



**Enter and View visit: Sorsby Medical Centre  
28 March 2017**

<b>Service</b>	General Practice
<b>Service address</b>	3 Mandeville St, London E5 0DH
<b>Provider name</b>	Sorsby Medical Practice
<b>Date/Time of visit</b>	28 March 2017
<b>E&amp;V representative/s</b>	Lloyd French Kanariya Yuseinova
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**About Healthwatch enter and view visits**

The Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007, as amended by the 2012 Act and directed by Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013, imposes a duty on health and social care providers (including the independent sector) to allow authorised representatives of Local Healthwatch to enter premises that they own or control to observe the services that are being provided. These are legally binding directions and are often referred to as ‘the right to enter and view’.

## Purpose of our visit

We visited Sorsby Medical practice to:

- Observe services being provided and interview patients about their experiences
- Compile a report highlighting good practice and recommendations for improvement

Our decision to visit was influenced by the following factors:

1. Routine comments and feedback from service users received by Healthwatch Hackney
2. A February 2015 [Care Quality Commission inspection report on the practice\\*](#)
3. Data from the national GP patient survey which show patients rated the practice lower than some others for several aspects of care.

We will continue to monitor patients' experiences of the service to check that the changes being made are working.

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Hackney would like to thank the practice assistant business manager and staff for accommodating our visit and the patients for participating in our interviews. We are also grateful to our volunteer authorised representatives for conducting the visit.

## Important Information for management/provider

- We expect Sorsby Medical Practice to provide an action plan and response addressing issues raised under 'Recommendations'
- Copies of this report will be circulated to City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England and the CQC and will be made available on the Healthwatch Hackney website
- We will publish the practice's action plan and response along with our report

## Disclaimer

- The observations made in this report relate only to the visit carried out at Sorsby Medical Practice on 28 March 2017 which lasted three hours
- This report is not representative of all patients of Sorsby Medical Practice on the day of the visit. It only represents the views of seventeen patients and two members of staff who were able to contribute within the restricted time available.

## Key information about Sorsby Medical Practice

- Sorsby Medical Practice has around 4500 registered patients
- It comprises 4 GP partners, 3 salaried GPs and 4 long term part-time locums
- Two GPs are male and nine are female.
- Lower Clapton Group Practice has managed practice since April 2014
- Patients can be sent to Lower Clapton Group Practice for minor surgery/post-operative wound care when nurse is unavailable at Sorsby practice
- Extended opening is on Monday evenings. Practice is closed at the weekend.
- PPG meetings occur quarterly
- Enhanced services include psychotherapy, Family Action, social prescribing, health visitors, baby clinic and Time to Talk
- Since our visit CQC, the CQC has rated the practice 'Good' in all areas (Sept-2017)
- Practice building and cleaning is maintained by NHS Property services

## **Recommendations**

All recommendations are based on patient feedback and our observations during the visit.

### **Recommendation 1**

The practice should review their phone appointment system to ensure more slots are available for patients who call up to make an appointment as patients reported significant problems with the phone booking process.

### **Recommendation 2**

The practice should urgently address the outdoor door access issue so disabled patients no longer have to struggle to access the surgery in their wheelchair.

### **Recommendation 3**

The practice should adjust the sound, timing and position of the consultation call up system so patients have more time to process the information.

### **Recommendation 4**

The PPG should be publicised more effectively with more visible/prominent posters and promoted by GPs during consultations and on the website

### **Recommendation 5**

The practice should consider reintroducing a children's space with books and toys

### **Recommendation 6**

The practice should consider redesigning the reception counter to make it more accessible for disabled patients by addressing restricted access to the waiting room.

### **Recommendation 7**

The practice should arrange for immediate repairs to the toilets to make them accessible including an emergency alarm red cord that reaches the ground connected to a buzzer and a flashing red light, a wheelchair-height sink and hand dryer. The practice must also re-site the large recycle bin away from the toilet and reviews cleaning arrangements to ensure the toilets are cleaned regularly.

### **Recommendation 8**

The practice website should be updated by adding an accessible font size option and creating a page with useful patient information (eg signposting and a prominent link to the practice complaint policy).

### **Recommendation 9**

The practice should provide leaflets and advice sheets in other languages.

## Summary of findings/observations

The following observations were noted during the visit:

### What the practice does well

- Smooth repeat prescription process
- Patients have confidence in their GPs and the practice nurses
- Patients described the practice as efficient and pleasant
- Reception staff were variously described as kind and helpful
- GPs respond well to the additional needs of vulnerable children
- Staff are trained on needs of patients with communication impairments
- Bright, airy environment, clean in the main areas (but not the toilets)
- Patients reported improvements in care recently
- One patient described the practice as 'outstanding'

### Areas for improvement

- Poor lobby/reception design/layout but practice limited by NHS Property Services
- Inadequate signs to the practice from main road
- Lack of toys and books for children in the waiting room
- Practice is not fully accessible for wheelchair users and parents with push chairs
- Reception configuration means confidentiality is not always well-maintained
- Patients lacked awareness of the PPG
- Consultation call-up screen requires improvements to work better for all patients
- Information not available in community languages
- Patients reported difficulties with telephone appointment with long waits on line
- Long waits in terms of days/weeks to see a specific named GP
- Poorly maintained/equipped toilet for disabled people and baby changing facilities

### Registration

- A new patient received conflicting information during the registration process which resulted in a long wait to be seen for his first appointment

### Physical environment/cleanliness/hygiene

- Practice has a poor layout because the reception counter forms part of the entrance door to the small waiting room.
- Overall environment was clean tidy and lobby and reception areas bright with inviting decorations and furniture.
- The toilets were not clean during our visit
- Recycle bin was stored in the toilet rendering it inaccessible to disabled patients

### Signposting to practice

- Practice is located five minutes' walk from the main road with few signs directing people to the surgery, a potential issue for new patients
- Practice is located on the edge of a large council estate in a parade of shops making it easily accessible to local residents
- Area has limited transport links. Only 242 bus serves the area directly
- Patients with mobility problems would find it difficult to travel to other parts of the health service without assistance

### Patient-centred care/dignity/safety

- Patients waiting with children were unhappy with lost children's play area
- Books and toys would have helped to occupy waiting children
- Reception desk location makes it difficult to maintain patient confidentiality
- Patients are expected to talk about medical needs as other patients walk past to the waiting room. Conversations are within earshot of queuing patients
- During our visit, the lower, accessible reception desk was closed with its shutters down and a patient in a wheelchair had use the higher reception desk
- Small waiting room and counter position may present a risk to patients in wheelchairs in an emergency/fire evacuation

### Communication

- The practice has a website and noticeboards throughout displaying current health and practice information
- Not many patients had read information displayed on the noticeboard
- No patients were aware of the practice's patient participation group, although information about the group was displayed in the reception area
- The practice website indicated 4 PPGs had taken place since August 2016
- The practice said more PPGs had taken place than indicated on the website
- Useful practice policies, including the practice complaints policy, are available on practice website but hidden under the news page
- The display and announcement board used to call the patient for their consultation was poorly positioned so not be seen by all waiting patients
- Patients complained the announcement was almost inaudible and the call-up information not displayed long enough so it was easily missed

## Accessibility

- Access for wheelchair users and visually impaired patients is restricted
- Both automatic outer doors failed to open fully, forcing one disabled patient to leave her vehicle outside and struggle in without assistance
- We witnessed another patient in a wheelchair accompanied by her son who struggled to access the building
- Inside doors were also not fully wheelchair accessible
- Electronic booking-in system is only suitable for use by sighted patients
- In line with the Accessible Information Standard, the practice has created an alert system to flag patients with communication impairments
- Hearing loop is available at the reception area
- Practice is able to provide information in variety of formats and an interpreter can be provided on request
- Practice has low rise reception desk but this was closed during our visit

## Appointments system

- Patients and staff told us that many prefer to book appointments in person at reception desk rather than use telephone and online booking system

## Patients' comments

**Patient 1** *'It's really hard to book an appointment over the phone. The phone rings for ages and no one picks up. Then, if it is not an emergency, I have to self-assess and decide: either to wait and call again or go to A&E. Otherwise, reception are really good. Patient confidentiality is kept and the doctors are great. Repeat prescriptions are always on time. It would be good if there were more appointments available and if they slowed down the screen that shows your name when your appointment is due.'*

**Patient 2** *'I needed to see the doctor today for the child I am fostering. I didn't call first thing in the morning. I just walked in to see if there were any appointments or cancellations available. The receptionist said actually there was and if I wait for a while I would be seen by the doctor. That worked well for me. Last week my other child wasn't feeling well so I called around 12pm. They put my name down and the duty doctor called me after 2 hours, assessed the situation over the phone and gave me an appointment for the same day. That was also dealt quickly and nicely. The doctors here are good so is the nurse. The receptionists are very kind and helpful. I believe my information is kept confidentially. The place has been always clean and tidy. I am happy'. Patient rated practice: 4.5/5*

**Patient 3** *'I started calling the practice to book an appointment from 8am. The phone was ringing for ages and no one picked it up. I persisted and kept ringing when finally they answered. This is the first time I have been here for over a year. The reception staff attitude seems improved. They are nicer now. The appointment screen here seems to be easy to navigate and the place looks clean. But the screen that shows your name for your appointment is very fast. There is no time to read which room and which doctor you are going to see'. Patient rated the practice 3/5*

**Patient 4** *'It's my first day today as a patient. I was here on Friday to register and they gave me a form I had to fill up and bring back 10 minutes before my 11am appointment. I was here on time when another receptionist said I had to be here 15 minutes before the appointment and I was "late". Now, they have asked me to sit and wait without giving me any clear information about how long will that take and when I will actually see a doctor. It's been half an hour or so I am sitting and waiting now. I don't know what to think now and how to comment the situation'.*

**Patient 5** *'I had an appointment for a blood test here on Tuesday which I attended. But on Wednesday I had a call from the reception asking me why I had not attended my appointment... Apparently someone forgot to register my attendance. There is always some waiting time when you have a scheduled appointment, sometimes 10-15 minutes, but it gets up to half an hour or so. They should re-organise their appointment system and times to avoid waiting times. And the screen they use to notify people for their appointments changes fast. By the time I have read which room I have to go to, the information is gone and it doesn't come back again quickly enough. Then I have to wait for it to appear again and I risk missing my appointment. Anyway, is hard to book an appointment. I start calling at 8 am and by the time someone answers the phone, there are no more appointments available. I don't know how this happens.'*

**Patient 6** *'The appointment system here is terrible. First, it takes ages to connect over the phone. Second, when I am lucky enough to get through, they say "no more appointments available". Then they will ask you for all your personal information and to see how well you are before they get a duty doctor to call you. Therefore, I rarely come here for an emergency. Apart from the unavailability of appointments, the doctors nurses, an even the reception staff are always kind.'* But there is mobility access issue. I am disabled and I had to leave my disability scooter outside and walk with the crutches because the doors are do not open properly and I get stuck. They should sort it out soon. And this screen here, that is supposed to show my name when the appointment is due. The screen is on one side when there is seating on both sides. It would be good and I don't think that expensive to put one more screen on the opposite side too. The beeping is so quiet and the notification stays on the screen for only 3 seconds and comes back again after 2-3 minutes. They should think about it as well'.

**Patient 7** *'This place is pretty good with me and I have no complaints about the treatment I have had from here so far. The doctors and receptionists are good. They even used to visit me at home when I wasn't able to walk. They arrange all my referrals and appointments. My only complaint is access to the building. I can hardly enter the surgery with my wheelchair because the doors are too narrow. There is a lift for upstairs which is good but I rarely use it. Some drinkable water around would be also nice". The patient rated the practice 5/5*

**Patient 8** *'I feel so stressed every time I need to book an appointment here. My daughter does it for me. We start calling from 8am and by 08:06 there were no more appointments available. Another thing, I was given an appointment for Friday when the receptionist called me in the morning an hour before the appointment time to say that my GP was ill and my appointment was cancelled. I wasn't offered another doctor and I wasn't asked if I needed to see another GP. Instead I was given another appointment a few days after which I am attending now. Otherwise, I think the receptionists are good.'*

**Patient 9** *I see different doctors every time here and I don't like it. I usually come to the surgery to book an appointment as I have hearing issues. They give me one if they have one available or the duty doctor calls me when I go home. But I can barely hear him and is sad they don't make a note of it. The toilets here are disgusting. Inside is dirty and not maintained well.'*

**Patient 10 (carer visiting with her mother)** She was happy with reception staff but unhappy with the appointments system. The carer and her family were also registered patients. She said it would be good to see the same doctor every time. She said communication was 'poor'. They didn't know about the complaints procedure and PPG. The environment was 'good' but she wanted the practice to bring back the children's play area.

**Patient 11** This was the patient's first GP consultation since registering a while ago. The patient was unhappy with telephone appointment booking system. He said: *'They are always fully booked matter how early you call.'* He said the appointment call system had poor quality sound and the patient name and GP room did remain on the screen long enough. The patient found the overall practice environment 'good'.

**Patient 12** The patient has been registered with the practice for over 40 years. They were not happy with telephone appointment system because it was difficult to get appointments that way. The patient felt consultations should be longer than 10 minutes. They were unaware of the practice's complaint procedure and had never received any information about the PPG. The patient said they sometimes revived text reminders for appointments. He felt it was very annoying that if you were a few minutes late for your appointment you were told to rebook but if you came on time you were never seen on time. The patient gave the practice environment a 'good' rating.

**Patient 13** The patient has been registered with the practice since 1994. The patient was satisfied with the appointment system and felt the diagnosis and referral at the practice was efficient and a '*vast improvement*' on the past. The patient was aware of the complaint's procedure but unaware of the PPG. The patient gave the general practice environment a 'good' rating.

**Patient 14** The patient had been registered with the practice since 2000 and was happy with reception staff who they described as 'pleasant and efficient'. They reported good communication in the practice and the patient was aware of the complaints procedure and the PPG. The patient gave the environment an 'outstanding' rating.

**Patient 15** The patient has been registered with the practice for over 25 years. The patient was happy with reception staff and reported good communication at the practice. They said they were aware of the complaints procedure and the PPG. The patient gave the environment an 'outstanding' rating.

**Note:** *This interview was particularly difficult because the patient clearly had mental health needs. The practice did not appear to take account of their presenting issues. The patient was playing a loud video and the reception staff did not come over quietly to warn the patient. Instead they told the patient from behind counter.*

**Patient 16** *Pain started last year and GP treated me twice for helicobacter infection with PPIs and antibiotics, neither worked. She didn't check me properly neither refer me to expertise for proper medical investigation. I was in pain for most of the year. On holiday in Turkey I became very ill in acute pain and the hospital doctor told me I had gall stones and I was operated on. The practice failed to diagnose gall stones so I was ill and in pain for a yea. No appointment, GP called me by phone and produce a medical certificate which I collected from health centre later on*

**Patient 17** The patient was registered with the practice for over 10 years and said he wasn't happy with the telephone appointment system. He said patients 'never got reminders' about appointments but was he was happy with reception staff. The patient wasn't aware of the complaints procedure or the PPG. The patient gave the environment a 'very good' rating.

### **Staff comments**

**Staff 1** The practice did not have enough permanent GPs to enable patients to be seen by the same GP each visit.

**Staff 2** Information on policies and procedures are website including the complaints procedure and details of the PPG were displayed prominently in the waiting room.

## Summary of equality information for patients interviewed

Ethnic category	
White	5
Other White	4
Black or Black British	4
<b>Other Black</b>	1
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	2
<b>Other Asian</b>	1

Gender	
Male	5
Female	12

## Pictures from the practice

Picture 1



Picture 2



**Picture 1:** Broken handles on the left of the toilet, alarm cord missing, toilet paper not available and hand towel dispenser placed too high to be reached by patient in a wheelchair.

**Picture 2:** Baby changing facilities were available but blocked by large recycling bin.

## Sorsby Medical Practice: Improvement Plan and response to Enter and View Report November 2017

We are very pleased to report that in October 2017, the practice were again reviewed by CQC and were now deemed to be 'good' in all areas.

Healthwatch Hackney Recommendation	Sorsby Medical Practice Plan
<p><b>Recommendation 1</b>  <i>The practice should review their phone appointment system ensure more slots are available for patients who call up to make an appointment as patients reported significant problems with the phone booking process.</i></p>	<p>We are in the process of reviewing our appointment system at the moment and are engaging with potential phone providers to ascertain which is the most appropriate to engage with, to give us the increased functionality we need to allow for calling waiting system.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b>  <i>The practice should urgently address the outdoor door access issue so disabled patients do no longer have to struggle to access the surgery in their wheelchair.</i></p>	<p>The outside doors have been repaired by NHS Property Services who own the building.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 3</b>  <i>The practice should adjust the sound, timing and position of the consultation call-up system so patients have more time to process the information.</i></p>	<p>We are reviewing this at the moment and are looking to try to change the position of the call in board to enable all patients to see it.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b>  <i>The PPG should be publicised more effectively with more visible/prominent posters and promoted by GPs during consultations</i></p>	<p>We have been working on PPG engagement for some time and have tried multiple strategies, including posters in the waiting room, over the past 12 months. We will continue to promote it through our GPs, nurses and reception team.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b>  <i>The practice should consider reintroducing a children's space with books and toys</i></p>	<p>Due to infection control policies that are in place we will not be able to introduce books or toys into the waiting room. The infection control policies are in place to protect the safety of our patients. <b>Note: HWH Hackney has checked and there are <u>no CQC or local infection control policies that explicitly prevent a GP practice from providing children's toys and books.</u> Some Hackney practices choose to offer this and therefore as a matter of course follow <u>The Health and Social Care Act 2008 Code of Practice on the prevention and control of infections</u></b></p>

<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> <i>The practice should consider redesigning the reception counter to make it more accessible for disabled patients by addressing the restricted access to the waiting room.</i></p>	<p>We do already have a low rise reception desk in place that is used for those patients needing the reception desk level to be much lower, such as those patients in wheelchairs, so this facility already exists. We would very much like to redesign the waiting area to make it more accessible but it is NHS Property Services that own the building and are responsible for making these changes and this is not something that would be approved for funding.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b> <i>The practice carries out immediate repairs to the toilets to make them accessible including an emergency alarm red cord that reaches the ground, connected to a buzzer and a flashing red light, a wheelchair-height sink and hand dryer. The practice must also re-site the large recycle bin away from the toilet and reviews cleaning arrangements to ensure the toilets are cleaned regularly.</i></p>	<p>The recycle bin has been removed. The substandard cleaning arrangement that are provided by NHS property services have been escalated to the cleaning manager for NHS Property Services. The works to the toilet again have been raised with NHS Property Service. It is their responsibility to make sure that these changes are made.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b> <i>The practice website should be updated by adding an accessible font size option and creating a page with useful patient information (eg signposting and a prominent link to the practice complaint policy).</i></p>	<p>We have changed our website provider and the design of our website and these have and are being incorporated into the site. Our website has the functionality to read out the text for those patients who are visually impaired now.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9</b> <i>The practice should provide leaflets and advice sheets in other languages.</i></p>	<p>Our clinical staff provide leaflets in other languages using online tools available. We will look to increase this offer and to incorporate more in the waiting room that reflect the languages spoken by our patients.</p>