

East Norwich Medical Partnership Feedback

October 2022

In October 2022 we visited a flu clinic at East Norwich Medical Partnership to speak with patients about their experience with local health and social care services. From this visit we received 26 reviews for the partnership. The reviews have an average star rating of 3.7 out of five.

We heard mixed experiences from patients we spoke to, most patients reported that the staff at the partnership were friendly and helpful. However, many patients also reported difficulties getting appointments at the partnership.

In addition to this, Healthwatch Norfolk officers who visited the surgery noted our experience:

Nice large car park in a good location, very friendly helpful reception staff who knew we were coming. The signage was good, the reception area was well set out and it was clear where people/patients were meant to go. It seemed to be easy access for everyone.

The reviews are displayed in the table below and can be found on our website here: www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/services/sprowston-centre-sproston-nr7-8dg .

A response to this report from East Norwich Medical Partnership follows the table of reviews (page 9).

ID	Title	Review	Rating
200980	Happy with the surgery	I am normally at St Williams way but being in the middle of them both it doesn't make a difference to me which branch I go to. I find it fine to get in and the staff are good when you come. I am happy with this surgery.	5
200962	They're under so much pressure	The Dr I have always seen is brilliant with me I have had lots of bad stuff over the years fantastic all staff are brilliant. There are two Drs who are awful and I would never see them if they're the only ones there I wouldn't go. I think the surgery is under so much pressure.	5
200876	St Williams Way not staffed	This branch of the practice is great it is well staffed and always open. But the branch at St Williams way is not always staffed. This one is further for me to come which is fine at the moment as I can still drive but at 92 this is not always going to be the case and I worry what I will do when that time comes. the staff are all fine and I have no complaints about them just wish they would staff St Williams way. I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2004 and an still going so they must be doing something right.	5
200873	Never had any problems	I have never had any problems at this surgery. It can be difficult since Covid to get an appointment but once you are in the staff are polite and helpful. It's better with the introduction of the coordinator you have the option of telling them what is wrong or waiting for the doctor to phone you. When it was urgent I was seen on the same day.	5

200916	We're one of the lucky ones	I think they're fine - no problems. Apart from at Thorpe there is often no reception/Drs but they always fit in here so between the 2 there is no problems. The staff are all good the facilities are all good you just have to go with it. I don't think there is anything I would improve I always get a Dr you phone up and there can be a wait but I think we're one of the lucky ones	5
200903	Staff are excellent	I have never had a problem at this surgery the staff are excellent and I have no problems getting an appointment for regular blood tests that I need. I feel very well looked after.	5
200901	Never had any problems	I find I can always phone and get an appointment. The staff are very good and I have never had any problems with them. I do preferer the Sprowston branch to the Thorpe one. When my husband had covid we sent an email just to let them know to put on his records as he is classed as vulnerable they got in touch with us arranged for him to have an oxygen level monitor and gave him antibiotics as they thought he may have a chest infection. They went out of their way to look after him.	5
200990	Everything is Fine	Everything is fine at this surgery I have no problem and can always get an appointment. The staff are always very good and friendly.	4
200989	On the whole very happy	On the whole I am very happy with the surgery. I do most of the stuff I have to do online as phoning is harder. They have dealt with my various health issues and I feel the staff look after me. I just wish the St Williams branch was manned better it is not staffed well and I worry it will close.	4

200979	Sprowston better than the Thorpe branch	I normally go to St Williams way but it is not good at all due to the lack of staff there you just can't get hold of anyone I would only give that branch 2 stars. This Sprowston branch is much better the staff are really friendly they are spot on and I would give them 5 stars. I do find it is difficult to get an appointment it is hard to get through on the phone. The online system is okay but not very user friendly.	4
200978	Been coming a long time	I have been using this surgery a long time and it is in a good location. I find it a efficient and the staff are very good and I have no problems and I feel well looked after. Phoning can be hard and there is a long wait on the phone at 8am. I always end up with phone appointments and I would preferer face to face ones I do not really like the phone ones.	4
200961	Time of day you call makes a difference	I find it difficult to ring up and get through but when I am through I am sorted. I can come in and book at the front too - the time of day you call makes a difference. The staff here are all good.	4
200960	Very efficient	I think they are easy to access the website is good. I never use the phones because the website works for me. I don't think they have anything to improve on they are very efficient	4
200926	Staff friendly and helpful	I think they have improved most recently the staff are friendly and helpful. Online booking was only accepted for a while then the surgery opened up again. When I'm in the mind set and have to wait I avoid peak times on the phone. The unmanned desk at the other surgery is strange but all good.	4

200874	Once see someone they provide a good service	If you can get to see someone they provide a good service. But it can be a struggle to get an appointment. During Covid my wife ended up going private for a heart condition as we could not get to be seen. I miss the face to face appointments I find them a lot better and easier to understand then a phone call. I understood it over Covid but I think it should go back to normal now. Once you are in I feel looked after and the staff are very nice.	4
200932	I think they're brilliant	I have been here for years and they are kind to me I think they're brilliant. Sometimes things go wrong but everywhere does everything does at times. I speak as I find. I think being able to get an appointment would get them more stars they just haven't got the staff they need more.	4
200913	Cope well under immense pressure	They have been very quick and efficient at their flu day. Generally it can be a struggle you call at 8am for an appointment and sometimes you don't get one. It is like you need advance notice to be unwell. The staff are all good they cope well under immense pressure. I do have a huge amount of sympathy for them. They need more people across the board I own a business and I can see that is where the issue is.	4
200828	Very good service	I have never been to a surgery before in Norwich this was my first time today for my flu vaccine. I came in for my vaccine and they made me a blood test appointment as I am on medication. Very good service today	4
200872	People are lovely	The people are lovely but it is hard to get an appointment you phone dead on 8am and by the time you get through all the appointments have gone. It can be a 30-45 mins wait on the phone. It can put you off trying to be seen and things could get missed. The care is very good once you are in.	3

200930	The reception girls are very good	I only come up here for warfarin really. The long message on the telephone puts me off. I have to wait until I have been and visited my husband so often call at 5-5.30 and it is not so bad then. The reception girls are very good. I tried to call one morning you can be 17 or 18 in the queue. Once I got down to 1 in the queue and it just cut me off and a message came on to say we are now closed for lunch! The staff and nurses I see they are all great but I think they are short on Drs. I have been a patient here for years and there have been no problems until Covid hit and I know and understand the problems but feel fed up. My husband has been in hospital since February and the surgery called recently to book him an appointment like they didn't know. Surely they should know?	3
200895	I don't have much faith	The people are ok no troubles - I do have a concern about one GP on 2 occasions I feel I was badly diagnosed. I appreciate they are professional but I don't have much faith I dread the thought of phoning them. The surgery have had a lot of bad publicity recently and I am not sure how they can address that but then I don't come here much. I didn't and don't want to speak to the Practice Manager as it's not that much they have enough to deal with.	3
200824	They always try to help	Like all Drs at the moment you can't see one - it is the post pandemic situation it wasn't too great before but you can't blame them - they are under pressure. They always try to help they do their best - especially reception.	3

200999	If was rating the staff it would be 5 stars	Staff are good and look after you when you get in and if I was just rating the staff it would be 5 stars but there is not a good chance of getting an appointment. Last time I tried I had to wait an hour on the phone to be told someone would call back. The phone reception is not good at my work so I ended up at the walk in centre where I had to wait 2 hours just to get a sample bottle and to be told I should of gone to the surgery. Feel pushed between the two.	2
200891	Difficult to get a blood teat	I have an ongoing condition that I have to have regular hospital appointments for. Recently I have had a few blood tests cancelled due to the surgery being short staffed and then struggled to rebook them within the time frame needed by the hospital. The nurses are okay but they seem to have a big turn over of staff I have not seen the same doctor twice in 10 years. My wife has moved herself and the children to a different surgery due to the frustration of getting appointments.	2
200879	Been trying to get an appointment for months	The wait is so long on the phone that I give up I have been trying to get an appointment for months but I can't sit on the phone for that long. I feel discriminated against as I do not have the internet so can not go online and get appointments like others can. The staff and care is good when you get in it's just a struggle to get in!	1

200923	We just want to feel cared for	I don't rate them. I'd give a rating of -12 if I could. They'll only treat symptoms they don't look into the cause. I called at 17.10 saying I haven't felt well all afternoon I couldn't move - they said they were fully booked and to call back the next day. I had to call a paramedic out which was a waste as the Drs could have helped me when I called. They had a couple of great Drs but they were both locums. You call at 8am you're number 30 in the queue and when they get to you they're fully booked. All surgeries are struggling but to get a face to face appointment is impossible. I have tried to move surgeries but other ones have said not to move as they are full.	1
--------	--------------------------------	--	---

In response to this report East Norwich Medical Partnership told us:

- As you know general practice is under extreme pressure and this had not abated following the pandemic
- Our GPs have made the decision of retain a triage service and have always and will continue to see patients face to face based on their assessment of clinical need
- Our nursing team have continued to see patients face to face
- Some nursing team appointments are now booked via self booking links – this enables the correct patients to book in directly to appointment slots and removes the need to access our services by telephone
- We have been able to secure the services of an additional part-time salaried GP Dr Divya Jacob who joined us as the beginning of September – this has given us an additional 6 surgeries a week
- We now also have a directly employed clinical pharmacist Kylie Fenwick working as part of our clinical team and Kylie joined us in September and she will relieve the GPs of some of their workload
- We have also recently used the locum services of 2 additional Advanced Nurse Practitioners to help relieve the demands from patients and used them for 2 days a week during September and October
- We have recently benefitted from the services of a Physicians Associate one day a week via our PCN in an ARRS role but unfortunately she is leaving the PCN – we are awaiting news of her replacement
- Our telephone system is monitored closely by all members of the management team and the reception supervisors – we monitor queues sizes, calls that do not make it into the queue as the queue size of 30 has been reached (this is usually first thing in the morning) and the number of patients who choose to drop out of the queue, we look at longest average wait times in the

queue. The whole reception/management team has access to this information from their PC.

- We monitor daily phone system activity and this is reviewed with individual staff members – in September our reception team answered 6678 calls and they made 1558 calls and our clinical team made an additional 4318 calls to patients
- We are still short staffed in our reception team despite repeated attempts at recruitment but part of our admin team assist with answering the telephone system during the first part of the morning and at busy times of demand and are currently handling about 20% of incoming calls – this is done on top of their existing busy workload.
- Being unfortunately impacts on us sometimes not being able to open our Thorpe Health Centre reception – however all phone calls are dealt with from our Sprowston site as well as all of our administrative functions. The clinical team remains working at Thorpe. Thorpe Reception is open every day that we are able to staff it – I have to ensure that I have experienced supervisor level staff working there as it would not be appropriate to site new staff there without supervision and support.