

Enter and View Report: Goodman's Field Medical Practice

Field 9, 11 Stable Walk, London E1 8ZF

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1. Visit Background

Visit Details	
Service Visited:	Goodman's Field Medical Practice
Address:	Field 9, 11 Stable Walk, London E1 8ZF
Service Manager:	Afroza Akthar
Date & Time of Visit:	13 th September 2023 (10am – 3pm)
Status of Visit:	Announced
CQC Rating:	Not inspected yet
Date of CQC Report:	N/A
Authorised Representatives:	Shreya Mandal, Joie Athos, Rachel Cleave and Janet Porter
Lead Authorised Representative:	Shreya Mandal

What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets is an independent organisation which relies on feedback from the local community regarding their experience using health and social care services across the borough. It is part of a nationwide network of local Healthwatch and a national body, Healthwatch England.

As the local Health and Social Care Champion, Healthwatch Tower Hamlets ensures that your voice is heard by National Health Service (NHS) leaders and local authorities when decisions are made on how services will be delivered and further improved.

What is Enter and View?

One of Healthwatch Tower Hamlets' statutory functions is to carry out Enter and View visits to health and social care service providers in the borough.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 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 be arranged if people tell us there's a problem with a service, but equally, they can also 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.

During the visit, we observe service delivery and talk with service users, their families, and carers. We also interview management and staff regarding their views of the service provided. The aim is to get an impartial view of how the service is operated and being experienced.

Following the visits, our official 'Enter and View Report', will be shared with the service provider, local commissioners and regulators outlining what has worked well, and give recommendations on what could have worked better. All reports are available to view on our website.

Disclaimer

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

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Tower Hamlets would like to thank the service provider, service users and staff for their contribution and hospitality in enabling this Enter and View visit to take place. We would also like to thank staff from Healthwatch City of London who assisted in conducting the visit and our interns, Haley Tischler and Luke Welch, who contributed to the writing-up process.

2. About This Visit

Goodman's Field Medical Centre

On 13th September 2023, we visited Goodman's Field Medical Practice, a medical practice located in Aldgate, within Primary Network 9. The practice is commissioned by the NHS North East London Integrated Care Board and has approximately 32,500 registered patients.

We interviewed a total of 9 staff members – including admin staff, pharmacists, nurse lead, GPs and the practice manager. Three questionnaires were also received anonymously from other staff members.

According to the practice manager, there are approximately 90 staff members who work within the medical centre. The team consists of at least 12 doctors, 7 pharmacists, 8 health care assistants, 6 nurses and 5 physician associates.

The practice also has an app called Dr iQ, which allows patients to book appointments themselves, providing approximately 240 same-day appointments with GPs or other clinicians depending on the health concern. This is closely monitored and adjusted according to demand.

CQC Rating

The CQC are the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England. They make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and encourage care services to improve.

At the time of the visit, Goodman's Field Medical Practice had not yet had a CQC inspection. Instead, they had a handful of online meetings during COVID-19 which gained them the following feedback: "We checked this service was likely to be safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led during registration."

Online Feedback

The NHS review page contains a total of 13 reviews: four 5-star ratings and nine 1-star ratings spanning from 2021 to 2023. The reviews highlight concerns regarding long waits, and issues calling in at 8am. There are positive comments on polite staff, quick appointments and the callback system.

Feedback is also available via Google Reviews; Goodman's Field Medical Practice having received 405 reviews since 2021 to date. Whilst most reviews are 5-stars, 1-star reviews are similar in number. Similar praises and concerns to the NHS review page are mentioned. Notably, patients mention appointments feeling rushed and concerns regarding the functionality of the Dr iQ app.

Nevertheless, the Dr iQ app has a rating of 4.3/5 on Apple Store and 4.1/5 on Google Play Store from the combined total of over 8000 users. On Apple Store, the most recent review made in 2023 mentioned that the app has allowed them

to receive further information about their symptoms, treatment and ask questions easily.

Focus of the Visit

The rationale for conducting the Enter and View Visit to Goodman's Field Medical Practice was based on data sourced from engagement, surveys and comments posted online (NHS, Care Opinion and social media). In comparison to other GP practices in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Goodman's Field Medical Practice had the highest number of positive feedback. Nevertheless, they also had a significant number of negative feedback.

The feedback indicated that the GP practice performed well across many areas, such as treatment, communication and staff attitude, but displayed concerns about service access, the telephone service, the functionality of the Dr iQ app and the referral process.

The main aim of the visit was to observe how Goodman's Field Medical Practice operates and how they are able to receive such a large amount of feedback from their patients. We also wanted to observe the areas of concerns that were raised in patient feedback, therefore questions for staff and patients were formulated in a way to address these concerns, alongside the standard Enter & View observations.

3. Summary of Findings

During the visit to Goodman's Field Medical Practice, Authorised Representatives were able to have a staff-led tour of the premises, take notes of their observations during the tour and take photographs when appropriate.

There are seven categories of observation. These categories include Outside and Entrance, Environment, Safety, Information Displayed, Accessibility, Reception and Waiting Area, and Staff.

Outside and Entrance

Goodman's Field Medical Practice is located near Aldgate East, London. The area is located away from traffic and is easily accessible via car, bus and tube. The area is somewhat busy with pedestrians, but not particularly noisy. At the time of the visit, there was a construction site located very close to the entrance of the practice.



Figure 1: Self check-in machines located near the entrance with COVID-19 signage.

First Impressions: What has worked well?

- There is a step-free entrance with automatic doors including visible signage from one side of the entrance.
- There are two check-in systems available for use near the entrance, although most patients appeared to prefer the reception desk.
- The reception area is large, well lit, and has visually pleasing decor, creating a welcoming environment for patients.
- Hand sanitisers were accessible around the entrance of the practice and throughout the facility.

What could be improved?

- The automatic doors appeared to have malfunctioning sensors. On several occasions, the doors were observed not to be responding to patients attempting to enter or exit the premises.
- There was scaffolding obstructing the entrance. The practice may be difficult to locate from another direction, without added signage, when scaffolding is in place.



Figure 2: The waiting area was decorated with plants.

Environment

What has worked well?

- The staff were noted to be exceptionally friendly and created a warm and inclusive environment, enabling patients to thrive well. The staff also appeared organised in their interactions with patients.
- The physical space was very inviting and well-lit and included nice decor, plants, and artwork. There were windows overlooking a garden that is inaccessible.
- Aside from minimal clutter in the primary office area, the practice was generally clean and tidy. No odd odour was observed, and the ventilation was working well on the day of the visit.
- There was clear signage to different consultation rooms and was visible in both English and Bengali.

What could be improved?

- There did not appear to be any issues with the environment at the Goodman's Field Medical Practice, therefore does not need any further improvements.



Figure 3: Floor to ceiling windows overlooking the waiting area, allowing lots of light into the premises for patients.

Safety



Figure 4: Several fire extinguishers were located

What has worked well?

- The facility included signage highlighting fire safety information, which included: Emergency Procedures for Fire, Patient Safety and Fire Alarm testing posters. Fire extinguishers were displayed in visible areas and fire exits were clearly labelled.
- The facility was equipped with ceiling-mounted light up panic alarms. These illuminated the path to the location where the alarm was triggered, providing clear guidance.

What could be improved?

- The safety features of the facility were observed to be well maintained and were not perceived to require improvements.



Figure 5: Noticeboards displaying all the relevant and important fire safety information.

Information Displayed

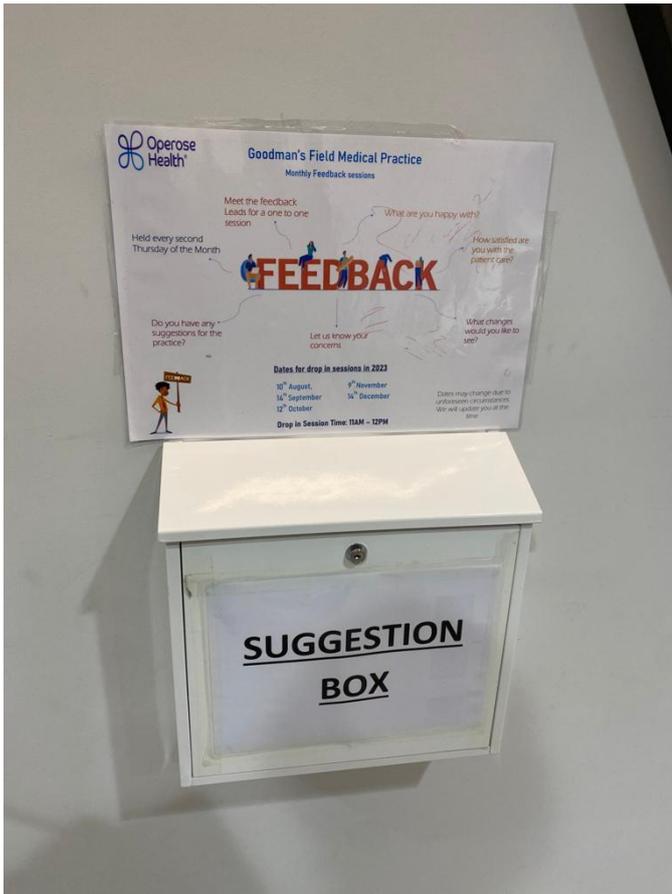


Figure 6: A suggestion box was present in the waiting area.

What has worked well?

- There were posters that promoted activities, including monthly feedback sessions.
- There were many frames displaying information on fire safety, staff information and protocol for emergencies.
- The facility included a feedback box available for patients to utilise near the reception desk.
- Multiple large TV screens were near the waiting areas, which were used instead of a traditional digital board. These screens were used for announcing patient names and consultation rooms, alongside displaying educational material for viewing.
- The internal signage at the facility was generally clear and mostly accessible. Some labelling issues were observed with the floor plan maps on display.

What could be improved?

- The posters were not varied and could have included a wider array of community-based activities in the local area.
- The maps that indicated the current location and the floor plan of the practice were not so easy to follow, specifically the signage for the washrooms were not clear.

Accessibility

What has worked well?

- The corridors were spaced widely, and the toilets were spacious enough to accommodate walking frames and individuals who use wheelchairs.
- The facility has step-free access, and all rooms are located on one level, making them easily accessible.
- The consultation rooms were large and spacious as well.

What could be improved?

- The facility was observed to be fairly accessible, especially to wheelchair users. Regarding accessibility, no improvements were deemed necessary.



Figure 7: A map of the premises showing that all the rooms are located on one level.

Reception and Waiting Area

What has worked well?

- The reception area had room for people to queue without crowding the reception desk. This provided some privacy for patients speaking with the receptionists about confidential matters.
- The waiting area is split into two spacious rooms that are nicely furnished. There are also floor to ceiling windows that let in plenty of light and provide a view of the garden.
- There is a water dispenser in the waiting area for patients to use.
- The TV screens periodically display educational material along with staff details and information.
- Hand sanitiser dispensers are available in the waiting area and throughout the entire facility.

What could be improved?

- There were no books, magazines or tangible media available for patients to read as they wait. However, this could be due to infection control measures.
- There is no access to the garden.

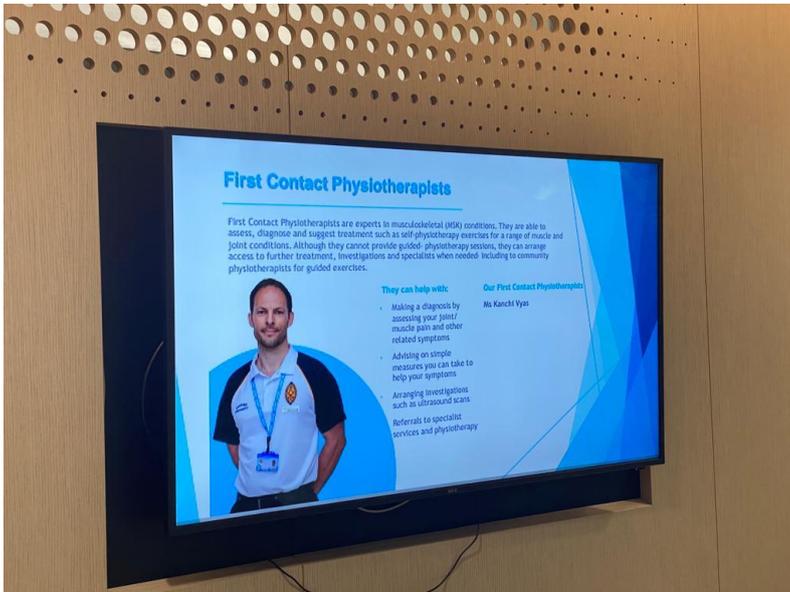


Figure 8: The GP practices uses TV screens located in the waiting area to display educational material and to announce appointments.

Staff

What has worked well?

- Staff members were very polite and diligent with patients at the reception. Even when there was occasionally a longer queue at the reception desk, the patients did not appear to be upset due to the positive and attentive attitude of the staff.
- The staff were also readily available to offer navigational advice around the premises.

What could be improved?

- The staff members were observed to be friendly and attentive towards patients and staff were not perceived as requiring improvements.

4. Interview with Management

During the visit on 13th September 2023, we had the opportunity to interview the practice manager, along with their Line Manager. We asked a total of 20 questions divided into the following categories: Appointment Booking, Consultations, Engagement and Feedback, and Staffing. As the practice manager had already filled out the questionnaire prior to the Visit, some extra questions were asked in addition. Answers from both the questionnaire and interview have been summarised in this section.

4.1 Appointment Booking

The practice manager confirmed that patients do have a choice of appointment methods when they book an appointment – options available are face-to-face, over the phone and online. These can be for the same day or within 48 hours. There is availability for appointments that are 2 weeks in advance, but the number of appointments offered are closely monitored due to DNA (Did Not Attend) rates. They also deal with requests via emails. Appointments can be booked with the duty doctor, back-up duty doctor, pharmacists, physicians associate or physiotherapist.

The practice has a hearing loop, automated sliding doors for wheelchair accessibility, lowered desk, disabled toilets, large fonts upon request, interpreting service and BSL service – these were the few mentioned when asked about special provision in place for people known to have difficulties, such as those with disabilities, foreign language speakers or the digitally excluded. They have plenty of staff who speak different languages and interpreters can be arranged if necessary.

The practice manager felt that the Dr iQ app worked well and had gained popularity with workers, students and parents with young children. They make good use of the same day call back option which can provide both video or telephone consultations. The app has a help button available in case of technical difficulties and issues are aimed to be resolved within the day. Dr iQ has a total of 120 available appointment slots every day, requests are responded to within the day, and by 3-4pm the capacity can be reached. This is closely monitored and adjusted according to demand.

When questioned about areas of improvement that have been self-identified, the practice manager mentioned that despite the very good standard of service, it is not reflected on Google Reviews. Those who have had a good experience tend not to be as driven to leave feedback as much as the minority who may have had a negative experience. Therefore, the overall feedback on the Google Review platform did not appear to be a true reflection of the service they deliver, according to the practice manager. While the team at Goodman's Field Medical Practice has attempted to increase patient feedback, it has been difficult due to the language barrier. The use of interpreters could lead to an increased

likelihood of producing biased feedback by influencing the patient, so it has not been put into place. Regardless, the team is constantly looking at ways to improve and monitor patient feedback.

4.2 Consultations

As NHS England's guidelines encourages GP practices to provide face-to-face appointments, it can place GP practices in a position of pressure. The practice manager at Goodman's Field Medical Practice claimed that face-to-face appointments can often be wasteful especially when booked too far in advance. Due to being situated in a deprived area, some patients know the system very well and tend to book appointments for a few family members and hold appointments in case they need it.

When the capacity is reached, patients are signposted to other services such as 111, hub, local pharmacy and A&E depending on the medical query. If vulnerable patients are identified, the duty doctor is asked for their availability so that an appointment can be squeezed in. A lot of patients on benefits tend to come in for minor ailments to get prescribed free medication, due to the recall of the Pharmacy First programme.

Some patients may be given a telephone consultation as a triage if their condition does not appear to require a face-to-face consultation – they are brought in if the clinicians feel they need to be seen in person. Those who are students, work or look after school-aged children also have the option of late appointments, weekend extended hours appointment, early appointments, telephone consultations and online consultations. Patients are also offered technical help with the Dr iQ app until 8pm. Any technical issues are prioritised for resolution within the hour at the earliest, and within the day at the latest.

Sometimes, patients experience delays in receiving the call for their telephone appointment. However, the practice manager for Goodman's Field Medical Centre claimed that has not been an issue at the practice and all appointments run during the allocated time. The consultation system is something that has been used for many years. It's easy to use, can prompt staff to action patient's task. The system also has the ability to set up alerts, which can flag safeguarding or vulnerable patients to staff.

4.3 Engagement and Feedback

Patients at Goodman's Field Medical Practice are encouraged to leave feedback during events held at the practice, such as Patient Participation Groups (PPG) and carers events. They also have a dedicated feedback boxes located in the reception and waiting area. A monthly Family and Friends text message is sent out to patients who had an appointment within the month. Reviews are usually left in the following ways: Patient Participation Groups (PPG), Google Reviews, NHS Choices, the feedback box, and Drop-in Clinics held by the practice.

Drop-in clinics or sessions are held every second Thursday of each month, 10-12pm, to receive feedback directly from patients. The practice is intent on actively improving the service and rectifying any issues that arise. They have 2 complaints leads and an assisting GP who may step in if need be. The practice

acknowledges each complaint within 3 days and aims to respond to complaints within 40 working days, keeping patients informed along the way. The information on the complaints procedure is available to the public on the Goodman's Field Medical Practice website and paper versions are available at the practice upon request.

4.4 Staffing

The practice manager received her induction 20 years ago. All staff at the premises undergo frequent training along with mandatory training. This includes, for example, training on customer service. The needs of staff are constantly reviewed, and gaps are identified. Learning and development opportunities are in place as the practice manager believes upskilling is very important.

The practice manager was aware of the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) and stated that the premises had hearing loops for patients with hearing impairments, BSL and interpreting services available. Patients are also able to request larger fonts or braille when requesting information.

The management at Goodman's Field Medical Practice seemed to be quite supportive of staff generally, with a 2-week induction plan for new staff members along with a buddy system. The practice manager feels as though she has happy staff members. They have implemented continuous feedback, an open-door policy, and appraisals in place and 1:1 sessions.

Regarding her work and working conditions, the practice manager mentioned wanting more services available for her staff through the NHS focusing on well-being – such as massages, yoga, after-work or lunch time exercise classes. This would provide her staff with a mental break after a busy day or at the end of a day to motivate staff. But overall, as it took a very long time to get the premises, the practice manager is very happy with her working conditions.

The most difficult aspect of the practice manager's role is knowing that there's always more they can do so they constantly strive to do better. There are occasionally unreasonable patients who may create a scene or demand things and talk down to staff, making them look incompetent. This can affect staff morale for the rest of the day which can be difficult.

The most enjoyable aspect of the job for the practice manager is the team. They are all very accommodating and helpful, going above and beyond at times. They are all eager to learn and better themselves for the practice and their own development.

5. Interview with Staff

During the visit on 13th September 2023, we also had the opportunity to interview staff members – a General Practitioner (GP), Administration staff, Pharmacists, the Senior Nurse and Regional Medical Director (RMD).

We asked a total of 20 questions divided into the following categories: Appointment Booking, Consultations, Engagement and Feedback, and Staffing.

The section below presents a summary for the answers provided by the staff with some quotes.

5.1 Appointment Booking

To book appointments, patients have several options depending on their preferences. They can use the surgery's bespoke app Dr iQ, which is available from 7am, to book on-day appointments. Patients can also try traditional methods such as phoning in or visiting the surgery directly. In case you are left waiting in a queue when phoning in, there is a call-back system in place. The average time people are left waiting in a call queue is 15 minutes according to administrative staff. Whilst telephone appointments are also available, the majority of patients prefer face-to-face appointments, mostly same-day appointments. In terms of ratios, there are not as many appointments available to prebook 2 weeks in advance, as same day or within 1-week appointments due to many patients not attending. This is closely monitored and amended according to demand and attendance rates. Home visits are also an option and can be requested on the day as well as pre-bookable, depending on medical needs. These take place as and when required. However, all housebound patients are visited at least once a year. In urgent cases, the Duty Doctor is allocated the home visit appointment. Once the appointment is booked, patients receive a confirmation text message.

As the practice is located in a very ethnically diverse area, most staff are bilingual, but interpreters can also be arranged via Praxis, which is a charity that provides advice and support to migrants and refugee in the UK. There are options for privacy at the reception desk, a hearing loop, sign language, big print, Braille, sliding doors, toilets for the disabled, lower desks at reception, and patients also have the option to write down their questions if they prefer. Some patients have a flag on their records to inform staff to make the appropriate accommodations.

Regarding the booking system, staff overall felt it worked very well and if there are any problems, text messages are sent out to alert patients. The Dr iQ app was mentioned again as being regarded by staff as a very positive development in facilitating appointment bookings. The Regional Medical Director highlighted that it is the variety of booking systems, available for patients, which works well, as they cater for all patients.

There is a minor setback of having to balance appropriate appointment allocation and waiting longer – for example, seeing a physiotherapist sooner or waiting longer to be seen by a GP. More efficient use of appointments, patient education with the PPG would be essential in advising patients about the types of clinicians and who could be the most appropriate to see.

Reassuring patients that they will be seen by someone who is well-qualified and can support the GP with their expertise. Passive adverts are already displayed on the screens in the waiting rooms, promoting education. There is an active PPG, and regular patient feedback drop-in sessions, and any issues raised are swiftly reviewed and acted upon where appropriate.

5.2 Consultations

All patients have a choice of face-to-face appointments, which can be booked for the same day, within 48 hours or within the following two weeks. There were no obvious challenges to this, but a large number of patients now prefer telephone appointments because of the flexibility that offers. Nevertheless, telephone appointments can be hard for people who need an interpreter.

At the time of the visit, there were plenty of patients waiting for in-person consultations. To smoothly transition into face-to-face appointments, the appointment system was restructured based on demand. More staff were also recruited. There is some pressure to meet demand, especially on the receptionists, but not on the workforce due to the structure.

Goodman's Field Medical Practice has various flexible appointment options for patients who study, work or look after school-aged children. Online consultations are an example. There are also appointments available on Saturdays and weekdays after 4:30pm during winter. We have priority appointments daily to accommodate vulnerable adults and children. Practice nurses and pharmacists are available to deal with certain ailments if doctors are otherwise engaged. Patients are also able to book remote appointments with pharmacists who can work remotely and have access to all the information and data they need via the Dr iQ app.

Remote appointments are monitored by admin staff and if anyone is running late, they can notify the patient. The admin staff also send texts to the GP to check if everything is okay. The appointments are generally on time and the consultation runs for 10 minutes but can run late due to patients having multiple concerns, for example. The RMD stated that, "communicating and informing patients is key". Often other clinicians' step in to help out if they are free and notice that another clinician is running behind schedule.

Some staff mentioned that they enjoyed working together as a team when dealing with the consultation system. At Goodman's Field, with more than 30,000 patients on its books, a typical day for a pharmacist may involve up to 60 contacts. It was mentioned that Dr iQ made it easier for patients to book appointments at the earliest opportunity instead of waiting till they have several serious ailments. This allows medical practitioners to catch a lot more ailments at an earlier stage.

5.3 Engagement and Feedback

Patients are encouraged to give feedback and do so all the time, via Google Review, PPG meetings, drop-in sessions, and surveys. A concern that was received was regarding the shortage of female doctors. So, the practice responded by recruiting two more female GPs. There were some concerns expressed by staff regarding a high percentage of patients who are unable to communicate in English. Interpretation services have been cut since COVID-19.

There is a clear complaints process, with details available at the reception desk or online. There will be a written acknowledgement within 3 working days and formal response within 40 working days. Staff are encouraged to diffuse a situation at the earliest opportunity. Complaints are used as a learning process where the staff members all reflect and learn from them.

5.4 Staffing:

There is regular training for all staff, and Goodman's Field is a designated Training Practice for registrars, nurses, medical students etc. An example of training provided for new staff is a 2-week induction and shadowing senior staff members for receptionists.

When staff members were asked about having received any training recently, many revealed that they had upcoming training sessions. Staff are allocated protected learning time where they can undertake mandatory training such as Health and Safety, and Infection Control. The constant training allows staff to be multi-skilled so that they can step in to support each other when needed.

Regarding the Accessible Information Standard (AIS), most staff seemed to be aware of what it entails, stating that patients can request their preferred method of communication – text, letter, phone or via the Dr iQ app. Individual needs, such as learning disabilities, are recorded on patient records. Provisions are also made for mothers who are breastfeeding, who have a dedicated room provided. Vulnerable patients are given priority for appointments.

The staff at Goodman's Field Medical Centre felt 100% supported by the management, commending the "open-door" policy which make them very approachable. There is a QR code presented on posters throughout the premises for staff members to scan and give anonymous feedback. In addition, there is a separate staff wellbeing feedback system in place, both of which are reviewed in meetings every 2 weeks. During these meetings, the team brainstorms solutions together and implements something in response to the feedback.

In terms of any improvements related to their work and working conditions, staff mentioned that there is a lack of windows in the consultation rooms and the air conditioning units are not always functioning. Risk assessments are carried out regularly on the environment. Staff members were happy with the workforce despite the tough working conditions at times. Their feedback is heard consistently and responded to, keeping staff morale high. There is a good team structure and good system meaning that the staff have better tolerance for difficult situations, resulting in good staff retention.

The most difficult aspect of working at Goodman's Field Medical Centre was dealing with some patients who were occasionally aggressive. It was also mentioned that as the practice is located in an area with a lot of deprivation, medical and admin staff are often asked for help on non-health matters such as housing, finance, or social issues. The staff are able to recognise that these concerns could lead directly to ill-health and will try to help and provide support where feasible. There was also some concern regarding staff-retention as a result of staff frequently being "head-hunted" due to being trained to a very high level – nevertheless, many staff have been with the surgery for many years.

The most enjoyable aspect of working at the practice was consistently stated as the team spirit and good team structure. Staff members enjoyed talking to people, including both colleagues and patients, and being able to develop themselves continually.

Being multi-skilled means they are able to alleviate pressure from the A & E departments by treating minor ailments. Staff also appreciated the open approach to problems and concerns raised by staff themselves, both of which are actively responded to.

6. Interview with Patients

We were able to interview and collect completed questionnaires from 11 patients during our visit to the Goodman's Field Medical Practice on 13th September 2023.

We asked a total of 11 questions divided into the following categories: Appointment Booking, Consultations, and Engagement, Feedback and Experience.

The answers have been summarised in this section.

6.1 Appointment Booking

Appointment Booking Satisfaction

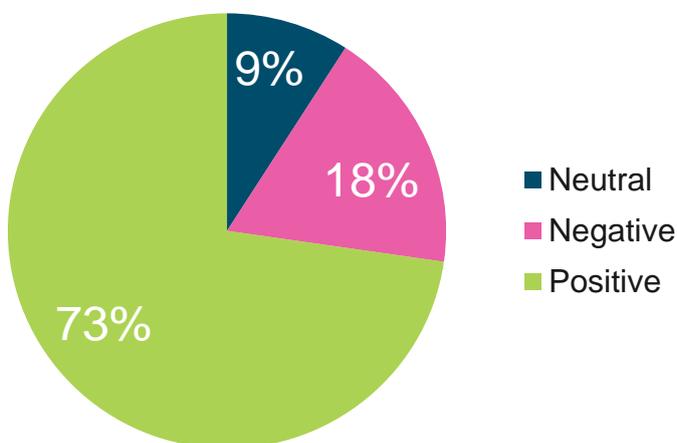


Figure 9: The overall satisfaction expressed by patients in the Appointment Booking section of the questionnaire.

On the day of the visit, patients were asked how they booked their appointment, if it was easy, whether they had to wait a long time for the appointment availability, and if the appointment was offered with their usual doctor.

Most patients had booked their appointments via a phone call, with very few using alternative methods such as booking online on the Dr iQ app or walking in.

When asked about whether booking the appointment was easy, 73% of patients responded positively. However, there were a few who were not happy with how long it took – stating “it was very difficult over the phone” and they “tried 3 times and waited 25 minutes to make an appointment”.

A significant majority of patients were very happy with how long they had to wait for an available appointment. One patient even stated that they were able to get a same-day appointment, though they had to wait an hour and a half.

Most patients were usually seen by different doctors, but if their usual doctor was available, the staff would make accommodations.

6.2 Consultation

Consultation Satisfaction

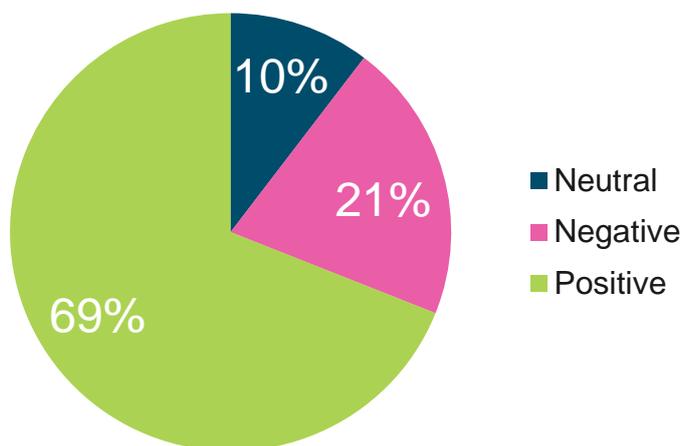


Figure 10: The overall satisfaction expressed by patients in the Consultation section of the questionnaire.

consultations due to the lack of follow-up questions which can feel frustrating. There was a suggestion of an increased focus on preventative care, perhaps screening and such.

There was roughly an even split between patients whose appointments were on time and those whose appointments were late, though “never more than 10 minutes late”.

All patients interviewed on the day of the visit were content with the quality of their treatment at Goodman’s Field Medical Practice.

In this section, patients were asked if they have had an online or phone consultation, the quality of the consultation, whether the appointments have been on time and if the patients were happy with the quality of their treatment.

There were roughly an equal number of patients who had the experience of online or phone consultation and those who had no experience, having only come in for face-to-face appointments.

Among those who had the experience of an online or phone consultation, a handful of patients were happy with the quality of the consultation, even stating that they even managed to get a face-to-face appointment for the next day.

However, some explained they did not enjoy the experience of online

6.3 Engagement, Feedback and Experience

Engagement, Feedback and Experience Satisfaction

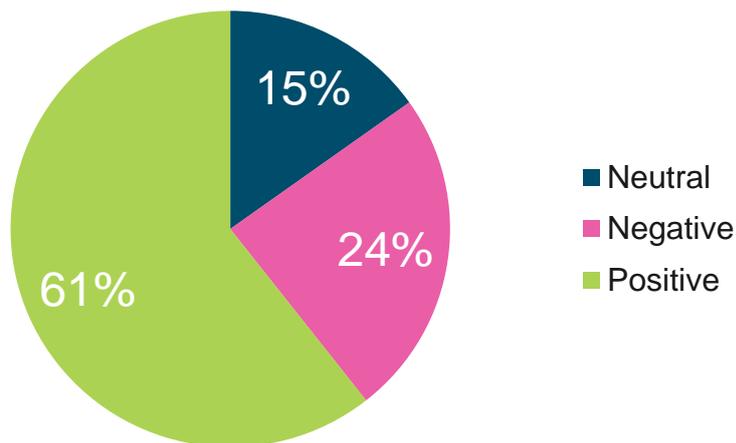


Figure 11: The overall satisfaction expressed by patients in the Engagement, Feedback and Experience sections of the questionnaire.

with their general experience of dealing with the staff at the practice – many stating staff are “polite” and “efficient”, and patients feel “well supported” and “more concerned about other patients being rude to staff”.

In this section, patients were asked about the feedback procedures and complaints process available at the surgery, along with their general experience dealing with staff members.

A significant number of patients did not know about the feedback procedure available at the surgery. Those who were aware of it, stated that they have seen a sign for it at the reception.

Many patients were also unaware of the complaint process or had not noticed the complaints policy on display in the waiting area.

All the patients at Goodman’s Field Medical Practice were very happy

7. Conclusion

Overall, our visit to Goodman's Field Medical Practice was positive with some areas for improvement identified. Below, we have highlighted positive aspects of the GP practice and have included our recommendations for improvement.

7.1 Good Practice

General Observations:

- The Goodman's Field Medical Practice is fairly accessible, both in its location and provisions in place for those with mobility issues, wheelchair, pram, and pushchair users. There is step-free access leading into the practice, with buttons in place to open the automatic doors and corridors are very spacious. The entrance for the practice located away from traffic and the main road. There are clear signage from one side of the entrance. In general, it is fairly accessible via public transport – the underground tube and various buses.
- Upon entry, patients are greeted by two check-in machines placed near the entrance, with a hand-sanitiser station located right beside them. The reception area is large with enough room for patients to queue without crowding the reception desk and compromising privacy. The waiting room itself is well-lit with both artificial light and natural light entering from the floor-to-ceiling windows. There are several TV screens displaying appointment information, educational material and staff information for patients' knowledge. These TV screens also had sound alerts installed for appointment announcements. The furniture and overall décor appeared warm and welcoming for patients.
- There were a variety of things on display throughout the premises. Artwork, navigational guidance, staff information and posters promoting activities, including monthly feedback sessions, which were displayed in corridors. Frames displaying information on fire safety, staff information and protocol for emergencies were located within the consultation rooms. A suggestion box was also present in the waiting area.
- The number of extra facilities available at the premises was commendable. These facilities included rooms for breastfeeding, rooms referred to as "pods" in which patients have the option of measuring their own blood pressure, and prayer rooms.
- Staff members were noted to be exceptionally friendly, creating a warm and inclusive atmosphere for patients. There appeared to be organised structure in their efficient but attentive interactions with patients. This meant that despite the occasional long wait to be seen, patients were not observed to be upset at the receptionists at the time of the visit.

Interviews:

- It was highlighted that patients have some flexibility when booking appointments, whether they wished to have a phone consultation or a face-to-face appointment. Patients also had various means to book their appointments – phone-in, walking-in, using the Dr iQ app or sometimes even emailing. In addition, patients also had access to a multifaceted team of healthcare professionals, including pharmacists and physiotherapists. There were provisions in place for those with mobility difficulties, those with disabilities, foreign language speakers, the digitally excluded, those who study, work or look after school-aged children.
- Patients at the practice are encouraged to leave feedback during events held at the practice, along with a dedicated suggestion box located at the premises and regular drop-in sessions to gain feedback. The feedback is actively reviewed by the team at the practice. Any complaints received are acknowledged within 3 days and responded to within 40 days, keeping patients informed along the way.
- The staff members are highly trained and are encouraged to attend training courses regularly, allowing them to be multi-skilled. There is a thorough induction in place, in which staff have a 2-week induction plan for the first two weeks and a buddy system. The open-door policy at the premises allows management to appear more approachable to other staff. The staff feedback is heard consistently and responded to, keeping staff morale high. There is a good team structure and system leading to good staff retention.
- Majority of the patient feedback was positive, claiming there were able to book appointments quickly, did not have to wait long for an available appointment and seemed happy with the quality of their treatment at Goodman's Field Medical Practice. All the patients interviewed on the day of the visit were very happy with the staff at the practice.

7.2 Recommendations

Some recommendations have been made based on the observations made, and the feedback received from both staff and patients during the visit. Overall, there were no areas of significant improvement identified at the premises. The majority of the improvements identified are minor and/or out of the control of the practice.

The Practice Manager at Goodman's Field Medical Practice was requested to respond to the following recommendations:

Outside and entrance

When approaching the practice, there was some confusion in locating the entrance due to the scaffolding obstructing the singular indicative signage – there was some concern regarding difficulties patients may have when approaching the practice.

During the visit, the automatic doors leading into Goodman's Field Medical Practice were observed malfunctioning numerous times, where it would not detect individuals attempting to enter and failed to open in a reasonable time frame.

The automatic doors appeared to have malfunctioning sensors.

There was scaffolding obstructing the entrance, which can make it difficult to locate the practice from other directions without added signage when scaffolding is in place.

- We recommend Goodman's Field Medical Practice to place some extra temporary signage outside indicating where the entrance is located when construction is taking place. This will help to clear up any confusion in the future.
- We also recommend regular maintenance for the sensors on automatic doors to ensure that they function appropriately.

Practice Response:

Construction works outside the practice has now been completed. For future constructions, we will keep this recommendation in mind and place sufficient signage externally to ensure patients and visitors are aware of the practice location/entrance.

The location of the sensor is the cause of delayed opening. This has already been raised with the ICB and NHS Property services. This is on our agenda to discuss with NHS Property service for an update. There is an ongoing

conversation since the mobilisation of the practice. Staff are regularly checking the issue when opening and closing the practice.

Environment

Whilst there was helpful signage located within the premises, such as maps and directional cues, it was still unclear where the washrooms were located. This was especially apparent when using the map displayed throughout the premises.

The signage for the washrooms was not clear. The maps that indicated the current location and the floor plan of the practice were also not so easy to follow. Staff were available to redirect patients if needed.

- We recommend Goodman's Field Medical Practice to consider redesigning the maps to include the location of public washrooms and baby change rooms for easy access.

Practice Response:

We will discuss the recommendation in our post move meeting for professional signage and in the meantime, we will explore the option of temporary signage.

Information Displayed

There were numerous artworks displayed throughout the premises, which elevated the environment. However, not enough variety in posters were observed. The Fire Safety and other safety information were mostly observed within consultation rooms and not in patient frequented areas.

The posters were not varied and could have included a wider array of community-based activities in the local area.

Safety related signage was not displayed in areas frequented by patients – such as waiting room and corridors.

- To address this concern, similar frames with posters could be displayed throughout the premises, including both a variety of community-based activities in the local area and vital safety information.

Practice Response:

The practice was designed to ensure the practice is paper lite and IPC compliant hence the practice has 4 large television monitors installed: two on each side of the waiting areas. The information that the practice displays for patients and visitors is on a loop via the screens. This includes all our safeguarding, fire safety posters and general information. This information is regularly reviewed and updated by practice management.

Reception and Waiting Area

There was a lack of media available for patients to interact with in the waiting area. This includes a lack of books, magazine and leaflets. Healthwatch Tower Hamlets recognises that this could be a result of infection control measures.

There were no books, magazines or tangible media available for patients to read as they wait. However, this could be for infection control.

There is no access to the garden.

- The Practice could consider the use of laminated media, such as leaflets, which could be cleansed at the end of the day. Leaflets are an effective way of spreading information, keeping patients updated on activities and health practices that may benefit them.

Practice Response:

Leaflets have been removed due to infection control.

We will consider implementing a free-standing leaflet stand. There are restrictions in terms of fixtures, such additions require landlord permission.

We will also consider displaying a sign for patients to ask for a leaflet if needed that also signposts them to our website which can also be translated.

Patients can also request printed leaflets from our reception team.

Staffing

When questioned regarding their working conditions, staff members had a few requests which they felt would improve their working conditions and environment. Overall, they seemed happy otherwise. It was raised that the air conditioning units are not always functioning.

The practice manager mentioned wanting more services available for her staff through the NHS focusing on well-being – such as massages, yoga, after-work or lunch time exercise classes. This would provide her staff with a mental break after a busy day or at the end of a day to motivate staff.

Staff mentioned that there is a lack of windows in the consultation rooms and the air conditioning units are not always functioning.

- We recommend that the Goodman's Field Medical Practice discuss the need for more well-being focused services to be offered to healthcare professionals, with local partners, and escalate to NHS England and the Department of Health
- We also advise the practice to be more proactive with the maintenance of the air conditioning units, especially since they are the only source of ventilation in the consultation rooms during the summer season.

Practice Response:

We have internal services in place for staff members. This was a suggestion for practices in general, which will be shared in terms of local programmes that could be on offer to NHS workers. Wellbeing is a current focus in the NHS. All NHS practices are currently engaged in quality improvement around staff wellbeing. Locally within the borough, a well-being bulletin is widely shared and includes well-being services for NHS workers.

This is an ongoing maintenance issue. The landlord, ICB, NHS Property Service and the Senior Management team along with our Estates team from Operose Health, are all working together to resolve this. This is also on the agenda for our post move meeting. Temporary measures are in place until a permanent solution to the maintenance issue has been identified.

Patients Feedback:

While the vast majority of the feedback received from patients during the Enter and View Visit was positive, some room for improvement was identified in the following sections: Appointment Booking, Consultation and Engagement, Feedback and Experience.

Some patients were not happy with how long it took to book appointments, and some did not enjoy the experience of online consultations.

The most serious concern was related to the lack of awareness regarding both the feedback system in place at the premises and the complaints process.

Appointment booking

There were a few patients who were not happy with how long it took to book appointments – stating “it was very difficult over the phone” and they “tried 3 times and waited 25 minutes to make an appointment”.

One patient even stated that they were able to get a same-day appointment, though they had to wait an hour and a half.

Consultation

Some patients explained they did not enjoy the experience of online consultations due to the lack of follow-up questions which can feel frustrating. There was a suggestion of an increased focus on preventative care, perhaps screening and such.

Engagement, Feedback and Experience

The use of interpreters could lead to an increased likelihood of producing biased feedback by influencing the patient, so it has not been put into place. Regardless, the team is constantly looking at ways to improve and monitor patient feedback.

A significant number of patients did not know about the feedback procedure available at the surgery. Those who were aware of it, stated that they have seen a sign for it at the reception.

Many patients were also unaware of the complaint process or had not noticed the complaints policy on display in the waiting area.

- It is understood that the Goodman’s Field Medical Practice has numerous administrative staff in place who oversee appointment booking. We recommend that the practice consider further training to ensure increased efficiency in call-handling, so that the patients are required to wait for a shorter duration.
- The practice could consider implementing a short follow-up survey to ensure the well-being of patients post-consultation.
- In regard to gathering feedback from patients with a language barrier, consider creating a feedback form in other languages, such as Bengali and Somali.
- Whilst staff members are more than happy to inform patients where they can access the Complaints Procedure, some patients may want to be informed in a more discreet manner. Having a dedicated Complaints Procedure poster

displayed on noticeboards throughout the premises would make the information more accessible, especially for those who are digitally excluded.

- Feedback posters were already observed at the premises but having more posters could increase awareness across the patient base. Text reminders could also assist in increasing awareness of the feedback procedure.

Practice Response:

During our recent management meeting, we identified that post covid, a significant number of our patients are still contacting the practice for repeat medication during core hours. We are working with our local pharmacy to implement ordering prescriptions on behalf of patients as they did pre-covid. We will also be starting a process of building better patient awareness of requesting medication online. We plan to hold engagement events and have appointed digital champions who are on hand to walk patients through the process during practice opening hours. This will significantly reduce the waiting times and the traffic via our telephone during our core hours. We have an ongoing process in place where senior staff members work with our receptionists to ensure better time management on phone calls. We have also implemented a call back function, which allows patients to request a call back rather than waiting on the line and their place in the telephone queue is unchanged. With the above process changes, we are hopeful that we will be able to manage calls more efficiently.

The practice sends out FFT surveys at the end of each week to gather feedback of the experience of their consultations. We also encourage patients at reception to complete FFT forms and leave feedback, which we regularly review. We will also be carrying out a local practice survey soon and will include this as part of the questions asked.

We have taken this recommendation onboard and we have sent our FFT questionnaire, forms and complaints form to our interpreting team to be translated and we will be implementing this.

This information is available as follows:

- Television monitors.
- Feedback Box
- Reception desk
- Via Website

- via PPG

From your recommendation we will also consider purchasing a free-standing notice/leaflet stand.

Staff members are also trained to inform patients on how to give feedback and if they would like to discuss anything, we direct them to a private room.

We have made our patients aware in our PPG meetings and at the point of raising a concern. We do have complaints and feedback posters at main reception. Our clinical staff members also advocate feedback during consultations. We also have feedback forms, FFT survey forms at front reception, which we review on a monthly basis along with google reviews and NHS Choices reviews. As well as our monthly drop-in sessions.



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