

The Hive visit to Mydentist, Kingswood



Healthwatch and The Hive Avon, a local organisation working with people with learning disabilities, have been working together to understand the issues people with learning disabilities face when assessing dental services.

Healthwatch had heard from people with learning disabilities that they sometimes find it hard to access GP services and wanted to know if the same difficulties applied to dental services.



Healthwatch and The Hive want to see how accessible dental services are to people with physical and learning disabilities.

When we talk about a service being accessible we mean both in terms of physical access but also information and communication provided needs to be accessible and understood by all patients, including people with learning disabilities.



Healthwatch contacted {my}dentist who have a dental surgery in Kingswood and they were very welcoming and positive about allowing a visit.

A visit to {my}dentist Kingswood surgery was held on 3rd March 2017.



The inspection team

Will, Heather and Ali are members of The Hive and identify as having learning disabilities.

They are Healthwatch Champions and have been involved in a range of activities at The Hive including Wellbeing Days, focus group events and Self-Advocacy courses.

Will and Ali had previously worked with Healthwatch on an inspection of a GP surgery.

Dominic the Advocacy Manager at The Hive prepared the easy read 'Inspection form' which was used to guide the visit.

Dominic also facilitated briefing sessions with the 'inspectors' and attended the visit to support them.

The visit was arranged and supported by Louise Spencer, Healthwatch

The staff at {my}dentist were helpful during the visit and were on hand to answer all the teams questions.

The team would like to thank all the staff at {my}dentist for allowing the visit to go ahead and for the information they provided to the inspectors.

Key findings and recommendations

Key Findings	Recommendations
<p>Outside of the building</p> <p>The surgery is in a good location on the main road and it is well signed. The area is well serviced by public transport but there is little on street parking in the immediate area. There were no car park signs and the team didn't know if it was a public or staff car park. The car park is well located. There was one disabled bay properly marked. One member of the team thought there should be at least two disabled bays.</p> <p>The surface of the car park and driveway was uneven and had a number of large pot holes. Pedestrian access to the building from the road is slightly elevated and this surface in places was uneven.</p>	<p>Car park sign to be displayed.</p> <p>Consider if an additional disabled parking bay is necessary.</p> <p>Look at resurfacing car park.</p>
<p>Access to the Building</p> <p>The team found that the entrance door was heavy to open and there was a large step up into the building which hindered access. The team observed a mother using a push chair have difficulty opening the door and managing the step both entering and leaving the surgery.</p> <p>The team felt that someone with mobility issues particularly if they were on their own would have difficulty gaining access to the building without help.</p>	<p>To consider making access to the building easier namely an automatic entrance door, handrails and a ramp into the building may be needed.</p>

Key Findings	Recommendations
<p>Reception</p> <p>It was obvious from the layout within the building where the reception area was and the team felt that the reception staff were friendly and welcoming.</p> <p>The reception desk was too tall for someone in a wheel chair. It would also be difficult for someone who was short or had mobility issues to use the reception area to fill in or sign forms. There was no other space at or near the reception desk for people to sit at a table to fill in or sign forms.</p>	<p>To consider altering part of the reception desk to accommodate wheel chair users.</p> <p>Provide a table and chair near the reception desk to assist people to complete paperwork.</p>
<p>Appointments</p> <p>There were no notices displayed regarding the process for booking appointments or whether people could request longer appointments which is important to people with additional needs.</p> <p>The team did speak with the reception staff who stated that they would offer longer slots if needed and future appointments are booked at reception following treatment.</p>	<p>To consider providing a sign stating people can request longer appointment slots.</p>
<p>Waiting area</p> <p>The waiting area was bright and airy with lots of natural light. There was plenty of comfortable seating with lots of space for people to move around.</p> <p>Music was being played and there were plenty of magazines to read. There was also a TV showing adverts of {my}dentist services.</p>	

Key Findings

Waiting for appointment

There was a notice in the waiting area explaining about delayed appointments and that patients could ask for their expected time slot if they were 20 minutes past their appointment time.

The team noticed that patients were called into the treatment room by a dentist or nurse this was done in an efficient and sensitive manner.

Notices and signs

There were a number of notices on the wall, these were on white paper against a white background. The font was a little too small and the team struggled to understand what the notices were trying to explain.

There were no signs showing where the toilets were so the team had to ask where they were.

Access to treatment rooms

It was noted that there were stairs to the first floor treatment rooms. These were very steep but had appropriate hand rails.

There was no lift at the surgery but it was stated that those who could not manage the stairs could be seen in a ground floor treatment room.

Recommendations

To consider a system where reception staff monitor appointment times and automatically notify people of expected delay. Particularly those people the staff have identified as having additional needs or nervous patients.

To consider the language used in the notices and use bigger fonts.

To display sign showing where toilets are so patients don't have to ask.

A notice should be displayed explaining this.

Key Findings

{My}dentist leaflets

These were very well set out with some pictures to help understand the content, however some of the text was too small and therefore difficult to read.

- **{My}dentist Medical History Form**
- **{My}dentist Appointment card**
- **NHS - Practice Record Form – Patient Declaration**

The amount of text, size of font, layout and language used on these documents meant that 2 of the team couldn't read them. The one person who could read stated that it was very difficult to read and was unable to understand most of language used and therefore would not be able to understand and complete the forms.

{My}dentist Online and phone services

Prior to the visit Louise Spencer and Dominic Box made 2 attempts each to contact {My}dentist to arrange a visit. The telephone system was very busy and despite 4 attempts it was not possible to speak with someone from {My}dentist.

After the inspection visit the team logged onto the {My}dentist website and despite having limited computer experience and with some assistance, the team were able to find a local dentist and follow the appointments booking process.

Recommendations

To produce all documentation in 'easy read' format namely, using larger font (point 16), include pictures where possible, use of short sentences and where possible simple language. Where difficult words are used there should be an explanation of its meaning.

To review all documents and communication methods against the Accessible Information Standard to ensure standard specifications are met.
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo/>

To consider improvements to the time taken for calls to be answered. This is particularly important for people who can not use or have access to online booking.

To consider the Accessible Information Standard specifications when updating online booking system.