

# GP Enter and View Report

Hopwood Medical Centre

1-3 Walton St, Heywood OL10 2BS



## Introduction

Healthwatch Rochdale (HWR) 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 Hopwood Medical Centre on 14/10/2025 at 10.00 as part of a planned Quality Visit by the Primary Care Team, Greater Manchester Integrated Care HMR (Heywood, Middleton, and Rochdale locality).

Hopwood Medical Centre is a GP practice in Heywood in the Rochdale Borough. The practice is in a purpose-built building and has about **9,000** patients.

### 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 that of the Patient Participation Group (PPG). We spoke with three patients in the waiting area during the visit, made observations and spoke with the practice manager. Due to staff sickness, we were unable to speak with staff. There was a telephone mystery shopper review done the same week looking at appointments etc. This combined approach highlighted several areas for improvement to services for patients..

### Who was involved:

- Moira Auchterlonie – Project Officer HWR
- Adele Hardacre – Practice Manager
- Jackie Woodhall – Primary Care Commissioning Team

## Executive Summary

**Quick Wins:** Here are three quick wins which could improve the service and patients' experiences at the Hopwood Medical Centre.

1. **To update the website as the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is now active.**
2. **To use the waiting room TV screens for patient information and signposting.**
3. **To update GP names on practice signs to match the website.**

**Key recommendations include:** confirming the telephone callback option is working for patients on hold, update the *Contact Us* page on the website with active links and to improve patient privacy and confidentiality at reception.

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

- It took 1 minute, 40 seconds to answer as first in the queue, relaxing music played while waiting.
- Informative Messages whilst waiting- medical emergency signposting, main menu including numbered options for appointments, general enquiries, test results after 11am and referrals information between 10-4.

### Appointment Access

- Same day booking available as were face to face appointments.
- No online booking appointments available at the time of the visit although they stated that they "*are looking into this*".
- PATCHS system available and test results were accessed via PATCHS or available by phone after 11am. Referral information was available between 10am and 4pm.
- Out of hours appointments were at the Phoenix Centre in Heywood.

### Staffing and Availability

- The practice has three female GPs and two male GPs.
- The practice provides 37 sessions of GP time per week, which was 4.5 full time GPs. There are also advanced nurse practitioners who provide 14 sessions (1.75 equivalent).
- One receptionist on duty during the visit. It was observed patients checking in with the receptionist.

### Digital Systems

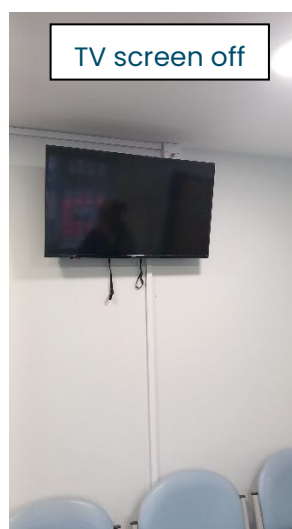
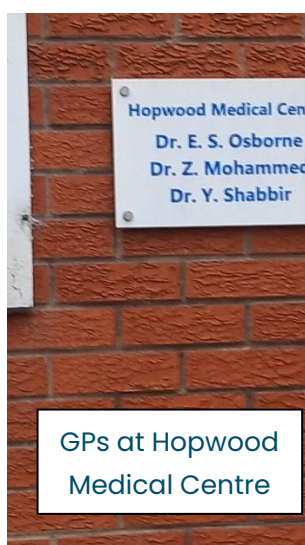
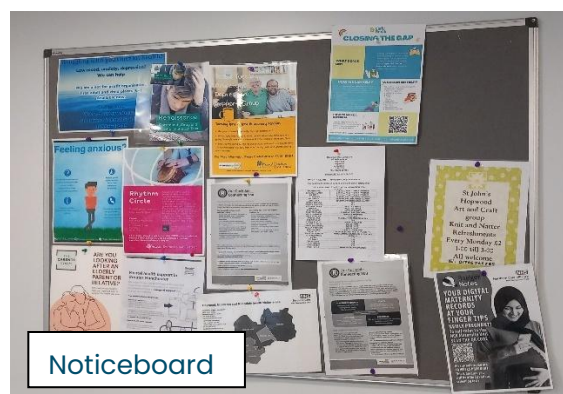
- The practice website states that online appointments are available through patient access, although the receptionist said they are not available. The website gives access to PATCHS, Prescriptions, appointments and patient registration.
- The website gives options for how patients may wish to consult. These included if there is a preferred doctor, nurse or other health professionals, for a telephone or face-to-face consultation or if an interpreter is requested.
- 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.
- The *Contact Us* page on the website has no contact details.

## Observations:

- The practice is situated on a side street off Manchester Road that has bus routes. There is a small car park at the front of the building plus on-street parking.
- Fully accessible building with disabled ramp and widened automatic doors.
- The sign showing the practice GPs outside the building did not have all current clinicians listed.
- The waiting room was clean, tidy with plenty of seating space available for patients. Consulting rooms were on first floor with working lift provided.
- Two TV screens in reception area were switched off during the visit.
- The patient toilet in the waiting area was clean, tidy and accessible.
- The building was wheelchair accessible with wide automatic doors. The waiting room was clean, tidy with plenty of seating.
- The reception was in the main waiting area. There was no privacy and no '*stop and wait sign*' to give some privacy as a patient spoke with the receptionist.
- The practice is a hub for extended hours and is also a centre for flu and COVID immunisation across the Rochdale borough.

## Patient engagement:

- The Patient Participation Group (PPG) is now functioning and meets quarterly.
- The PPG page on the website needs updating to reflect that the PPG is now active.
- No current plans to publish meeting minutes on the website.
- The PPG was involved in a Primary Care Network event (September 2025) with various Rochdale Council agencies and local events and public health initiatives.
- Future plans include PPG members at practice events and community outreach in Heywood.
- Plans for involvement in health campaigns (breast cancer, bowel cancer, prostate cancer awareness).
- The practice newsletter was on the website (Spring 2025).





## Recommendations and Practice Response

	<b>Healthwatch Rochdale Recommendation</b> November 2025	<b>Hopwood Medical Centre</b> Name & position of responder	<b>Update/Actions/Further comments</b> Date: November 2025
1.	To update the practice name signs with current clinicians.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	As discussed within the meeting, I explained that we are having a change of Clinical Partners and staff. A new sign will be installed outside the practice within the next 2 months.
2.	To use the waiting area TVs to give information and signposting for patients.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	<p>This system is no longer operational and cannot be repaired with a new system would need to be purchased but unfortunately funding has ceased along with the licence reimbursement. Therefore, the practice has made the decision not to continue supporting this service.</p> <p>However, patients continue to have free access to the internet on site, and we regularly share important updates, information, and signposting resources on both our social media platforms. We hope this will continue to support effective communication with our patients.</p>
3.	Confirm callback option on telephone system is working for patients when on hold.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	In your report, it was noted that our telephone system does not offer a call-back option for patients waiting on hold. I would like to confirm that the practice uses the X-on Surgery Connect telephone system, which does provide patients with the ability to request a call back. I can also confirm that we have completed a number of patient call backs during October 2025, and these figures can be provided upon request.

4	Update the <i>Contact Us</i> page on the website with active links.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	In response to your request to update the 'Contact Us' page with active links, I can confirm that the website has now been fully updated. We have also added a range of additional useful information and accessible links to support patients in finding the resources they need more easily.
5	To improve patient privacy and confidentiality at reception.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	In regard to your recommendation to improve patient privacy and confidentiality at the reception desk, I can confirm that we have several measures already in place. Radios are available both in the downstairs reception area and the upstairs waiting room to help manage patient flow discreetly. We also display a notice on the reception screen advising patients that, should they wish to speak with us confidentially, they may hand over one of the blue laminated cards provided on the reception desk. These cards are used regularly, and our patients are familiar with this system.
6	To update the PPG information on the practice website.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	I can confirm that the information has been updated.
7	Share report and discuss findings at a PPG meeting.	Adele Hardacre Practice Manager	This report will be shared at our next PPG meeting in December 2025.



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