

# Walking for Health



## Case study on best practice—Abbey Medical Centre, Kenilworth

Healthwatch Warwickshire contacted Abbey Medical Centre and the Walking for Health group after hearing about the good practice.

**Background:** The Walking for Health group was set up at the Abbey Medical Centre in March 2017 after setting out to get people more active. It is part of England's largest network of health walks. The group runs every Friday at 12.30pm throughout the year and is open to anyone. The group started with 16 participants and one walking route. The group now has 60 people on their list and four walking routes suitable for all abilities. The walk is supported by volunteers and the GP practice manager. A newsletter is sent out to participants quarterly and has lots of information and feedback from those who attend on the benefits attending can bring.

**Endorsement:** The Walking for Health group is fully backed by the GPs at Abbey Medical Centre. There is a message on each prescription issued advertising the group which has resulted in many more attending the group. In the May 2017 newsletter GP Partner, Dr Peter John said that:



"I am very proud of our involvement with Walking for Health here at Abbey and was pleased to be on our first walk back on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Walking offers enormous benefits to our health and wellbeing, and there is an ever expanding and conclusive body of evidence to support the notion that we need to be more active in our daily lives. Not only physically but walking with other like-minded people has an impact on our social lives and we have seen this here at Abbey with regular attendees at the Kenilworth Centre afterwards. I hope more patients and residents of Kenilworth take up walking and other activities to increase their health and happiness."

**Dr Peter John, GP Partner, Abbey Medical Centre**

**Benefits outlined by participants:** Participants of the groups have cited more benefits to the groups than remaining active. One of the top listed benefits is the social interaction with others. Participants greatly appreciate the use of The Kenilworth Centre after the walk where they meet for refreshments and conversation. The group also has two social activities in the calendar year; a summer garden party and Christmas lunch.

### What best practice looks like:

- Excellent working collaboration between GP Practice and volunteers
- The service is fully endorsed and advertised by the GP surgery and is on every prescription issued
- In collaboration with The Kenilworth Centre the Walking for Health group secured a place to meet post-walk
- The group has committed volunteers who ensure that the group meets every Friday without exception
- The group is open to anyone regardless if they are registered with the GP practice or not

