

Patient Participation Group

FEEDBACK AND LATEST ACTION PLAN

- PPG Meeting: Tuesday, 2nd October 2012

Current Issues discussed:

PPG Meeting time:

There were mixed feelings from the PPG concerning the current meeting time. While some of the PPG members found it difficult to attend lunchtime meetings, other members were happy and did not feel that this was a problem. It was suggested that alternate daytime and evening meetings would address this issue; however, this was also problematic to some members. Therefore it was agreed that, for now, the meeting time will remain the same and that we would review this in future.

Décor and General Appearance of the Health Centre:

Comments were made regarding the general appearance of the waiting rooms, in particular the waiting room used mainly by the Solway and Whale practice. It was felt by some of the group there were areas that were in need of updating. It was acknowledged by the manager, that there was a need to replace some of the chairs, and although the carpets in the practice area had recently been replaced other areas were yet to be done. The manager informed the group that the practice was currently renewing and replacing as funds permit. The practice regularly assesses the general appearance of both the internal and external building, and addresses issues as and when they arise. However, due the high volume of traffic there will always be general wear and tear. Finances permitting we will continue to upgrade and replace fixtures and fittings, prioritising those regarded as most urgent. The practice will always endeavour to ensure that patients feel that their visit in all respects is always a pleasant one.

Larger Group vs Smaller Group:

It is the aim of the practice to have a diverse representation of our patients attending the PPG meetings, and in order to achieve this we require as many patients as possible to be part of the PPG. However, it was felt that at a previous meeting, where in total there were 13 people in attendance, there was a tendency to go 'off topic' quite a lot. With this in mind, and with the need to grow the PPG, we may need to re-think how we are going to address this issue without restricting the group discussion. This will be readdressed at the next PPG. It is important that members keep to the principles of the group and remind themselves that it is not a forum for personal issues or grievances.

Booking Appointments with 'Usual' Doctor and Continuity of Care:

Continuity of care was raised by a PPG member who had difficulty booking an appointment with a particular doctor, who she had been seeing for an on-going problem. Andrea and Rachel attempted to explain that this particular doctor is part-time, and had been on annual leave which resulted in a backlog of patients wanting to see her. In addition to this it was during the busy summer holiday period when other doctors were also taking annual leave. Good clinical record keeping is essential and means that other doctors can review the patients' medical history, and support patient care, even if they did not originally see or treat that particular patient. This is why during such times as annual leave other doctors are able to continue to support the patient in their care.

We aim to offer a variety of book-ahead appointments; however, there are times where this is not possible such as annual leave. To ensure that there will be adequate availability for, acute, book-on-the-day appointments, the book-ahead appointments have to be reduced. These appointments are then available for acute on-the-day problems. It is agreed whenever possible that continuity of care is best maintained if patients are able to see the same doctor for on-going problems, and will endeavour to provide book-ahead appointments to try to accommodate this, however they are not limitless.

With this in mind we continue to educate our patients that it is not necessary to see their 'usual' doctor for acute problems. We would not expect a patient who had an acute problem to wait for their 'usual' doctor, and would advise them to book with a doctor who was available on the day. We will encourage our patients to make use of the appointments in the most beneficial way, to enable them, and other patients to see their 'usual' doctor for on-going conditions.

Advanced Bookings and DNAs:

From historical evidence we have found that, advanced appointment bookings of more than 2 week are more likely to be unattended. To try to minimise this problem, we have introduced a text reminder service. A text message is sent 24hrs before an appointment. This service is only available to those patients who have informed us of their mobile telephone number. We continue to check patients' mobile phone numbers when they book for appointments to enable them to take full advantage of the new service.

New Clinical System:

The practice will be upgrading the clinical system on, 13th-14th December. The system should allow for a more flexible structure in all areas. Over this transitional time it will be necessary to reduce the book-ahead appointments available. We will display notices to our patients in anticipation of 'teething' problems while we adjust to the new system.

Repeat prescriptions will not be issued in December and a system was introduced in September to address this. The PPG discussed and agreed on the appropriate wording to inform the patients when they collect their prescription.

Staff Sitting and Eating at the Receptionist Desk:

While attending the surgery two patients were left unimpressed by the lack of professional behaviour of a clinical member of staff, and receptionist, who were seen chatting and eating at the reception desk. This is not the usual behaviour of the staff nor is it representative of the practice team. All staff are given adequate break-time, and will be reminded of the conduct that is expected.

Action Points:

- Carpets to be cleaned.
- Condition of chairs to be assessed.
- Display information regarding the upgrade of the clinical system.

Next meeting, Tuesday 27th November 2012 – 1-2pm