



Enter & View

Camelford Medical Centre

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1 Introduction

1.1 Details of visit

Service provider	Camelford Medical Centre
Service Address	Churchfield Camelford PL32 9YT
Date of visit	13 th January 2026
Authorised representatives	Nigel Oakes

1.2 Purpose of visit

This visit was conducted as part of a rolling programme of visits to health and social care providers in Cornwall. Our goal was to observe the service in action, hear directly from patients, and make recommendations for improvement.

1.3 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cornwall would like to thank patients and staff for providing a warm welcome and their positive contribution to this Enter and View visit and the subsequent report.

1.4 Disclaimer

This report relates to findings observed on the specific date above and is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all patients and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time of the visit.

1.5 About Healthwatch Cornwall

Healthwatch Cornwall is an independent organisation committed to amplifying the voices of Cornwall's residents in the planning and delivery of health and social care services. Through public engagement, we gather their views and experiences with these services. We ensure these perspectives are represented in decision-making processes both locally and nationally, driven by the belief that community feedback is vital to improving standards of care.

1.6 What is Enter and View?

As a local Healthwatch we are authorised to "Enter and View" health and social care services through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Local Authorities Regulations 2013 (part 4). These services can include hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies.

Enter and View visits are an opportunity to see services in action, listen to and understand the experiences of individuals who use them, and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The visits are organised based on feedback received about individual services or in response to themes identified in our research.

2 Visit Summary

Conversations with staff

Healthwatch Cornwall met with the managing partner and four staff members to discuss the service and team and view the facilities.

Conversations with patients

Twelve patients were asked individually about their experiences with the service including the facilities, the care and the staff.

Observation of facilities

Observations were made throughout the visit, focussing on the condition of the facilities and patient experience. Overall, observations on the day and feedback from patients and staff were largely positive.

3 Service Overview

Camelford Medical Centre surgery provides primary care services in the Camelford area, it operates from a purpose-built facility near to the town centre and currently cares for approximately 6,700 patients. The practice has two branch surgeries, both located in the North of the county. The practice has recently been established as a standalone practice and has registered with CQC as a new service provider. It has not yet been inspected by CQC.

4 Observations

The surgery is well signposted from the main road and easy to locate. There is a large public car park adjacent to the practice and parking is free for up to two hours for patients. On the day of the visit there were a large number of parking spaces available, including ample disabled parking bays.

There is a large sign outside of the practice which states the is practice part of 'Veor group', this is now outdated.

On entry there is a large, covered entranceway and a well signposted reception area. A hand sanitiser dispenser was positioned inside the front doorway, but it was empty. Adjacent to the reception area there was an automated booking in screen and patients were observed to be using this. There were several patients queuing for the reception and the receptionist was seen to be speaking to each in turn in a calm and unhurried manner. A member of the healthcare team came from a clinical area and asked if they could help anyone in the queue with using the booking in system or with any queries. This action quickly reduced the queue and on

approaching reception we were welcomed to the practice, identification was checked and we were asked to sign the visitors book.

5 Patient Feedback

Twelve patients were asked about their experience of the surgery.

All twelve patients provided positive comments about the care they received. Seven said the staff were kind, four said they thought the staff were caring. A patient told us 'We're lucky to have this surgery, the doctors are brilliant and go the extra mile to get you sorted, I've even been seen when it was my GP's day off but he came in specially to do a clinic' Another said, 'You'd be hard pressed to find a bunch as good as these, you get proper looked after'.

Three patients reported that they had challenges using the phone to get an appointment. One said, 'I was on the phone for ages and was sixteenth in the queue so eventually gave up'. Another patient reported, 'I never bother with the phone as you're always stuck in a queue, so I come into the surgery instead, I'd rather queue outside than wait on the phone'. A third patient told us, 'I don't bother with the phone as you don't ever seem to be able to get an appointment, I'd rather come in and speak to a real person'.

Two patients told us they had a positive experience with the electronic booking system, one said 'It's brilliant, I went on this morning and got an appointment straight away'.

One patient told us that they had experienced a problem with the automated check in screen, they said, 'I used it to book in, but something went wrong and I missed my appointment, when I told the reception staff, they said it was temperamental, but they booked me a later appointment'

Two patients commented positively on the branch surgeries, one said 'It's so handy to be able to go to one so close and they were able to give me the medication I needed straight away'. Another told us, you can always get a nurse appointment quickly at the branch (surgeries), which is all you need most of the time as they are really good and professional'

Two patients told us that being able to park for free next to the surgery was helpful.

6 Staff Feedback

Three staff members were asked about their experience of working at the surgery and all spoke about it in positive terms.

A member of the healthcare team described the practice as 'a lovely place to work' they told us, 'Management are so supportive, I feel part of an excellent team and both the clinicians and practice manager are so approachable, they're amazing'. They reported that they would not hesitate to recommend the practice as a place to work and said they were happy with their workload. In summary they said, 'I look forward to coming in each day, they are my work family'.

We were told that there were some administrative challenges caused when patients care was split between hospitals in Devon and Cornwall, when Pathology results could not be accessed.

A member of the administrative team told us that some patients did not use the electronic consulting and appointment system, they said 'They either don't know it's available or are disinclined to use it, which makes the phones busier'.

Patients described long waits on the phone but staff did not identify this as an issue.

7 Management Feedback

The Managing Partner explained that the practice had registered with CQC as a new provider and location in 2024. They described the historical challenges the practice had faced when they were part of a wider medical group and told us, 'The practice is now financially secure and looking towards the future'. They reported that there had been a lot of staff changes but described the practice as having, 'A tight cohesive team that works well together'. They told us that they had received interest from staff at other practices regarding potential employment.

We were told that the main challenge faced by the practice was the fabric of the building, which needs updating. The building is owned by the former practice partners and is rented to the current practice. We were also told that whilst there is land suitable for development of new buildings adjacent to the existing practice, establishing funding for a new surgery would be challenging.

8 Recommendations

Healthwatch Cornwall have offered some recommendations based on observations and feedback from patients to improve patient experiences at the practice.

- 1) The main sign outside of the building names the practice as 'A Veor group practice'. To avoid potential confusion, consideration might be given to amending the signage.
- 2) A patient reported having missed an appointment due to an error with the booking in screen. A check of the system and carrying out any necessary remedial actions would increase patient confidence in using this service and reduce the potential for missed appointments.
- 3) Supporting increased use of the electronic booking system would be of benefit to both patients and the practice. Consideration should be given to encouraging use where possible and allocation of resource to assist those patients experiencing digital isolation.
- 4) Several patients reported long waits when phoning the surgery. A review of wait times and system function, such as call back, may improve patient experience of this service.
- 5) The ability to access results of tests (such as pathology and imaging), regardless of where they were performed, may be of benefit in the treatment pathway. The practice may wish to continue discussions with relevant departments at both the Royal Cornwall and Plymouth University Hospitals to review progress towards this.
- 6) The hand sanitiser dispenser in the entrance was empty on the day of the visit. Regular checks to ensure it is filled would ensure patients have the option of using this important stage in hand hygiene.

9 Provider Response

1. The sign outside the building is being updated.
2. We are aware of some issues with the telephone and online booking systems, and these are being investigated by our suppliers.
3. The hand sanitiser dispenser is now regularly checked throughout the day and filled when necessary

Ian Shepherd Dip PCM (Dist.)
Managing Partner, Camelford Medical Centre

Contact us:

Healthwatch Cornwall, Suite 1, Calenick House, Heron Way, Newham, Truro, Cornwall, TR1 2XN

 0800 038 1281

 enquires@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

 healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

 @HWCornwall

 @healthwatchcornwall