



Details of visit

Service address:

Service Provider:

Date:

Authorised

Representatives:

Complaints Procedures Visit

**Upper Green Road, St Helens, RYDE, IW,
PO33 1UG**

St Helens Medical Centre

20/05/2015

Pamela Cranefield and Denise Parker

Acknowledgements

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

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, it is only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.



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 CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.



Purpose of the visit

This visit was arranged as part of the ongoing complaints work plan. The visit was designed to look at the accessibility of the complaints procedure throughout the GP surgery.

Methodology

The visits took place unannounced. The GP surgery were made aware that healthwatch would undertake visits related to the complaints workplan and were given a 2 week window but were not informed exactly when, or what the visits would involve.

The visits framework contained 2 sections.

Section 1 looked at the accessibility. The walls, leaflet stands, desks, tables were observed to see whether information was available informing people of the complaints procedure.

Section 2 focused on staff knowledge of the complaints procedure. Staff members were approached and asked questions related to making complaints and their comments recorded.



Results of Visit

Accessibility

Complaints Procedure Posters and leaflets

Within the surgery there were complaints leaflets available and these were positioned in noticeable areas.

The panel felt they would know how to make a complaint based on the information provided in the leaflets and would be aware of the timescales involved. The language and font size were appropriate, however there was nothing to indicate that the leaflets are available in any other format such as another language or braille.



The panel felt that the complaints and comments leaflet created by St Helens Medical Centre was excellent. It contained the right balance of information and left the patient informed but not overwhelmed.

Independent advocacy advice has been included within the complaints leaflet and SEAP (independent advocacy services) were promoted on posters and again these were positioned in noticeable places. The posters did not fully explain what an advocate is.

Healthwatch Isle of Wight complaints surveys were available on the reception desk.

Staff Conversations

During the visit the panel asked 2 staff members how to make a complaint.

Response 1 - Would help the patient to resolve the issue and give them a leaflet specific to St Helens Medical Centre.

Response 2 – Has put in place a patient survey, had funding for a community advocate who dealt with issues. Very keen to resolve complaints and would like to see an introduction of a new level of complaint between minor and major to prevent things getting out of hand.

Service users can complain on behalf of a relative or a stranger with that persons consent. Verbal complaints are also acceptable but written communication is considered 'better'.

The practice manager stated being keen for complaints to be dealt with in a timely fashion and in a way that is transparent.

Staff were very polite, friendly and confident in their responses.



Recommendations

Healthwatch Isle of Wight Recommends the following:

1. Posters should be created and displayed throughout the practice. They should clearly state all the information a person would need to make a complaint, (including potential timescales involved).
2. All posters and leaflets should be available in other formats upon request.
3. The complaints and comments leaflet be shared with other practices on the Isle of Wight as an example of good practice.

