fit around my working schedule is nearly impossible, I have to wait two weeks'. One patient said it was hard to get through on the phones to make an appointment in the first place.



However, other patients told us it was 'fairly easy' to make an appointment, and one person said they only had to wait three to four days before they got one. We heard mixed feedback about the punctuality of appointments; two people told us that booked appointments could run twenty to thirty minutes late, and one person had been waiting half an hour on the day we spoke to them without being offered an explanation. People who used the walk-in service told us they typically waited an hour or two to see a GP, which they generally felt was reasonable.



### 4.3. Treatment received by staff



Most people were happy with the treatment they received from the GPs at the surgery, rating them as ‘good’ to ‘excellent’. It was noted by three patients that it was unhelpful to see a different GP each time. One patient told us, “it’s hard if they don’t actually know anything about you”. Another felt that the care received from the GPs at the surgery was “hit and miss, some want to get you out quickly, but some are really good. It’s different every time”. One person did not feel that seeing different GPs each time was an issue and described all the GPs at the surgery as professional and friendly. We spoke to the practice manager about the issues raised by patients having inconsistent GPs, who understood the concerns and informed us that the practice is working towards offering a consistency of GP for those with long term conditions or complex needs.

Most of the patients who had seen a nurse at the practice felt that they were treated well by them. One person described the practice nurses as ‘outstanding’, commenting that they “really take the time to listen”. However, one patient did note that time limited appointments made it harder to fully explain themselves to the nurse, and that sometimes it felt as if they therefore “just assume it’s a certain problem without investigating”. This was compounded by the fact that it was hard for her to get an appointment, “so by the time I do, I have a lot of things to say”.

Everyone was satisfied with the help and support they received from the reception staff, although one person commented that they acted slightly as a ‘gatekeeper’, and it would be nice if they were slightly more approachable (such as smiling more). Others described them as ‘professional’ and ‘very helpful’.

When we asked for additional comments, one person commented that he had not been invited for a check-up for a long time, and that it would be helpful for the surgery to send out regular letters for check-ups (this generally isn’t common practice for GPs unless there are long term and enduring conditions or disabilities).

#### 4.4. Involvement in decision making and information provision

Although most people were happy with how involved they were in the decisions made around their care and treatment, we did speak to a patient who felt it was limited by short appointment times. She felt that, similarly, information sharing was insufficient and commented “I would want more information. Sometimes they just tell you to look at a website. If you’re not good with computers, then you probably won’t bother”. Another person told us that involvement in decision making and information sharing varied depending on which GP you saw, and that some were better than others.



Three people we spoke to had heard of the surgery’s Patient Participation Group; one person commented this was via the posters in the waiting area.

#### 4.5. Medication and prescriptions



Everyone we asked was happy with the ease of ordering repeat and picking up prescriptions, for instance commenting that it was an ‘easy system to use’, ‘straight forward’ and ‘simple’. One person did feel that clinicians sometimes ‘palm you off with something’ in order to finish the appointment but agreed that the actual process of getting prescriptions worked well.

## 5. Overall satisfaction

The majority of people we spoke to were happy with the care and treatment they received at Ferryview Health Centre. The main issues patients did report centred around the difficulty in getting pre-booked appointments, appointment times not feeling long enough, having to see a different doctor each time and experiencing varying standards of care as a result.



## 6. Recommendations

### Recommendation 1: Ensure patients can see a consistent GP when needed

To reduce the amount of time patients spend repeating their stories/medical histories and to facilitate trust, wherever possible, patients should be able to see the same GP. This is particularly important for people with long and enduring conditions.

**Review: 12 months**

### Recommendation 2: Work to reduce waiting times for booked appointments, and improve the punctuality of booked appointments

Most people we spoke to on the day were using the surgery's walk-in service as opposed to having a pre-booked appointment. Multiple patients told us the waiting times for appointments were too long. This impacted on their ability to see a regular GP, which two patients felt were detrimental to the care they received. It also meant they sometimes had to wait longer in the surgery, than they may have had with a timed appointment. One patient told us this also reduced his satisfaction with the treatment, as appointment times

were too short to deal with multiple issues. We therefore recommend that the surgery work to reduce their appointment waiting times. The surgery should work to improve the punctuality of appointments. Where delays are unavoidable, reception staff should update patients and keep them informed.

### Recommendation 3: Improve signage towards the alternative waiting areas

The surgery has an excellent children's waiting area, which was unfortunately empty on the day of our visit (despite several children in the main waiting area). We would encourage the surgery to improve signposting towards this space. This can also be done verbally by reception staff for patients with children. Patients should also be assured that they will be called for their appointment via the TV screen in that area. We would also encourage the surgery to rethink the naming and sign on the 'isolation room', as this felt a little imposing. A more inviting sign for a 'private space' or '1:1 area' might be more patient friendly.

## 7. Provider response

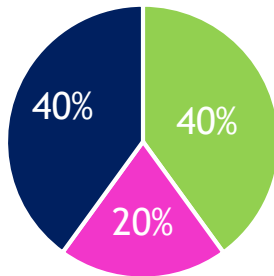
All providers are given the opportunity to review our Enter and View reports prior to publication, check for factual accuracy and provide a formal response.

The provider did not comment by the time of publication.

## 7. Demographics

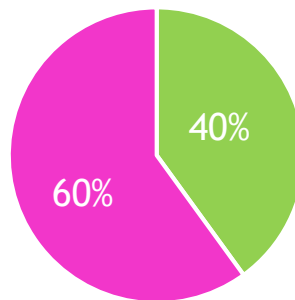
Of the people we spoke to on the visit:

### Gender



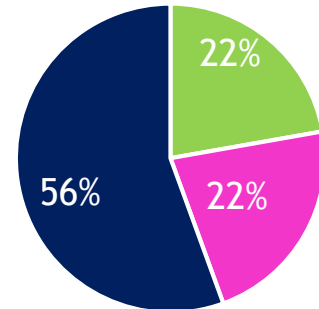
- Female
- Male
- Not known

### Sexuality



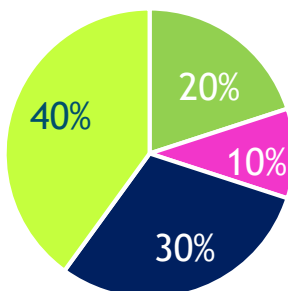
- Not answered
- Heterosexual

### Age



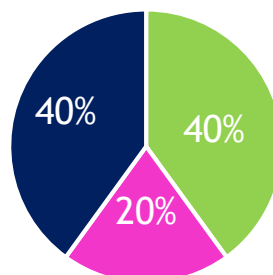
- 25-44
- 45-64
- Not known

### Ethnicity



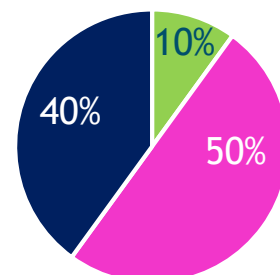
- White: UK/ Northern Irish
- Mixed/ Multiple ethnic background
- Not known

### Religion



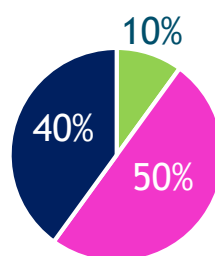
- No religion
- Christian
- Not known

### Carer



- Carer
- Non-carer
- Not known

### Disability



- Disabled
- Not disabled
- Not known

## 8. Contact us

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