

# GP Enter and View Report

The Dawes Family Practice

**83 Spotland Road, Rochdale OL12 6RX**



## Introduction

Healthwatch Rochdale is the independent voice of Heywood, Middleton, and Rochdale residents. We listen, challenge, and shape local health and social care services.

Healthwatch Rochdale representatives conducted an Enter and View visit at The Dawes Family Practice on 27/10/2025 at 13.30 as part of a planned Quality Visit by the Primary Care Team, Greater Manchester Integrated Care HMR (Heywood, Middleton, and Rochdale locality).

The Dawes Family Practice is a GP practice in Spotland, Rochdale.

### **Purpose of Visit:**

The purpose of the visit was to review how patients access GP services, including appointment booking systems, accessibility of information, and the overall patient experience including the Patient Participation Group (PPG). We were unable to speak with patients on the visit as they did not wish to engage. During the review visit we spoke with the practice manager, two receptionists and observed various aspects of the practice. A telephone mystery shopper review was done the same week looking at appointments etc. This approach highlighted several areas for improvement to services for patients.

### **Who was involved:**

- Moira Auchterlonie – Project Officer HWR
- Laura Simmons – Practice Manager
- Jackie Woodhall – Primary Care Commissioning Team
- Claire McKeown – Primary Care Commissioning Team

## Executive Summary

**Quick Wins:** Here are three quick wins which could improve the service and patient experience at The Dawes Family Practice.

1. **To activate callback on the telephone system.**
2. **To update the website PPG page with plans to restart the PPG.**
3. **To replace the waiting room clocks for ones with numbers.**

**Key recommendations** include activating the telephone callback option for patients on hold, improving patient privacy and confidentiality at reception, to set up a new Patient Participation Group (PPG) and to use the waiting area TVs to display patient information.

These findings and recommendations have been shared with the practice, and a formal response has been requested in line with Healthwatch's statutory role. For more information on this please click [here](#).

## Booking system

### Telephone System

- We conducted a 'mystery shopper' review of the telephone booking system.
- For the morning Call (8:00am) it took seven minutes to get through and number 12 in the queue.
- No callback option mentioned.
- Options given were: Press 1 for appointments, blood tests and prescriptions (after 10am) Press 2 for referral concerns, insurance, secondary care (between 9am and 5pm). No other information given whilst on hold.
- Spoke with reception at 8:07am. Same day booking and face to face appointments were available.
- Second Call (9:30am) on hold and caller number five. Able to book appointments in advance of two to three weeks and the length of appointment depended on the nature of the problem.

### Appointment Access

- Same day booking available as were face to face appointments.
- PATCHS system available and test results were accessed via PATCHS or available by phone after 11am. Referral information was available between 10am and 4pm
- Evening slots and out of hours available at the Whitehall Street Clinic.
- Extended hours appointments are delivered by Rochdale Health Alliance, and these can be booked via the surgery. The Extended hours service is provided by GPs, Nurses & Healthcare Assistants from Monday to Friday: 6:30pm to 8pm Saturdays 9am to 6pm.

### Digital Systems

- For online booking, the practice uses PATCHS or the website Online request form for emergency and routine appointments
- Patients tend to contact the practice via PATCHS or the phone line.
- Staff are trained in PATCHS and how to update it and review it to ensure good user experience.
- The practice website states that appointments are available through PATCHS and the online request form.

- The practice manager was pleased to report they had recently reached the uptake target for PATCHS, which is the online communication tool for the GP practice. Word of mouth was credited with helping them reach this target.
- Prescriptions can be ordered using the NHS App, through PATCHS or drop off at the surgery. There is also a clear link to order directly from the practice website.

### **Staffing and Availability**

- On the day of the visit there were two GPs, one nurse and a paramedic plus two receptionists. Patients checked in with the receptionist not a self-check-in.
- Staff on reception were noted as helpful regarding access and appointments.

## **Observations**

- The practice is situated just off Spotland Road with bus routes into Rochdale. There is a car park at the side of the building plus on-street parking.
- The practice is accessible, with a ramp up to the front door.
- It has two separate waiting rooms, depending on which consulting room patients are attending. The waiting rooms were clean, tidy with sufficient seating.
- The reception was between the two waiting rooms. Patients had to speak through a glass panel. There was no privacy and no 'stop and wait sign' to give some privacy as a patient spoke with the receptionist.
- Each waiting room had an old TV mounted on the wall that was switched off.
- The patient toilet was clean and tidy and accessible.
- Care Navigation method was used by receptionists taking phone calls. The practice manager confirmed that receptionists were using a script to help direct people to appropriate services.
- There were lots of posters on boards however, nobody was reading any of them as they came in or were waiting. Some posters were very old or difficult to read.
- The waiting room clock had Roman numerals which can be more difficult to read by some patients.

## **Patient engagement**

- The Patient Participation Group (PPG) is not currently active as confirmed by the practice manager. The practice website needs updating to reflect this. The practice manager said they are about to start looking at how to advertise and recruit to the PPG. The practice looking at how best to engage with seldom heard voices, particularly asylum seekers.
- NHS App and Patient Engagement. The practice was involved in the recent primary care network event around patient engagement at the Riverside in Rochdale regarding the NHS App. They have in-house support from the local Integrated Care Board (ICB).



## Recommendations and Practice Response

	<b>Healthwatch Rochdale Recommendation</b> December 2025	<b>The Dawes Family Practice</b> Name & position of responder	<b>Update/Actions/Further comments</b>
1.	To improve patient privacy and confidentiality at reception.	Laura Simmons, Practice	<b>Same as TV display – we are in the middle of looking at replacing the old check in screen to create an alternative way for patients to book themselves in when they have an appointment. This will then free up space around the reception area, providing more room for those patients waiting to be seen and providing extra privacy to patients when talking to the receptionists about medical care.</b>
2.	To set up an active PPG which meets regularly..	Laura Simmons, Practice Manager	<b>Pending further interest. In the new year</b>
3.	To use the waiting area TVs to display patient information.	Laura Simmons, Practice	<b>This is something we are currently looking into. We are arranging a few appointments with companies who deal with check in screens. This will then free up the reception desk and aid those who are just booking in for an appointment.</b>
4	To tidy and theme the noticeboards.	Laura Simmons, Practice Manager	<b>One of our care co-ordinators updates/tidies all our noticeboards on a regular basis. However, we are going to have a look at having theme notice boards around both waiting areas.</b>
5	To activate callback on the telephone system.	Laura Simmons, Practice Manager	<b>29.11.2025 Request made to telephone provider to review our telephone system to add callback function.</b>  <b>24.12.2025 Further email requests sent to telephone provider to update the surgery of our recent request</b>
6	To update the website PPG page with plans to restart the PPG.	Laura Simmons, Practice Manager	<b>24.12.2025 Email requests sent to website company to add details of our PPG plans to restart</b>
7.	To replace the waiting room clocks for ones with numbers.	Laura Simmons, Practice Manager	<b>The clock we be changed to numbers instead of roman numerous clock</b>
8	To share this report and discuss findings at a PPG meeting.	Laura Simmons, Practice Manager	<b>Once the PPG has been re-introduced, all reports and surveys will be shared within the PPG Group</b>



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