

**General Practice Roadshow**  
a report by  
**Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin**

**January 2019**



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## 2. Executive Summary

The Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin (HWT&W) Board decided, as one of its focused activities in 2018, to carry out a “General Practice (GP) Roadshow” format review of General Practitioner Practices (GPP). The longitudinal study covered all 14 listed Telford and Wrekin (T&W) individual or group Practices and 1 Practice with a Surgery in Telford. The GP Roadshow involved 22 visits to GPP locations.

The visits were conducted in a consistent format and lasted approximately 1.5 hours at each location.

The findings of the study have been consolidated into this Report and provide not only detailed commentary on the information collected but also a comparison of the pre-visit Healthwatch grading against the current grading as at January 2019.

All information collected was anonymised and separated into Appendices to allow easy circulation to individual practices. Only the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and Telford & Wrekin Council are planned to receive complete sets of Appendices.

## 3. Introduction

As part of the core activities of Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin (HWT&W) the HWT&W Board decided that a significant portion of its engagement effort throughout 2018, would be focused on the 14 GPPs in Telford and Wrekin (T&W) to gather the views and experiences of patients using those services. A longitudinal study, entitled “GP Roadshow”, was to be conducted in conjunction with the general feedback that HWT&W routinely receive from the T&W Community. This would allow a comparison to be made against HWT&W feedback, as at January 2019, indicating any movement in performance and the views of patients with respect to a Practice.

This report is based on Information and data collated in 2018 and was accurate at the time. Some aspects of the report may have since changed.

## 4. Aim

The aim of the GP Roadshow was to cover the T&W GP Practices in a series of visits throughout 2018. The insights and feedback obtained would be brought together in a report, which HWT&W feel could usefully support the GP Forward View initiatives, by highlighting how Practices can improve and identifying where there is good quality of service provision to inform both Providers and Commissioners alike.

## 5. Methodology

This piece of work utilised a 'Roadshow' format by ensuring that HWT&W engagement was specifically tailored to the general aim and clearly advertised as concentrating on each specific GP Practice. Feedback was collected in a consistent format directly from individuals and complimented by observations made by volunteers and HWT&W staff. Each GP Practice was visited by at least 2 volunteers or staff for a concentrated period of approximately 1.5 hours and coordinated by the HWT&W Health and Social Care Engagement team.

Patients and staff were provided with detailed information on HWT&W, together with standard feedback forms on which they were invited to share their comments and experiences. The rationale was only to incorporate into the analysis, information that was pertinent to their experiences at the GP Practice. All feedback received was moderated for any safeguarding issues and where no explanatory information was offered, for example where only a rating was provided, that feedback was excluded from the study. To ensure consistency in reporting during the study period, the feedback was collated under the following main headings:

- Appointments
- Waiting times
- Staff Attitude
- Accessibility
- Information
- Prescriptions
- Suggestions

- Ideas for Change
- Observations

Roadshow visit reports were anonymised to ensure confidentiality, and any stories that could potentially lead to the identification of an individual who shared their feedback were also excluded from this report, although their insights were still considered appropriate in informing the development of themes.

Our team also provided information through observations made during visit and through research prior or following visits.

## 6. Findings

The study covered all 14 GP Practices in T&W as well as the practice at Shifnal & Priorslee. This programme involved visits to 22 locations as listed below:

- Charlton Medical Centre
- Court Street Medical Practice
- Dawley Medical Practice
- Donnington Medical Practice
- Hollinswood and Priorslee Medical Practice
- Ironbridge Medical Practice
- Linden Hall Surgery
- Shawbirch Medical Practice
- Stirchley Medical Practice
- Sutton Hill Medical Practice
- TELDOC
  - Aqueduct
  - Hadley
  - Highfield
  - Lawley
  - Leegomery
  - Lightmoor (not visited - written feedback only)
  - Madeley
  - Malinslee
  - Oakengates
- Wellington Medical Practice
- The Surgery, Wellington Road
- Woodside Medical Practice
- *Shifnal and Priorslee Medical Practice (SCCG)*

The findings are contained in the individual appendices attached to this report and for ease of reference are ordered as above, correlating to the listings on the T&W CCG website.

In addition, HWT&W have compiled a single report sheet for each Practice visited, usefully comparing the pre-Roadshow “Star” grading with the current grading for January 2019; which have been duly anonymised and included in each Appendix.

## 7. Overall Themes

The overall themes that were recurrent through the survey period were:

### Appointments

- Extended, variable opening times (early mornings and later opening) would be beneficial to patients particularly shift workers and would free up day time appointments.
- Appointments can be hard to get for some patients and experiences often depend on individual Practices.
- Experience of pre-booking appointments can vary between Practices. Some patients reported a 20 to 30-minute wait on the phone just to make an appointment.
- Many patients reported that following early morning calls and the release of bookable appointments, appointments can be quickly taken, sometimes within minutes.
- Patients wanting to see their preferred Doctor could result in a wait of 2 to 3 weeks for an appointment.
- “Drop in” or “sit and wait” service was rated as a valuable service by a few patients and they suggested it can help alleviate telephone booking difficulties.
- Expanding housing developments can affect Practices ability to offer appointments. Patients will be competing for limited slots and patients may have to wait longer to see a Doctor.
- Some people reported, due to limited appointments and high demands to see a Doctor, that they have been forced to attend or have been advised by Practices to attend A & E for assessment and treatment.

### Waiting Times

- Waiting times varied between Practices with some offering same day appointments. Practices with a “sit and wait” service resulted in some patients waiting for up to 2 hours to see a Doctor. However, patients preferred this rather than trying to book an appointment.
- Patients are generally happy to sit and wait for a Doctor if they take time to talk and examine patients.

- Practices that have joined up with other Practices to form a group, does not necessarily mean improved waiting times or better access to a Doctor. Some people rely on public transport and may have to travel around the Telford area so choice can still be limited.
- Triage services can be beneficial for patients and help signpost people appropriately.

## Staff Attitudes

- Doctors and staff need to be trained around mental health and take more time to talk to patients, this can be valuable to some.
- Overall, people experience of Practice Medical Staff was found to be good.
- Receptionist attitudes can vary between Practices, resulting in some negative experiences for patients.
- Staff need to be approachable and explain things fully, so patients fully understand.
- Approachable and friendly staff, who take time to listen and help patients enabled to people to have a positive experience.
- Reception staff need to be aware about patient confidentiality when discussing personal matters with patients.

## Accessibility

- Waiting times varied between Practices. Patients overall reported issues with booking appointments and using Patient Access on line.
- Practices should consider or continue to offer a range of services, such as blood testing, Healthy lifestyles advice, etc...
- Practice reception areas need to be accessible for all patients with normal or low height counters available.
- Very few Practices indicated on NHS Choices that they offer accessible facilities, particularly braille translation services, RNID type talk and signing services.
- Practices need to offer suitable car parking facilities, especially disabled parking. Good access to all areas of the Practice is required, this includes automatic doors.
- Some waiting areas could be made more comfortable and accessible for patients, especially people with limited mobility.
- If more than one Practice in group, then when booking appointments, Reception Staff need to consider patients who use public transport. Especially if Practices where an appointment has been booked, is the other side of the town or in a hard to reach area.

## Information

- Information available in Practices in Telford and Wrekin varied. Some Practices had various leaflets and information available on certain conditions, support groups; for example, cancer.
- Information on Patient Participation Groups (PPG) also varied. Majority of patients had not heard about their local Practice group. Some Information Boards also lacked current information about the group at the Practice. There appeared to be some under investment in supporting and raising awareness of individual groups. However, there were some very good examples of PPG's who were actively supported by the Practice.
- Information held on some Practice websites relating to PPG were found to be out of date and no evidence of recent minutes of meetings found in some cases. While in other Practices we found detailed information.
- Confidentiality at reception areas remains a problem. People can be overheard during conversations between patients and reception staff - some related to sensitive matters.
- Information in various formats and languages should be widely available for patients. In some Practices we could not find paper versions while in other Practices this was not a problem and we found lots of information in different formats.

## Prescriptions

- Some patients reported a delay of 10 days around prescriptions being prepared by a Doctor and being sent to a Pharmacist.
- Overall, patients are happy with the way Practices and Pharmacists process prescriptions.
- Some patients did not receive information they needed from Medical Staff in relation to medication changes.

## Technology

- We observed Self-check ins were out of order in some Practices which placed additional strain on patients and Receptionists.
- Some patients experienced issues with Patient Access online and when system was not available it seemed to take time to resolve issues.
- Patients who had a visual or hearing impairment reported issues with alerting them when medical staff had called them in. Staff need to consider people's preferred methods of communication.
- More investment was needed at Practices around information technology and for keeping systems in working order and up to date.
- Some Patient Information display screens were found not to be working on the day of our visit.



## 8 Next steps

This GP Roadshow was an initial broad-brush snapshot across the T&W community, providing an overview of the status of each Practice to calibrate against historic HWT&W feedback scores. Consideration for further work around GP services be commissioned by the CCG, to explore specific areas of interest in more detail.

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