



Enter and View Report

Mendip Vale Medical Practice

Langford Surgery

4th December 2017



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Details of the Visit

Location

Pudding Pie Lane, Langford, BS40 5EL.

Date and Time of Visit

4th December 2017; 9.30am to 11.30am

Enter and View Representatives

Karen MacVean and Neil Turner

Registered Provider

Mendip Vale Medical Practice

Type of Service

General GP Services

Specialisms

- Regular reviews of patients with Diabetes and Asthma and those at risk from Coronary Heart Disease. All blood tests
- ECGs
- Blood pressure monitoring
- New patient checks
- NHS Health checks
- Carers Health checks
- Spirometry
- Support to stop smoking
- Audiometry
- Immunisations
- Ear syringing
- INR blood tests

Practice Manager

Katie Drew, General Manager

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch North Somerset Authorised Enter and View Representatives wish to thank Mendip Vale Medical Practice and in particular the staff and patients at Langford Surgery.

Purpose of the Visit

Healthwatch North Somerset is carrying out a series of visits to GP Practices in North Somerset to ascertain the experience and opinions of local patients. Mendip Vale Practice at Langford was selected as part of our series of North Somerset GP Enter and Views of GP Practices in North Somerset.

Healthwatch North Somerset made the decision to visit GP Practices in North Somerset to observe the patient experience of using the services. Feedback gathered from local people provides a lot of positive feedback and there are numerous examples of good practice. Access to primary care is a theme frequently identified in the intelligence gathered by Healthwatch North Somerset and Enter and View visits allow observation of the patient environment.

The purpose of this Enter and View visit was aimed at outlining what was observed and recognising, highlighting and sharing of good practice and making any suitable suggestions for improvement to the service concerned.

The report may also make recommendations for commissioners, regulators or for Healthwatch North Somerset to explore particular issues in more detail. Unless stated otherwise, Enter and View visits are not designed to pursue the rectification of issues previously identified by other regulatory agencies. Any serious issues that are identified during a Healthwatch Enter and View visit are referred to the service provider and appropriate regulatory agencies for their rectification.

This report relates only to this specific visit and feedback received directly by Healthwatch North Somerset during the two hours of the Enter and View visit. It is not Representative of all service users, only those who contributed within the restricted time available, through interviews or other feedback.

Description of the Service

Langford Surgery is part of the Mendip Vale Medical Practice. On their website, Mendip Vale Medical Practice describes Langford Surgery as the 'State of the Art' main surgery along with four other branch surgeries. The Mendip Vale Medical Practice covers a wide rural area in North Somerset including the villages of Blagdon, Churchill, Claverham, Cleeve, Congresbury, Hewish, Kenn, Kingston Seymour, Langford, St Georges, Wrington, and Yatton. There are 26,000 Patients registered with Mendip Vale Medical Practice who can choose to be seen at any of the five Surgeries, including Langford.

On the Langford Surgery site there are eight consultation rooms, two health nurse assistant rooms, two nurse treatment rooms and a private suite. There are usually seven GP's and three nurses on site. District Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors and a number of therapists including a private physiotherapist operate or run clinics out of Langford Surgery.

Langford Surgery opens six days a week, Monday to Friday from 08.00am to 18.30pm and Saturday morning from 08.30am to 12.30pm.

Mendip Vale Medical Practice usually has three or four trainee doctors attached to the Practice at any one time. The Practice also has student nurse placements.

The Mendip Vale Medical Practice is RCGP (Royal College of General Practitioners) Research Ready accredited, and are part of the South West Primary Care Research Network.

Planning for the visit

The Enter and View visit was an announced visit with Katie Drew the Mendip Vale Medical Practice General Manager being given two weeks' notice. We sent a confirmation of visit letter, Practice Manager questions, posters and leaflets to the Surgery to inform patients, relatives, carers and staff about the Enter and View visit and about the role of Healthwatch North Somerset. The Enter and View visit was planned at 9.30am at the Practice Managers request, to observe the Surgery during a busy period of their day. As part of the planning the Enter and View Representative did some background research of the website and out of hours telephone message.

How was the Visit Conducted?

Two Enter and View Representatives, Karen MacVean and Neil Turner, carried out the visit. The Enter and View Representative's met with the General Manager at the start and at the end of the visit.

The Enter and View Representatives observed the condition of the premises and the interaction between the staff and patients.

The Enter and View Representatives were not approached by any patients or staff members while they conducted the Enter and View visit. The information and evidence detailed in this report is collated from speaking to the General Manager and the Enter and View Representative's own observations.

The Enter and View Representatives sought background information by reviewing the website to note the information available to patients and by making a call out of hours to note the recorded information given to patients.

How were findings recorded?

Comments and quotes were recorded by the Enter and View Representatives whilst observing the Practice and engaging with the General Manager. Observation and prompt record templates were used to make notes, these were typed up after the visit by the Enter and View Representatives. The report was compiled and written based on the notes and records of the visit.

Communication with the Manager

The Enter and View Representatives met with the General Manager immediately before the Enter and View. Three prompt questions were used to establish instances of good practice, evidence change occurring because of patient feedback and identify potential improvements. The three prompt questions and responses are recorded below.

Q1. Are there any examples of good practice that you would wish to share with the rest of the primary care community?

- There is a practice car and driver available for all Mendip Vale Medical Practice surgeries. This transport is accessed through clinical staff referral (mainly GP) to transport patients who would otherwise struggle to get there, to the surgery.
- The Contact Patient Scheme - Practice Admin contact 3 or 4 vulnerable patients fortnightly to check on their wellbeing. (Originally this arrangement was used by St George Practice but when the 'Mendip Vale Medical Practice' group formed the rest of surgeries in the group adopted the system), Midwives and Health Visitors provide services on-site.
- Private physiotherapists are available.
- Practice care nurses and health care assistants/phlebotomists are available.
- There is flexibility of staff cover from across the group which means the Practice do not have to use locums
- Patients can access any of the five surgeries in the Mendip Vale Medical Practice group, which means patients can be seen by a GP fairly quickly.
- As appointments for emergencies are often available sick children and vulnerable patients can usually be seen the same day.
- A Duty Doctor is available who can review a patient's symptoms and who has flexibility to arrange with an appropriate clinician to carry out a home visits if required.
- Langford Surgery deliver medication to Blagdon Luncheon Club for distribution to patients.
- District Nurses are based in Langford and St George surgeries.
- The Patient Participation Group is 'fantastic and very active'.
- Practice staff try to attend parish and parish council meetings.
- There is a dispensary on-site.
- The phone and computer system is linked for all five Surgeries in the Mendip Vale Medical Practice. Calls to any Surgery are answered by the first available receptionists from across the five Surgeries. This reduces patient call waiting times. The volume of calls and the call wait times are monitored continuously throughout the day by the General Manager, so in busy periods other staff can be diverted to answer calls.
- Mendip Vale Medical Practice are a training establishment for doctors and student nurses and receptionists.
- Mendip Vale Medical Practice engage staff in decision making and reward staff performance through the certificated 'Living the Values' award.
- Late night or early morning surgeries are available by appointment across the surgeries in the Mendip Vale Medical Practice

Q2. Do you have any examples of how the Practice made changes following feedback from patients?

- The Practice car is available to transport vulnerable patients who would otherwise struggle to get to the surgery. This was an issue raised by patients in the past.
- Rapid access to GPs with flexibility in place for patients to access all five surgeries in the group and the Duty Doctor.
- Extended opening hours at the different Surgeries for example, Saturday Morning Surgeries at Langford and alternate Saturdays at St George. There are also late or early surgeries available by appointment across the Mendip Vale Medical Practice
- An on-line patient access system can be used to book appointments.

Q3. From the Surgery's perspective, are there any changes or recommendations you would make to improve access to services at the Practice for patients?

- To provide more access available to Practice nurse services; currently recruiting for this.
- All patients have access to same day appointments with GP or the option to book an appointment in advance for non-urgent matters within 2 weeks.
- All nurses are trained to undertake treatment room nurse duties, with individual nurses trained in a variety of additional specialisms. The Practice would like to encourage individual nurses to develop additional specialisms to improve accessibility of services across all surgeries.

Observations and Findings

The Enter and View Representative observed the following:

External Building Condition

- The Practice is housed in a large modern purpose-built building which is set back from the road with ample car parking at the front, the side and at the back of the building.
- There is a sign displaying the name - Mendip Vale Medical Practice by the entrance.
- There are pedestrian walkways around the building.
- The front of the surgery has a hedge fronting onto the pavement. There are areas that were planted with shrubs and foliage. Generally, the appearance externally was pleasant with well-ordered and well-maintained building and grounds.

Internal Decoration, Cleanliness and Furnishings

- Internally all the public and back office areas observed were clean and in a good decorative and well-maintained condition. The walls were painted in neutral tones and there was some interesting and attractive artwork on the wall depicting local people including children.
- The toilets were clean and stocked with the essentials items such as toilet paper and soap.

Outside Langford Surgery

- There is a roadside sign to indicate the surgery's location. The sign specifies the building as Mendip Vale Medical Practice not Langford Surgery.
- Designated car park is available to the front, side and rear of the building.
- Disabled spaces are allocated in the front car park and they were clearly marked.
- There is level access from the pavement outside the surgery and also from the car park to access the building through a glass porch.
- The Surgery and Dispensary opening times, as well a list of the GP names are shown on the glass façade by the front entrance.

Access to Langford Surgery

- The Surgery is accessed through two doors. The first door leads into a porch area and the second door into the main building, both doors are automated giving easy access to wheelchair users, people with limited mobility and pushchairs.
- Access is level from outside to the inside of the building.

- Reception is directly opposite the entrance and is clearly visible.
- There are signs directing patients to the Dispensary.
- There is a hand sanitiser in the porch area.

Reception

- The reception desk is directly in front of the entrance but also has a sign on depicting it is reception.
- The reception desk is at different height levels for wheelchair users to be able to see the receptionist easily and use if they need to write/sign anything.
- There are no barriers separating the public from the receptionists.
- The Enter and View Team were asked to sign a visitor's book and were given visitor passes.
- We observed there was very little privacy at reception as there were waiting areas at both sides of the reception desk. Some people waiting in line to speak to the receptionist could easily overhear conversations. The Enter and View team could clearly hear conversations patients were having with the receptionist when they were sat in the bigger waiting room.
- There is office space behind the receptionist desk so the Enter and View team considered that conversations could be heard by other staff members occupying those offices.
- There was one receptionist on duty when the Enter and View team visited, the team twice observed people waiting to speak to the receptionist in a short queue of two or three. The first was for a very short time and the second was slightly longer for a more complex query.
- The receptionist wore a name badge on a lanyard.
- Waiting times for delayed appointments were not displayed at reception.
- The Enter and View team observed that the receptionist was friendly and helpful to everyone she dealt with including patients.
- One patient came into reception while the Enter and View Representatives were there and told the receptionist that they were in a lot of pain with back ache and wanted to see the Duty Doctor. The receptionist offered to get the GP to phone the patient at home when the GP was free, but the patient said they wanted wait. The receptionist advised the patient she would let the GP know that they were waiting.

Waiting Rooms

- There was plenty of seating available in the larger waiting room at the time of the Enter and View visit.
- The Enter and View team observed patients waiting to be called in personally by GPs.
- The chairs in both waiting rooms were placed around the room and in rows in the middle.
- The chair seats were plastic. Some of the chairs had arms to aid patients getting up from the chairs.
- There were pictures and interesting art on the walls; some depicting local schools and people.
- The floor was covered by carpet which was in a good condition and clean.
- There were clear signs for the toilets including a disabled toilet which did not require a key to access.
- There were clear signs for the baby changing facilities.
- There was no drinking water available on view.
- The Enter and View team did not observe a hearing loop sign.
- There was no visible indication of waiting times to see the practitioners.

- One patient was overheard complaining at reception that they had been waiting 45 minutes to see the GP. The patient was told at this point that the GP was running late.
- There was no background music playing and the Surgery appeared calm and quiet.
- All the Medical Practitioners came into the two waiting areas to collect their patients in person.

Information Boards/Leaflets

- Outside the surgery the opening times of the Surgery and Dispensary and the names of GPs were displayed.
- Community information was available in the porch area.
- The Mendip Vale Medical Practice mission statement was displayed.
- There was lots of board space available with useful health and safety information displayed, all information appeared to be up to date and relevant.
- A range of health and safety leaflets were available
- Healthwatch North Somerset leaflet were displayed.
- Leaflets with Christmas opening times were available.
- Information about the Practice Patient Participation Group, Family and Friends Test and complaints procedure were all visible.
- The Healthwatch North Somerset posters about the Enter and View visit were displayed.
- There was a comment box available.
- There was a young person's information board and some information regarding carers groups, there was not a specific carers board.
- The Enter and View team did not observe details relating to information being available in other formats, hearing loop, patient access on-line, translation services or 'you said we did' information.

Patient Contact

- The Enter View team were not approached by any patients

Communication with the Practice Manager at End of Visit

At the end of the Enter and View visit the Representatives met with the General Manager to clarify any issues that were unclear. The responses to queries raised are below.

- The General Manager checked the availability of a hearing loop system and noted this facility is available - a hearing loop sign will be displayed to inform patients of this service.
- Translation and information in different formats are available on request. The Surgery use Language Line and Google Translate.

Good Practice

- There is a practice car and driver available for all Mendip Vale Medical Practice surgeries. This transport is accessed through a clinical staff referral (mainly GP) to transport patients to the surgery who would otherwise struggle to get there.
- The Contact Patient Scheme - Practice Admin contact three or four vulnerable patients fortnightly to check on their wellbeing. (Originally this arrangement was used by St George surgery but when the 'Mendip Vale Medical Group' formed the other Surgeries in the group adopted this system).

- Patients can access any of the five surgeries in the Mendip Vale Medical Practice group, which means patients can be seen by a GP quite quickly as appointments for emergencies kept free. Sick children and vulnerable patients can be seen that day.
- There are extended opening hours across the five practices.
- A Duty Doctor is available and has flexibility to arrange the appropriate clinician to carry out home visits if required.
- Langford Surgery deliver medication to the Blagdon Luncheon Club for distribution to patients.
- The practice staff try to attend parish and parish council meetings.
- There is a dispensary on-site.
- The phone and computer system are linked for all five Surgeries in the Mendip Vale Medical Practice. Calls to any Surgery in the group are answered by the first available receptionists from across all Surgeries, this reduces patients call waiting times. The volume of calls and the call wait times are monitored continuously throughout the day by the General Manager, so in busy periods other staff can be diverted to answer calls.
- The Mendip Vale Practice engage staff in decision making and reward staff performance through the certificated 'Living the Values' award scheme.

Out of Hours

As part of the background research the Enter and View representatives noted the following details when they phoned the surgery out of hours:

- The name given was for the practice group 'Mendip Vale Medical Practice'. Langford Surgery was not named specifically.
- The phone message detailed the Mendip Vale Medical Practice opening hours.
- There was clear information on redirecting calls out of hours, including NHS 111 for general non-life-threatening illnesses and 999 for emergency treatment.
- The message ended without advising that patients could not leave a voice mail message.

Review of the Practice Website

As part of the background research the Enter and View representatives noted the following details when researching the website:

- Langford Surgery is incorporated within the main Mendip Vale Medical Practice website.
- The website was reasonably easy to navigate both on a PC and a mobile phone.
- The most relevant information pertaining to the surgery for example, the opening times, contact details, location, registering and out of hours information can be found by clicking on the main information tabs (with drop-downs) running along the top of the page.
- There was a lot more information contained in an extensive list of tabs on the right-hand side, which was more difficult to navigate. For instance, it was difficult to find the complaints procedure which was contained in the 'Patients Charter and Policy' tab on the right had side. When finding the complaints information there were no forms to download or no direct contact number for the General Manager, who patients were directed to contact.

Recommendations

Healthwatch regulations stipulate that service providers and commissioners have a duty to respond to local Healthwatch reports and recommendations within 20 working days, in writing, to acknowledge receipt and to explain what action they intend to take; or if they do not intend to take action they must explain why. (Health and Social Care Act 2012: Addendum to summary report: issues relating to local Healthwatch regulations).

Healthwatch North Somerset recommends the following based on the Enter and View Representative's observations and feedback received by the public in North Somerset.

We believe the following recommendations to be achievable, affordable and evidence based:

- To display information about the availability of hearing loop.

Service Provider Response

Received from Katie Drew the Mendip Vale Medical Practice General Manager:

In response to a patient coming into reception while the Enter & View reps were there and asking to see the Duty Doctor..... (last point under reception heading)

It appears the correct process for utilising the Duty Doctor wasn't followed on this occasion. The Duty Doctor system is run as a telephone triage system, so we can manage the Duty Doctor list safely.

The report has been shared with our Sue Millard the Practice Service Manager, Sue is responsible for dealing with matters relating to patient liaison and services.

Following the feedback in the report there are some areas that we would like to develop and improve in and therefore would be grateful if we could contact Healthwatch North Somerset to ask a few questions regarding some of the feedback received.

About Healthwatch North Somerset

Healthwatch North Somerset is the local independent voice for health and social care services. We work with local people to improve services for people who live, or access services in North Somerset, gathering local views and experiences and acting on them to make local services better, now and in the future.

Healthwatch North Somerset's statutory function and remit, which is laid out in The Health and Social Care Act 2012, is to provide a voice for people who use health and adult social care services, by:

Influencing

- Giving people an opportunity to have a say about their local health and social care services, including those whose voice isn't usually heard
- Taking public views to the people who make decisions - including having a Representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board (People and Communities Board in North Somerset)
- Feeding issues back to government via Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Signposting

- Providing information about health and social care services in the local area
- Advising people on where to go for specialist help or information (signposting)
- Helping people make choices and decisions about their care
- Working closely with other groups and organisations in the local area.

Enter and View

To enable Healthwatch North Somerset to gather the information it needs about services, there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch North Somerset staff and volunteers to see and hear for themselves how those services are provided. That is why the government has introduced duties on certain commissioners and providers of health and social care services (with some exceptions) to allow authorised Healthwatch North Somerset Representatives to enter premises that service providers own or control to observe the nature and quality of those services.

Healthwatch North Somerset Enter and Views are not part of a formal inspection process, neither are they any form of audit. Rather, they are a way for Healthwatch North Somerset to gain a better understanding of local health and social care services by seeing them in operation. Healthwatch North Somerset Enter and View Authorised Representatives are not required to have any prior in-depth knowledge about a service before they visit. Their role is to observe the service, talk to service users and staff if appropriate, and make comments and recommendations based on their subjective observations and impressions in the form of a report.

Legislation allows 'Enter and View' activity to be undertaken with regard to the following organisations or persons:

- NHS Trusts
- NHS Foundation Trusts Local Authorities
- a person providing primary medical services (e.g. GPs)
- a person providing primary dental services (i.e. dentists) a person providing primary ophthalmic services (i.e. opticians) a person providing pharmaceutical services (e.g. community pharmacists) a person who owns or controls premises where ophthalmic and pharmaceutical services are provided
- Bodies or institutions which are contracted by Local Authorities or the NHS to provide health or care services (e.g. adult social care homes and day-care centres).

Key Benefits of Enter and View

- To encourage, support, recommend and influence service improvement by:
- Capturing and reflecting the views of service users who often go unheard, e.g. care home residents
- Offering service users an independent, trusted party (lay person) with whom they feel comfortable sharing experiences
- Engaging carers and relatives
- Identifying and sharing 'best practice', e.g. activities that work well
- Keeping 'quality of life' matters firmly on the agenda
- Encouraging providers to engage with local Healthwatch as a 'critical friend', outside of formal inspection
- Gathering evidence at the point of service delivery, to add to a wider understanding of how services are delivered to local people
- Supporting the local Healthwatch remit to help ensure that the views and feedback from service users and carers play an integral part in local commissioning.

Relevant Legislation

- The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013. (18 February 2013).
- The arrangements to be made by Relevant Bodies in Respect of Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013." (28 March 2013).
- The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013. (18 February 2013).
- The arrangements to be made by Relevant Bodies in Respect of Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013." (28 March 2013).



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