

# Issa Medical Centre

GP Services Enter and View Report

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022

10:00am – 12:00pm



## DISCLAIMER

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff, patients and relatives who met members of the Enter and View team on that date

### Contact Details:

Issa Medical Centre  
73 St Gregory Rd,  
Preston  
PR1 6YA

### Practice Liaison:

Sharon Riley – Practice Manager

### Date and time of our visit:

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2022  
10:00am – 12:00pm

### Healthwatch Lancashire Authorised Representatives:

Steven Walmsley – Senior Engagement Officer

John Moore – Volunteer

## Introduction

Our role at Healthwatch Lancashire is to gather people's views and experiences, especially those that are seldom heard, to give them the opportunity to express how they feel about a service. This was an announced Enter and View visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Lancashire (HWL) who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced. The aim is to obtain the views and experiences of patients, relatives and staff and observe and assess the quality of services.

The team compile a report reflecting observations and feedback. Healthwatch Lancashire is an independent organisation, therefore we do not make judgements or express personal opinions. The report identifies aspects of good practice as well as possible areas of improvement. This is sent to the manager for their opportunity to respond. Where appropriate, Healthwatch Lancashire may arrange a revisit to check the progress of improvements. The report is then published on the Healthwatch Lancashire website at [www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk) and sent to the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England and any other relevant organisations

## Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Lancashire would like to thank the management team, staff and relatives for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

## Methodology

The Enter and View representatives made an announced visit on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> of December and spoke to 10 patients, 9 staff members. 4 patient responses were provided in writing.

Healthwatch Lancashire obtain the views and experiences of patients, relatives and staff. Conversations with each are adapted to capture individual experiences to help assess the quality of services. People using the services were asked about their general feelings about the GP Surgery including their experience of making an appointment, communications and the surgery environment. Conversations with staff included their thoughts about provision, appointment management, communication, staffing levels and support, including training. Relatives were asked to speak about their thoughts including how they felt about the experience their family member has had. The team also recorded their own observations on the environment and staff-service user interactions.

To retain confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, names, pronouns and any identifiable details have been removed from quotes; 'they/their' has been used throughout the report to refer to members of staff and patients.

Prior to the visit, a discussion was held with members of the Practice Management to discuss the context of the visit and gather information on the Surgery. This includes appointment making options, the patient demographic and staffing at the practice.

## Summary

Information in this section is gathered from the Pre-visit discussion and contact with the practice.

### Pre-visit contact

Healthwatch made contact on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November and found that there was an initial 25-minute wait to speak to a member of staff. There was a queuing system which was used to identify the position in the queue which we were held at position 8 for 15 minutes.

During the pre-visit discussion, Healthwatch learned that the surgery had made significant investment in a new phone system to try and ease congestion on the phone lines but there were still periods where there was a wait for people calling the surgery.

### Surgery Information

Issa medical practice was formed when different practices amalgamated and took over a new-build centre in Preston. They serve approximately 32,000 patients across two sites with the second surgery located in Fulwood. The practice serves a large geographic footprint from across the Preston area. They serve a diverse mix of ethnicities in an area with high levels of social deprivation. The practice has an open register and there are approximately 200 new patients registering a month which is increasing the patient population.

The practice employs a wide range of staff roles to meet the needs of the local population such as GPs, Advance medical practitioners, Nurse practitioners, physician associates, Paramedics, Healthcare Assistants and clinical pharmacists.

The surgery has also been used as a hub for the Covid vaccination programme and has delivered approximately 131,000 vaccines to members of the public.

## Appointment making

Appointments are handled via online access or through Telephone enquiry. The surgery have 5 lines in operation with a member of staff to respond to patient queries on each. There are two supervisors on hand to assist with any complex enquiries or clinical issues.

<b>Book an Appointment</b>	<b>View Online Services</b>	<b>Order a Prescription</b>
<b>Contact the Surgery</b>	<b>Online Health Information</b>	<b>Community Support</b>
<b>Friends and Family Test</b>	<b>Patient Newsletter</b>	<b>Plans for Garstang Road</b>

The image above has been taken from the homepage of the website which shows how online booking of appointments can be accessed through a link to Patient Access.

## Staffing

There are several GPs running clinics alongside other professionals servicing planned appointments for other areas. There is a total of 19 clinicians on hand to see patients. The reception area was always manned by four members of staff to handle checking in and other enquires. We were advised that there was a paramedic on nursing home visit and other professionals were holding clinics such as Mental health practitioners, physician associates and clinical pharmacists.

## Appointments

Appointments can be made as a telephone consultation or a face-to-face appointment. All clinical staff had full appointment diaries with an average of 20 appointments booked in. One GP was allocated time to handle additional demands that presented on the day. GPs were available to cover appointments from 8am to provide for increases in demand.

We were advised that all children are given face to face appointments as a rule with adults given the option to choose their preferred method of consultation. Home visits are made around lunch time for patients who are particularly vulnerable. Local nursing homes have their own contact line to the surgery and each nursing home has a dedicated member of staff to maintain consistency.



# Enter and View observations

## Location and external environment

Issa Medical centre is located on St Gregory Road in the Deepdale area of Preston. The surgery serves a wide geographic footprint of the city. A large car park is situated to the rear of the surgery with disabled parking and an overflow area. There is step-free access from the car park to the entrance which is level with the pavement. There is access to public transport, with the nearest bus stop located nearby on Skeffington Road.

## Internal environment and reception

The surgery is split into two levels with clinic rooms located throughout the building. There are 4 waiting rooms of different sizes at different locations. The waiting rooms differ in size. Patients are directed to the different waiting areas by a receptionist. Waiting rooms are named by staff as the "Red" waiting area the "Fish pond" to help patients navigate the around the surgery. According to staff, these names were given due to their location in the surgery. However, there was no signage observed to signify these locations. Arrows were present on the floor to help direct the flow of patient traffic. A clock was noted in the red waiting room but not seen in others by Healthwatch representatives.

In the main entrance area, there is an information system and a screen for patients to check in. These were not in use at the time of the visit due to Covid precautions. Patients were greeted by a member of staff at the front door and were guided to check in at the Reception desk.

A feedback box is located on the front desk for patients to leave comment cards.



## Patient interactions

Healthwatch observed several interactions between patients and staff in the waiting area and on the phone system. Staff were observed to be calm and showed respect to different queries. Provision for confidentiality is catered for as private rooms are available on request. Clinicians collect patients from waiting rooms and walk with them to treatment rooms. Patients are directed by members of staff to locate the relevant areas before their appointments.

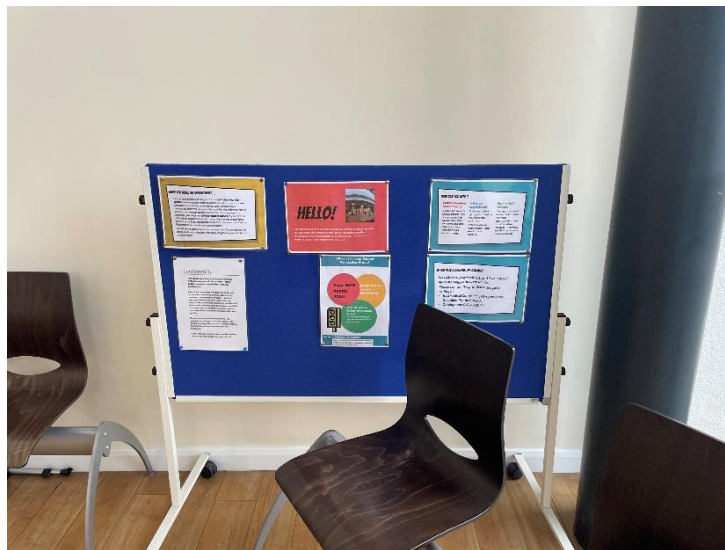
The phone system monitoring was demonstrated by a member of staff, which showed that wait times in the morning were around 8 minutes. It was indicated by staff that that the longest wait on the day was 19 minutes during the busiest period. There had been over 600 calls handled on the day of the visit, which was noted as being normal for the time of day by the staff team.

Healthwatch observed phone calls being handled. Staff asked questions to help them decide how to allocate an appointment. Staff were observed using a triage sheet to make decisions about where to allocate an appointment.



## Patient Involvement

Information was displayed on noticeboards throughout the surgery about services that are provided in addition to GP appointments such as Social Prescribing. There was also a Patient Participation Group (PPG) advertised on a board in the corner of the main waiting area and a poster behind the Reception desk. Senior leaders explained that the surgery had conducted outreach work in the local area in Mosques and community centres to try and raise awareness of how to make the best use of the surgery.



# Feedback from patients

Healthwatch spoke to 10 patients who attended the surgery.

## How did you make your appointment?

Six patients had made their appointment using the phone system. Another patient had attended a follow up appointment which had been arranged by their doctor. One patient said that it was hard to make an appointment when they first made contact with the surgery "There were no appointments available." This patient tried again the following day and were able to make an appointment.

## What would you change about the process?

Four patients said that they felt that the appointment making process took some time, especially when they used the phone system. One patient commented that it was "the same at any surgery." Another commented that the phone system was very impersonal and that they were repeatedly referred to as "Nummer 10 in the queue."

## Would you be open to other methods of appointment making?

Three patients provided no opinion on the subject of alternative methods of appointment making. They commented that they were unaware of other options available. One responded by saying "No, I can't use online apps."

Two patients said that they were open to other options and would be happy to try patient access if they were given assistance with the app.

A third commented that they liked to walk in to arrange appointments as it was "More convenient."

One patient responded by saying "I already have online access and use this sometimes."

### Have you seen an improvement in the wait times on the phone?

There was a mixed response to questions regarding wait times on the phone. One patient commented that wait times were “usually good” and that they were prepared to wait to receive care. “I understand that they are very busy.” Another patient remarked that “appointments are not given soon enough. I end up waiting a long time on the phone.”

One patient commented that they had seen an improvement but that wait times were still long. They qualified this by saying “It is like that wherever you go.”

One patient did mention that there was no improvement in the wait times stating “if anything it seems worse and more difficult to get through.”

### Do you feel that you receive care and treatment that meets your needs?

All patients expressed positive comments about the care received when they saw a medical professional. One patient said that “ I received a home visit when I was very poorly a short while ago. I was pleased with this service.” Another commented that there was “lots of aftercare” which they could access after their appointment. Three patients said that Dr Patel was “Wonderful.”

One patient did experience an issue at an appointment where they reported that they felt rushed through their appointment and that they felt “they didn’t take my disability into account.” The patient explained that they felt they needed more support getting into the bed from their wheelchair.

One patient responded positively saying that “My previous surgery ignored my condition and left me unmedicated. Issa had scans and tests sorted very quickly.”

### Do you think the premises are well maintained, accessible and clean?

Patients complimented the building and said that there was sufficient waiting space for their appointments. One person commented that it was difficult to find where they needed to go when they were attending for an appointment. "I didn't know where I needed to wait and they were busy when I went back to ask."

Accessibility was praised by a member of the public. "The access from the car park is all flat." Another patient said "It is so much better than it was previously."

Parking was mentioned by 3 patients who expressed concern about the level of traffic that was present at the front of the building "The road is dangerous at the front. It is often gridlocked because people don't want to use the car park at the back."

### Do you know who to speak to if you are not happy with the service or wish to make a complaint?

Three patients said that they were not sure about how to raise issues with the surgery. One said that they would "probably just ask for a manager."

Two patients said that they knew how to provide feedback with one commenting that "questionnaires have been available on the front desk."

## Staff views

We spoke to 9 members of staff including members of the Senior Leadership team.

### Do you have enough staff when on duty?

#### How do you handle appointments and manage the number of contacts?

Eight out of the nine members of the staff team commented that they felt the staffing levels were “adequate” for the demands on the day of the visit. One member of staff said that “the surgery is very busy but we manage” They explained how the appointment list is planned and they are pleased that there is a range of appointment methods available to patients.

One member of staff commented that the phone lines were extremely busy in the morning and thought that an extra member of staff would be helpful at particularly busy times of the day.

Two members of staff said that they regularly had patients making complaints about wait times on the phone system. “If we had another member of staff we would not have this much demand.”

It was commented by one member of staff that “we are trying to utilise staff to meet the increases in demand.”



## Do you feel supported to deliver a person-centred experience?

All nine members of staff said that they felt supported to provide care for patients. It was commented that they were given “a lot of freedom” to organise their appointments to meet the needs of the public by choosing the manner of appointment that is best suited to that patient. One member of the clinical team explained how they can tailor their appointment times for more complex needs, such as a language barrier or serious medical condition, using a double appointment to utilise language line or give the patient the time that they needed to assess their clinical needs appropriately.

One member of staff commented that the surgery is “incredibly busy” and they felt that there was consistent demand to meet the needs of the patients. They went on to explain that “there is a lot to juggle but management are very supportive and do what they can to support us work with patients. If a particularly challenging patient needs assistance there is always support available from the Senior Leaders.”

## Do you feel that you have enough training to carry out your duties well?

Staff were positive about the level of training and support that they received. Regular training is scheduled to cover safeguarding and regular courses on a “rolling programme” to keep members of staff up to date with clinical developments. One member of staff praised the way that training needs are listened to by senior leaders, with training matching the requests of the practice staff to accommodate areas of development that staff feel particularly strongly about.

## What is your experience of working here?

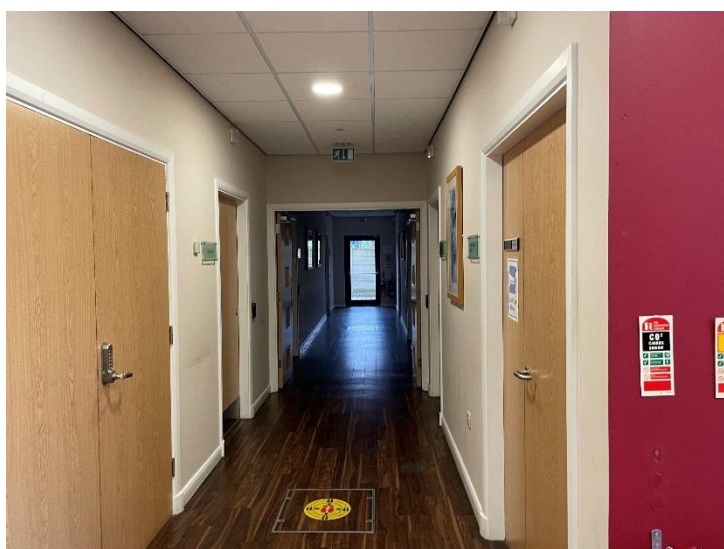
Staff members were positive about their experiences working at the surgery. "everyone is very compassionate and friendly which makes coming to work pleasant." Three members of staff commented on how they felt supported when they were met with challenging issues "There is always a member of senior leadership available to provide support."

## Are there any changes that can be made to improve the patient experience?

One member of the staff team commented that they were doing outreach work with local mosques to try and inform members of the community about how to make the best use of the GP service and to make suitable appointments. Three members of the staff team expressed a desire for more education of patients to inform them about the appointments that are available and how to make better use of them. "A lot of patients attend the surgery for minor issues that could be resolved in other ways." They felt that if patients were more aware of how to self-care there would be less demand on the surgery to meet those needs.

## Any other comments?

One member of staff commented that they thought the signage in the surgery could be clearer for patients as "patients don't always know where they need to go."



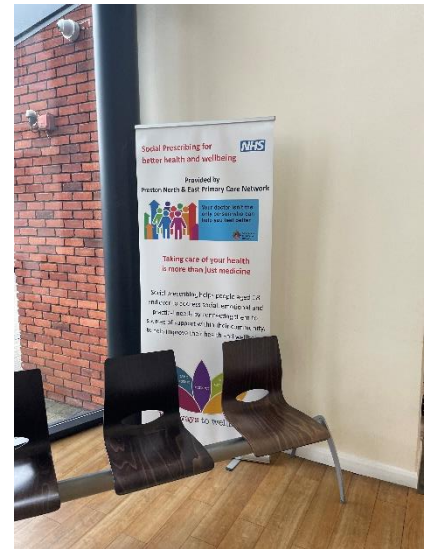
## Recommendations

The following areas for improvement have been highlighted from patient, relative and staff feedback. These are not Healthwatch Lancashire recommendations but rather, areas for improvement suggested by service users, relatives and staff.

1. Ensure that waiting rooms are dementia friendly where a clock displaying the date and time is visible.
2. Investigate other methods to promote the education of patients on how to make the best use of appointments, including alternate ways to book appointments through further outreach work or communications strategy.
3. Continue to monitor wait times on the call waiting system.
4. Add additional signage to inform members of the public where waiting rooms and clinical areas are located.
5. Promote patient involvement using the Patient Participation group or other methods including better positioning of relevant information.



Pictures from the visit:



## Provider Response

Areas identified for improvement	Action from provider	When by	Comments
TIME/DATE DISPLAY	PURCHASED AND INSTALLED	W/C 19.12.22	
DIRECTION SIGNAGE	AS ABOVE	JAN 23	
PPG PROMO	PLEASE SEE FACTUAL COMMENTS, RE CURRENT PROMO MATERIAL  PULL UP BANNERS TO BE PURCHASED AS ABOVE	JAN 23	New year we will have a drive on recruitment of a PPG group/open evening/day in effort to recruit.
Completed by	S RILEY	Date 14.12.22	

### Questions

Is the report factually accurate? If not please state what.

Yes

Did you learn anything new about patients' views and experiences, or anything else, as a result of the Enter and View undertaken by Healthwatch Lancashire?

We are planning on holding an open day to recruit more members to the PPG group and investigating different ways of communicating with patients.

[www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

 [info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlancashire.co.uk)

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