

## Review of the Patient Survey 2014

### Patient Group

The practice has a long established patient liaison group, CHAMPs, (Carlton House Association of Motivated Patients), which meets every two months. In addition to patients, the meetings are attended by a staff representative, one or two doctors and the practice manager.

Meetings are held at 6.30pm on the first Wednesday of the month in question in the practice's meeting room. Copies of minutes are displayed in the waiting room on the Patient Participation notice board.

Improving the patient experience has been a regular agenda item for the last five years. This provides a discussion forum on the services provided by the practice and how these may be improved or added to. Feedback on the patients' own experiences are welcomed as part of the discussion.

### Patient Survey

As part of the practice's initiative to gauge patients' opinions on their experiences in the practice, we agreed and undertook a patient satisfaction survey using the tried and tested General Practice Assessment Questionnaire (GPAQ) and commissioned an independent research company, Patient Dynamics, to do the evaluation audit.

250 questionnaires were randomly distributed to patients over a one week period in early 2014. Of these 213 (85%) were returned.

Patients were asked a mix of **Evaluation Questions** – a judgement about how good an aspect of care was. **Report Questions** about specific experiences and **Demographic Questions** – age, ethnicity etc.

The patient group met in March 2012 to discuss the survey results and the issues raised by patients.

Overall it was felt that the results of the survey were very positive. Where national benchmarks were available, 83.5% of all the practice's results exceeded these.

### Reception

76% of respondents found the reception staff very helpful with a further 24% stating that they were fairly helpful. There were no negative responses. The reception staff work extremely hard to assist patients and it was felt gratifying that this was being recognised.

### Telephone

75% of respondents said that they found it very, or fairly easy to get through on the phone. This is higher than other years. However, 22% still do not find it easy.

61% find it very, or fairly easy to speak with a doctor or nurse on the phone, whilst 10% do not find it easy and 29% didn't know or had not tried.

The practice's new telephony system and increased numbers of staff answering the telephone in the first two hours of the day were felt to be contributing factors to the positive response. In addition the doctors have a set number of telephone consultation slots each day to deal with non-urgent matters that do not require a face to face consultation.

### **Appointments**

64% of patients said that if they needed to see a doctor urgently they could normally be seen on the same day. There are more on the day appointments available, which means that all patients who need to be seen on the day should be able to make an appointment.

90% of patients indicated the importance of being able to book appointments ahead of time, but only 23% said they found this very easy and a further 45% found it fairly easy. 25% did not find it easy.

The figures were felt to be lower than expected as the practice currently offers pre-bookable appointments up to 4 weeks ahead for the doctors and 12 weeks for the nurses. The matter was discussed and it was felt that a further display of appointment information in the waiting room would be useful and that more patient education was required.

With regard to booking appointments, 71% usually book by telephone and 28% in person. 57% of respondents said they would prefer to use a telephone to book an appointment; 26 % would prefer to book in person, and only 17% would prefer to book on line. Currently the practice is not able to offer on line booking but is investigating this for the future.

With regard to length of time it takes to see a particular doctor, 36% of respondents said that they saw the doctor on the same or next day, 20% indicated that their wait was 2-4 days and 30% said 5 days or more. Overall, 57% deemed the service good to excellent, whilst 17% deemed it poor or very poor.

The figures improved for patients who were willing to see any doctor with 64% being seen the same or next day, 21% in 2-4 days and 5% waiting 5 days or more. 9% of respondents either do not need to be seen quickly or have never tried.

It was felt that the more flexible patients are with seeing a doctor and their availability, the easier it will be to book an appointment. During discussion, the question of continuity of care was raised and although the practice no longer runs an 'own doctor' list, and patients may see which ever doctor they wish, they are encouraged to maintain continuity of care by seeing the same, or no more than two different, doctors with any one concern.

Flexibility improving accessibility seemed to be borne out by the responses to the follow-on question asking patients to rate how quickly they are seen by any doctor. 79% felt this to be excellent, very good or good, whilst 5% felt it to be poor or very poor. The remaining 11% said it was fair.

Regarding the length of time patients had to wait for their consultation to start. The results varied considerably with 10% waiting less than 5 minutes, 67% waiting 5 to 20 minutes and 22% waiting over 21 minutes. 1% had no set time and this was explained as most likely being an 'emergency extra patient who would be asked to come to the surgery and wait to be fitted in by a doctor,

It was felt that this question was not clear as it doesn't say from which point the patient had to wait. Was it from the time they came into the surgery (some arrive very early and so have a long wait) or from the time of their appointment.

64% of respondents found the waiting time to be excellent, very good or good, whilst 22% deemed it fair and 15 % deemed it poor or very poor.

This was discussed in detail by the patient group and it was felt that the doctors give personal service and if a patient needs more time than the allocated 10 minutes in which to deal with a concern, then he or she will be given it. It was acknowledged that this can make doctors run late. The practice has produced a guide to helping patients make the most of their appointment. This is currently on the website and it was felt that hard copies for the waiting room would also be useful.

### **Opening**

85% of patients indicated that the practice was open at times convenient to them but 9% said that it was not.

Only 16.5% (35 people) of total respondents answered the question on the additional times that they would like the practice to open. Of these 40% would like Saturdays, 34% after 6.30pm, 14 % before 8am. A further 11% would like Sunday opening.

Again, some of the responses puzzled the patient group as the practice offers appointments after 6.30pm up to four evening a week and does not close until 7.00pm Monday – Friday. The practice used to open on Saturday morning for pre-booked appointments, however there was a very high level of patients (up to 50%) who failed to attend these appointments, and so the service was stopped in favour of providing more late evening appointments.

### **Treatment**

All of the questions relating to the clinical and general care given by doctors and nurses, together with involvement of the patient in decisions on their care had scored high percentages in the very good/good areas.

The level of confidence in the doctor or nurse was also extremely high with only 3% of all respondents saying that they did not have confidence and trust in the GP or nurse that they saw.

The patient group felt that these percentages reflected their own experiences at the practice.

### **Overall Experience**

Only 3% of respondents felt that overall the practice did not help them understand or cope with their health problems and 2% felt that it did not help them to keep healthy

96% of respondents said that overall their experience of the surgery was good/very good or excellent. 93% would definitely or probably recommend the practice to someone who had just moved to the area.

### **Survey Summary**

The patient group felt that it is clear there is still some patient education to be undertaken particularly in the area of appointments and that the new leaflet might help with this.

A summary of the survey will be published as a newsletter and this will also be used as a means of detailing and explaining opening time and types of appointment. Hopefully patients will find this feedback useful.

### **Future Actions**

Patient Education – More detailed information regarding appointments to be provided via displays leaflets and website especially explaining advance booking and extended hours appointments.

Hard copies of the '*How to get the most from your GP*' information from the website to be produced as a patient information leaflet.

Below Benchmark Scores – Review the areas where the practice ratings were lower than benchmark (telephone, booking ahead and overall experience) to see what, if any, changes/improvements can be made over and above patient education.

### **Finally**

We would like to thank all of the patients who took time to complete a questionnaire, and our patient group representatives for their input. We strive to move forward and improve our services and welcome your feedback at any time.