

# East Harling and Kenninghall Surgery Feedback

## February 2024

In February 2024 we visited events in East Harling Welcome Hub and Banham Community Cafe to speak with patients about their experience with local health and social care services. From these visits we received several reviews for East Harling and Kenninghall Surgery. We have also received some reviews through our website and on the telephone this month. In total we have received 12 reviews for East Harling Surgery with an average star rating of 1.8 out of five and nine for Kenninghall Surgery with an average rating of 2.8.

While some did tell us about good experiences once they were seen, we heard about frustrations with getting appointments, a shortage of staff at the surgery, and a reliance on locum doctors which patients felt was reducing continuity of care. Other concerns included:

- Feeling dismissed or redirected to other health services such as 111, Accident and Emergency, and the Walk in Centre.
- A receptionist sharing an incorrect cancer diagnosis with a patient.
- Difficulties getting prescriptions signed.
- Difficulties accessing home visits.

The reviews are displayed in the table below and can be found on our website [www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk).

ID	Branch	Title	Review	Rating	Source
227462	East Harling	High staff turnover	They can recruit staff but the turnover is rapid and its got worse and worse. Lots of good nurse practitioners have come and gone. All the GPs seem to be locums, the managing partners are elsewhere. The locums are good but they don't know the patients. Last time I was there I had to make sure they read my notes because they don't know what my conditions are. 0/5 for trying to get an appointment, 5/5 once you're there.	3	Engagement Team
227513	East Harling	Staff retention	There's a problem with staff retention. No one stays. Everyone's lovely, but no one stays. It's a long wait for appointments and you never see the same doctor again. There must be something wrong. Once you get in the service is good but it can be 3 or 4 weeks wait. Sometimes there's no doctors available for prescriptions etc.	3	Engagement Team
227507	East Harling	No GP	Two weeks before Christmas I had a massive allergic reaction and I'd run out of steroids. I tried to get an appointment but they were all gone. I walked down to the surgery so they could see how unwell I was. I just needed a prescription for more steroids. The pharmacist tried to get a prescription but there wasn't any GP there to sign it.	3	Engagement Team

227461	East Harling	incorrect information from receptionist	5 weeks ago I had a blood test. I rang up for the results and got told the results were severely abnormal by the receptionist. I asked them if they were saying I had cancer. The receptionist replied "looks like it". It was then 24 hours before I saw a doctor, during that time I thought I had cancer. When I saw the doctor I learned I didn't have cancer, just an iron deficiency. The nurse practitioners are brilliant though, there just aren't enough staff, especially in peak hours.	2	Engagement Team
227361	East Harling	Patients are diverted to the walk-in centre	<p>It's so sad, you just don't see the doctors anymore. It didn't used to be like this. There's no one-to-one care now, I have no confidence in the surgery. They can't cope with the small, simple things so you worry about what would happen in a crisis.</p> <p>Patients are regularly diverted to the walk-in centre, we're well-known over there. They almost roll their eyes when they hear we're from East Harling and anyway it's not always possible for people to get to Norwich.</p> <p>I wanted antibiotics for a chest infection and was told by the receptionist and nurse to call 111 as I wouldn't be able to get an appointment. Last week I had to get a second lot of antibiotics so I called 111 again and this time was sent to Thetford so they could listen to my chest to make sure nothing more serious was going on.</p>	2	Engagement Team

227356	East Harling	Can't get hold of a doctor	<p>You just can't get hold of a doctor, you have to see a nurse or other healthcare professional who are very good but they can't cover everything. Are these other roles about money rather than being appropriate? I'd hardly ever used 111 but recently I've used it a lot as I can't see a GP. In fact, I ended up having to go private for consultations and an operation last year as it was impossible at East Harling. I'm even considering moving as my husband and I need to have medical support we can rely on now we're older.</p> <p>The receptionists are good within the restraints they're having to work in and I'd give them 4 stars. You can book for in a month's time but nothing sooner and they do try to help you not be sent to Kenninghall (as I can't get there) but it seems the partners say no and to send you there.</p> <p>I had a recent incident where I couldn't see a doctor so called 111 and that doctor said as Harling aren't part of the scheme where 111 can book you in with their GPs I would need to have an ambulance to get to hospital. However a little while later they somehow managed to get me in with the Harling doctor.</p> <p>When you do get in, it's often a locum and they seem to only let you talk about 1 condition at a time even though really they should take a holistic approach as things are usually linked.</p>	2	Engagement Team
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227772	East Harling	You have to help yourself	<p>My husband went for a problem that he waited 3 weeks for, actually saw a doctor who said while he is there he will give him a diabetes test, which came up border line, he gave him a print out of a help service. My husband rang it and the place doesn't exist anymore. Why don't the practice know this, there never is any follow up so its back to Google. This practice is nothing but a mess, I have had horrendous problems with it, it's my opinion that the partners are too busy with there private customers and this is a sideline. Doctors leave because they don't want to be associated with ineptitude, what's going to happen when st least 200 more people sign on from the now estate!!!</p>	2	Website Feedback
227510	East Harling	Not enough doctors	<p>I moved here 13 years ago and the surgery was lovely, the service was decent. Its gone down hill. It's impossible to get an appointment. I've never been able to get an emergency or same day appointment. I contacted them in November for an appointment and the soonest they could see me was 4 weeks later, 3 days before that they cancelled the appointment because there were no doctors. I contacted them on the 26th November and finally saw someone on the 3rd January. It was a doctor I'd never seen before which is standard. The nurses are lovely but there aren't enough doctors.</p>	1	Engagement Team

228156	East Harling	No urgency and no GPs	I tried calling the practice and have had trouble getting through. It took me 20 minutes to get through by phone. I was discharged by the hospital but can't get the medication I need from the GP. I need a particular medication for my condition but was told I would have to wait and see a doctor before getting it but they did not have any appointments today and do not want to wait weeks for it. There are no regular GPs and there is no urgency from the surgery. This makes you feel vulnerable.	1	Telephone call
228159	East Harling	Possible stroke case.	On 25/02/2024 I was admitted to West Suffolk Hospital and diagnosed with non-valvular atrial fibrillation. Upon release I returned home with the needed medication but on showering on 28/02/2024 I noticed that I had what looked like a "black eye". Fearing the worst (stroke) my wife drove me from Garboldisham to East Harling Surgery to urgently get the opinion of a doctor, speed being the main thing when suspecting a stroke. My wife explained the facts to the receptionist who said it would not be possible for me to see the one doctor on duty, practice nurse or paramedic. The same went for the sister surgery at Kenninghall. Bearing in mind that a stroke should be given priority because of the time factor this could have meant me being driven to Bury st Edmund hospital A & E dpt. We decided to visit the chemist in East Harling who was able to give us sound advice following her inspecting my black eye. I am absolutely disgusted at having been turned away without being seen by a qualified member of the East Harling medical team and feel that this complaint should be investigated forthwith.	1	Website Feedback

227364	East Harling	Would be good to feel like somebody cares	<p>I saw a GP with my husband who I suspected was getting dementia. He didn't take long talking to us and dismissed the problem. For the second appointment I tried to call the surgery but couldn't get one. I called 111 and they managed to get an appointment for me. This time the GP was friendlier but still didn't diagnose the dementia.</p> <p>I only got help after the police were called by my husband when he was confused about who I was. Now I do have support from Gateway and lots of other things but until then I wasn't believed. It would be good to feel like somebody cares, you don't know any of the doctors. I have to say the receptionists are lovely - friendly and helpful.</p>	1	Engagement Team
227358	East Harling	Why don't they deal with eye problems?	<p>I had an issue with my eye and was told they don't deal with eyes. Who made the decision not to see people with eye problems? I was given a number for a clinic which the receptionist didn't know where it was. I wanted to know if it was outside the village as, of course, it was unsafe to drive because of my eyes. The pharmacist said I needed to see a GP and to call 111 if I couldn't.</p> <p>I called 111 who were able to book me in at the surgery and I was given antibiotics for conjunctivitis. However my optician returned my call later on and told me it wasn't antibacterial!</p> <p>I hate to complain as it was such a good service years ago but I can't understand why they won't treat eye problems, especially I was seen after 111 intervention.</p> <p>People can't drive when they're having trouble seeing, and they might not be able to drive anyway. It was very strange that they couldn't even tell me where the clinic was they were referring me too.</p>	1	Engagement Team

226858	Kenninghall	My prescription is always ready	They do a first class job and my prescription is always ready. I don't think there are any improvements that can be made to East Harling and Kenninghall. You have to wait 3 or 4 weeks for an appointment but I understand that as they have so many people on their books.	5	Engagement Team
226857	Kenninghall	Can't fault the doctors I have seen	The surgery is really good but there are no doctors. The receptionists are wonderful and I can't fault the doctors I have seen. But they could improve by having more appointments and doctors as if it's an emergency it's difficult to get an appointment.	4	Engagement Team
227459	Kenninghall	Difficult to get an appointment	Getting an appointment is very difficult and then you end up having to go to East Harling. The parking is terrible there. I had a fall the other week and bashed my mouth, a week later it was still bad. I rang the surgery and the message at 8:40 said there were no appointments left already. I did then get seen the next day and the doctor was good, but i did have to travel to the other site. It's not any individual problem, I think they haven't got enough staff.	3	Engagement Team
226862	Kenninghall	No continuity of care	In the past the doctors surgery was excellent and brilliant with me as they knew I was an expert in care. But now you can't get an appointment. My relative did get one but it was with a locum. They were lovely but then left. My relative then had to see another locum and had to explain everything again. There is no continuity of care. They should also have someone who is a qualified nurse, rather than receptionists. I would give the professionals five stars but sometimes access to them is better than others.	3	Engagement Team



226859	Kenninghall	Physio	I was referred to physio and I was told I was going to see a woman, but when I got there the physio was a young male. He was lovely, but it has happened a few times where you are told you're seeing someone but end up seeing someone different. It's also very rare I see a doctor, it's usually a practitioner.	3	Engagement Team
226856	Kenninghall	Used to be very good but now 3 stars	I go to East Harling and Kenninghall Surgery. My mum has anaemia and can't get to the surgery but they keep saying bring her to the surgery- but it's hard to get her there. They should make more provisions for when people get older and there should be home visits. Kenninghall surgery is short staffed. It's very hard to get an appointment. My relative got an appointment but it is in three weeks time and you don't want to wait three weeks to be seen. Some of the receptionists were really nice and were always happy and cheerful, but they have now left. I used to rate the surgery as very good, but now it would be three stars- although I know they're overstretched and need more staff.	3	Engagement Team
226865	Kenninghall	Communication and access need improving	I went to the meeting about Kenninghall and East Harling surgeries and we were told it was set up for 3,000 people but now has 7,000 on their books. People were confused as to what the provision is and the set up. We were told that everyone needed to phone up at 8:30 which people found confusing. We were told that staff felt intimidated and that was affecting staff retention which made it seem as though patients were frightening off staff. There were also no doctors from the practice at the meeting. I think they need to communicate that they are on the	2	Engagement Team

			<p>side of the patient. They need to improve access- I phoned East Harling and wasn't sure who whether I was supposed to phone. There was a large phone que at 8:30 (but they did sort my problem and I got an appointment). There are concerns around the building of more houses and how this will affect the surgery.</p> <p>I have regular check ups and medication and that works well. The new system where you collect medication is also good, but initially there was some confusion and they gave me all the medication at once. There's lots of little hiccups. Patients want to know what they can do to help the system. We were told at the meeting that there are 5 doctors but not all of them work everyday so people get confused that they are not being seen when the surgery has 5 doctors.</p> <p>When you get booked in with a doctor they then leave and the new one says that they cannot do what the last one has said they can do, so it doesn't help when you have to keep seeing different doctors. There needs to be more working together because of the different layers of it.</p>		
227455	Kenninghall	Long waits	<p>Hard to get an appointment. My mum has had to wait 4 weeks and she's 96. There's long queues on the phone and you can't see a doctor. It's changed since covid. You can also only go over one issue per appointment, I think you should be able to discuss several things, they could be connected.</p>	1	Engagement Team

226374	Kenninghall	good luck getting an apointment	on hold for 30 minutes despite ringing at opening time, when eventually got through was told no appointments for today. Same thing happens everytime you ring them, reception staff are not the issue at all - they are lovely! More doctors needed i think!	1	Website Feedback
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