
What we're hearing about Glenlyn Medical Centre

February 2025



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Introduction and approach

After receiving feedback from some patients about Glenlyn Medical Centre and in conjunction with the practice, we visited in February 2024 to learn more from patients. We also ran a survey for local residents to complete to tell us their experiences of being a patient at the practice. We used this evidence to make recommendations to the practice and Surrey Heartlands ICB about how to improve the service for patients. This report - [What we're hearing about Glenlyn Medical Centre – March 2024](#) is on our website.

We wanted to understand what progress had been made and how people were feeling about the service, so in November 2024, we visited the practice again and conducted another survey. This report is based on the feedback we have received about the practice from both of these routes. It is designed to highlight the themes we have been hearing about and includes quotes from local people to provide context on these themes. Whilst this report accurately reflects what we hear from the individuals we speak to, we are aware that it may not be representative of everyone's views of the service.

If you would like more information or examples of what people have shared, please get in touch.

Recommendations

Theme	What would be helpful?
Ease of appointment booking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with patients to help them better navigate the various options for accessing care. 2. Work towards a consistent and clear approach for having the online forms available.
Appointment booking methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Patients should have the same options available to them regardless of how they contact the practice, and the message to them should be consistent.
Phone lines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Continue to understand any outstanding issues with the phone service. 5. Encourage people to use the call back facility so that they are not waiting so long. 6. Explore the ability for patients to select a call back further into the call journey.
Accessibility of sites	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Clear communication to patients about what is available at either site. 8. Make patients aware of any local support available for volunteer patient transport.
Patient relationship with multi disciplinary team	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Continue to build patients' understanding of the processes and the role of the MDT. 10. Review the current process to consider what the patient journey to getting appropriate treatment involves. Can changes be made to improve their experience and wait time?
Access to medical records	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Ensure that people know what they can expect to have access to, and how to access their medical records. 12. Clarify the process to find out test results or updates on referrals.
Communication requirements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Ensure that the practice communicate with patients according to their requirements. 14. Consider ways to better support communication needs of unpaid carers.

How easy is it to get an appointment at the Glenlyn Medical Centre?

In March 2024, we heard that whilst appointment booking was quick and easy for some, however, others found it difficult:

“Impossible to phone, no answer, call back doesn’t work, online forms keep changing and no reply- reception turn you away to do it online.”

239492647

In our latest survey, 77% of respondents told us they found it difficult or very difficult to get an appointment, suggesting it is still a significant challenge for many patients to book an appointment, particularly due to issues with online forms:

“Normally cut off is very early in the day.”

260686999

“The forms are not always checked and have to be completed more than once.”

260686991

“3 weeks ago I filled in an online form for an appointment, I got no response. Filled in another form a week later, had a response saying someone will contact me a week later, they couldn’t give me a time, no phone call was received.”

260688026

However, there were exceptions to this and many people recognised that there have been improvements made in recent years:

“Whole process is efficient. Response in a day or so. Very simple. Use phone sometimes, use call back. Get called within the hour. Improved massively in last few years. Pre-Covid you had to hang on the phone but those days are gone.”

258466728

In March 2024, we recommended working with patients to help them better navigate the various options for accessing care, and working towards a consistent and clear approach for having the online forms available.

The latest feedback suggests there are still improvements needed to make appointment booking work better for people. A consistent and clear approach for the availability of online forms is needed.

Appointment booking methods

In March 2024, we reported that booking an appointment over the phone was the most popular method, followed by the GP website, in person and finally very few people said they would like to use the NHS App.

More recently, people have told us that they may want to use the NHS App but can't (there are not enough appointments available to book that way), appointments are not available at Glenlyn, only the Giggs Hill site, or they have been unable to set up proxy access for their children. This means that there is an increased demand on other methods:

“Often the option to email is at capacity. Phone calls are often not returned. I would prefer to use the NHS App but it's rare to find any appointments at all on there for Glenlyn. It is frustrating when you are registered at Glenlyn but get offered Giggs Hill when you do not drive and the public transport links means a bus, train ride and a long walk (which is not possible for those with mobility problems) or an expensive cab ride. As someone with ongoing lifelong issues, not to have a regular GP who knows you, and to only be seen by non-GPs, is very frustrating also. Also, trying to phone you are often waiting over half an hour or more and then the phone just cuts off and you have to start again.”

260712641

Many comments also suggested that phones were often unanswered, online forms were unavailable, there was a lack of availability on the NHS App and, when they went in person, they were often turned away:

“You can't just call to make an appointment; most of the time you're in a queue. There are rarely slots available on the website. The last time I tried, I couldn't even get the receptionist to make me an appointment even though I was standing there in front of her!”

260717813

There were also reports of patients being told not to phone:

“We're told not to phone the surgery and that appointments cannot be made over the phone.”

260689664

We recommend that patients should have the same options available to them regardless of how they contact the practice and that the messaging to patients about their options to contact the practice should be consistent.

Have phone lines improved?

In March 2024 we reported that most people wanted to book an appointment over the phone and recommended improvements be made to the telephone systems. In our more recent survey, people mentioned the call back facility and how that had improved, meaning people should not have to wait on the line:

“Not an issue as I use call back. They called back in 10 minutes this morning.”

258471237

However, many were still reporting long wait times for the phone to be answered. 92 people said they have made an appointment by phone and 58 of those said they had waited longer than 15 minutes for the phone to be answered. It was not always clear from people's answers how recent their experience was, however, there were enough comments made to suggest that waiting times for the phone to be answered remain long and people often experience being cut off unexpectedly:

“I have in the past attempted to phone and called 247 times and the phone was engaged.”

260686991

“It also cuts you off after 45 minutes.”

260696044

When commenting on call backs, it was reported that patients are only offered the opportunity for a call back at the start of the call and some may benefit from having the option again whilst they are waiting.

We recommend that more be done to understand any outstanding issues with the phone serviceⁱ. People should be encouraged to use the call back facility so that they are not waiting for so long as well as exploring the ability for patients to select a call back further into the call journey.

Accessibility of sites

Comments made throughout the most recent survey suggested that many were finding Gigg’s Hill inaccessible unless they had access to a car but were more likely to be offered an appointment there which they couldn’t get to. Some who live closer to Gigg’s Hill felt the opposite and that there wasn’t enough available to them at Gigg’s Hill.

This was similar to what we heard in early 2024 when we recommended: ‘Where possible, patients should be offered a choice of which site to attend. Where this is not possible, it would be helpful to clearly communicate the reasons to patients and ensure that patients are made aware of any local support available for volunteer patient transport’. This appears to still be a challenge for patients, and we recommend further work in this area to manage patients’ expectations and develop their understanding of what is available on either site:

“As the practice covers wide area, why can’t the doctors attend both surgeries? For those people living in the Thames Ditton area, there is no public transport to Molesey; certain clinics they only run at Molesey!”

260732108

We also recommend that the practice ensure that patients are informed of any available support with transport.

Patient understanding of the multi-disciplinary team

In March 2024, following comments by some that they felt they were receiving an inferior service if they didn't see a GP, we recommended more work with patients to improve trust and confidence in clinical decision making and to build understanding that being treated by the most appropriate professional ensures everyone gets the right support from the right person or service.

In the latest survey, there are signs that this is improving:

“Accept whoever been given so not a problem. Trust they will put me in front of the person I need. I have a lot of confidence in it now.”

258466728

“I don't care who I see as long as someone with medical knowledge can assist me.”

260673974

However, some report that they still feel they are being “blocked” from seeing a GP when that is what is clinically required:

“Happy to see nurse practitioner but are times I need to see a doctor and that can be difficult. The [nurse practitioner] is all that's available and they may not be able to help you i.e. certain referrals or change to medication needs a doctor.”

258476026

There were also comments made about the triage system and many people felt that receptionists were not in a position to triage patients appropriately. Additionally, some felt this was leading to unnecessary delays:

“Triage system means there is no patient choice as to who can be seen by whom. My son had a recurring ear infection between July to September this year – he had 7 appointments, saw 3 different GPs (one of whom was a locum and gave him the wrong antibiotics, according to a paediatric nurse we saw subsequently) and 2 different paediatric nurses.”

260602199

We recommend that Glenlyn Medical Centre continue to build patients understanding of the processes and the role of the MDT. We also recommend a review of the current process to consider what the patient journey to getting appropriate treatment involves, and whether changes can be made to improve their experience and wait time.

Access to medical records

In our most recent survey, we asked people to tell us about any experiences relating to healthcare professionals having access to relevant medical records. Many commented on the relationship between primary and secondary care and having to find out about test results themselves. They also described the problems associated with living near borders of services meaning access to records was problematic.

“I had a heart issue at Kingston hospital that was never picked up by Glenlyn. Every discussion seems to start from scratch.”

260695405

We also heard from people who felt that a reliance on locums at Glenlyn meant that there was a lack of familiarity with people’s conditions.

“No one reads anything on your records before they call you in. And then they ask the most stupid question.”

260689435

We also heard that limited access to records for patients was having a negative impact on benefits applications, and putting people's wellbeing at risk:

"I need my disabled daughters records for her PIP application and Glenlyn have said to do it ourselves via the NHS App which only allows us to access some of her records. They will not help us to do it and we are at risk of losing her higher rate PIP for both elements. As my daughter cannot work it will push us further into poverty meaning we can't afford heating let alone food. The reach of Glenlyn failings goes beyond acceptable."

260689919

This is not the case for everyone, and we also heard that people feel access works well:

"My record are online so accessible by any medical professional."

260688000

We recommend that the practice ensures that people know what they can expect to have access to and how to access their medical records. We also recommend that the practice clarifies the process to find out test results or updates on referrals.

Communication requirements

Whilst the majority of people told us that they did not have any communication requirements, those that do said they are not being met by the practice:

"I told the practice over 6 times that they must call me instead of my mum as she has severe memory issues. They kept calling her and so I had to keep going down there as she had no recollection of the call or the information she was given. On some occasions this was critical as it involved

changing medication that potentially could have caused a heart attack.”

260690088

“I receive texts on mobiles. It would be easier if I could get large print leaflets etc but this isn't offered.”

258477130

When we asked ‘Has Glenlyn Medical Centre ever asked you about your access, support and communication requirements?’, 96% of people told us they hadn't. Carers of elderly relatives said this would have been helpful so that they could make adaptations, as the needs of the people they care for change.

We recommend the practice ensure that they communicate with people according to their requirements. We also recommend that the practice consider ways to better support communication needs of unpaid carers.



Who we heard from

155 people completed the survey.

We heard from adults across all age ranges with most being working age adults. This is compared to the previous survey where most people were aged 65+.

16. Please select your age range:			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	0 - 5 years	0.00%	0
2	6 - 15 years	0.00%	0
3	16 - 17 years	0.00%	0
4	18 - 24 years	0.65%	1
5	25 - 49 years	30.52%	47
6	50 - 64 years	42.86%	66
7	65 - 79 years	18.83%	29
8	80 - 89 years	5.19%	8

16. Please select your age range:

9	90+ years		0.65%	1
10	prefer not to say		1.30%	2
			answered	154

- 81% of people identified as White British.
- 80% identified as a woman.
- 10% of respondents considered themselves to have a disability
- 22% of respondents considered themselves to have a long-term condition
- 9% of respondents are unpaid carers.

Thank you

We would like to thank everyone who gave their time and shared their experiences with us. We would also like to thank everyone who helped share and promote the survey, ensuring people can have their voice heard.

Thank you to Glenlyn Medical Centre for welcoming our visit and learning from the experiences of their patients.

Appendix

Recommendations from March 2024

Glenlyn Medical Centre

1. We recommend more work with patients to improve trust and confidence in clinical decision making and to build understanding that being treated by the most appropriate professional ensures everyone gets the right support from the right person or service.
2. We recommend working with patients to help them better navigate the various options for accessing care, and working towards a consistent and clear approach for having the online forms available.
3. We recommend that improvements to telephone systems are considered, including how the call back facility is implemented.
4. Where possible, patients should be offered a choice of which site to attend. Where this is not possible, we recommend that the practice clearly communicates the reasons to patients and ensures that patients are made aware of any local support available for volunteer patient transport.
5. We recommend a range of ways to communicate with patients should be utilised according to individual preferences. We have heard from some patients of other practices that they do not like to receive text messages when they have not explicitly given permission, so we would recommend explicitly seeking consent.
6. We recommend that the Patient Participation Group is re-established and fully supported in order to forge better links to communicate with patients and encourage more involvement and feedback directly from patients.

NHS Surrey Heartlands

1. We recommend more work with patients to improve trust and confidence in clinical decision making and to build understanding that being treated by the most appropriate professional ensures everyone gets the right support from the right person or service.
2. We recommend considering this feedback as part of improvements to websites going forward.
3. We recommend increased promotion of the NHS App to build confidence in patients and make it easier for them to access care.

About Healthwatch Surrey

Healthwatch Surrey champions the voice of local people to shape, improve and get the best from NHS, health and social care services. We are independent and have statutory powers to make sure decision makers listen to the experiences of local people.

We passionately believe that listening and responding to local people's experiences is vital to create health and social care services that meet the needs of people in Surrey. We seek out people's experiences of health and care services, particularly from people whose voices are seldom heard, who might be at risk of health inequalities and whose needs are not met by current services. We share our findings publicly and with service providers and commissioners to influence and challenge current provision and future plans.

We also provide reliable and trustworthy information and signposting about local health and social care services to help people get the support they need.

Contact us

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 [Healthwatch Surrey](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Healthwatch Surrey)



We are proud to be commended in the National Healthwatch Impact Awards, recognising our work helping to improve local NHS and social care. You can view [our video](#) highlighting how feedback has enabled us to make positive changes to health and social care services.



We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we perform an audit so that we can be certain of this.

Luminus

The Healthwatch Surrey service is run by Luminus Insight CIC, known as Luminus.

Registered office: GF21, Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Surrey, GU4 7HL.

ⁱ Since sharing this report with Glenlyn, they have informed us that there is a new phone system in place.