

Patient Participation Group

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The Practice carried out an independent patient satisfaction survey, during July and August 2012. The practice is pleased to report that the survey findings demonstrate that a commendable 95% of all patient ratings about this practice were good, very good or excellent. This is a 3% improvement upon last year's results. In conjunction with patient suggestions and feedback and regular meetings with Hartington Surgery Patients Group the annual patient satisfaction survey is designed to establish levels of patient satisfaction and to identify areas where patients are not entirely satisfied. This information is then used to formulate a structured action plan to put measures in place to improve upon the current situation.

Waiting times - The main area of patient concern was regarding the length of time they waited to be seen by a Clinician once they had registered their arrival at the Surgery.

The Practice completed an internal audit to identify the average waiting times and carried out an investigation as to why some clinics appear to run late. The results are as follows:-

- Patients present with more than one, often complex, problem which cannot easily be dealt with in a routine appointment slot.
- Patients sometimes present with extra family members, for example children, who they have not previously booked in but would like seeing by the Clinician.
- Long standing history and patient/Clinician relationships often mean that there is a 'lot to talk about' and consultation discussions can digress.
- Clinics sometimes start late due to unavoidable situations, for example, medical emergencies and urgent telephone calls from hospitals or other health care providers.
- Patients don't always arrive on time for their appointment.
- Clinicians get interrupted by other urgent medicals issues whilst in the middle of a clinic.

The Practice is pleased to report that amongst the patient feedback regarding waiting times one patient commented that in view of the quality of care and the fact that they were not rushed by the Clinician then they considered waiting a little longer to be a 'fair trade off'. The Practice would like to establish a balance which enables it to continue to offer quality care and not rush patient appointments whilst ensuring that clinics run on time. The uncertain nature of healthcare can mean that emergency situations arise which require urgent attention and can result in clinics running late.

The Practice has discussed and evaluated the results of the investigation and made the following proposals:-

- A newsletter article and waiting room display screen message to advise patients to book a double appointment if they have complex, or numerous, medical problems or if they wish two people to be seen at the same time.
- Reception staff to inform patients who are waiting if clinics are running late.
- Clinicians will make a conscientious effort to try and run clinics on time.
- Clinicians to avoid unnecessary chat and digression if clinics are not on time.
- Lengthen the routine appointment time from 10 minutes to 15 minutes (already done).
- Ensure clinics start on time.
- Put in catch up slots.
- Reduce interruptions during clinics – only medical emergencies.
- Patients who arrive late to be seen at a convenient space or at the end of the clinic.

Disabled car parking spaces - There is currently one disabled car parking space at the front of the Practice. This space is not used exclusively by patients with mobility problems. When the space is in use, other disabled patients must park in the main car park and walk a considerable distance. The Practice recognises that another space would prove beneficial and is in the process of arranging a second Disability Discrimination Act compliant space to be provided.

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Light reflectors – The wall at the front of the building has been knocked down twice in recent months by cars reversing from the disabled car parking space. Light reflectors have been installed to improve visibility.

High backed waiting room chairs – The Patient Participation group requested new cushions for the high backed waiting room chairs. These have now been replaced.

Other suggestions- Other minor suggestions included tidying up the wires which hang down from the waiting room display screen and repairing pot holes in the car park. These actions are now complete.