



Local Patient Participation Report 2014

The Woodbridge Road Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) was formed in 2012. It consists of 153 registered patients who we have shown are representative of our patient population as a whole. It is a virtual group and discussions are conducted by email.

In early 2014 an email was sent to the PPG members asking them to complete a short survey on surveymonkey.co.uk about which issues we should be asking the wider patient population about in our annual survey. There was also space for them to write their own ideas. The results of the survey are as follows available here: <https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-89S66B8/>

From these results, we can see that the most important issues highlighted by the PPG were:

- Ease of making appointments
- Availability of appointments
 - Repeat prescriptions
 - Communication
 - Out of hours

We based our patient survey around these areas.

The patient survey was set up using surveymonkey.co.uk. All patients (including the PPG members) for whom we have email addresses were emailed with the link and asked to complete the survey. The survey was also put on our practice website. We left paper copies in our waiting rooms with posters asking patients to fill them in and hand them in at reception. We had 604 responses.

The results are summarised below

Full survey can be viewed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-WQZ8ZB8>

Ease of making an appointment

53% patients make an appointment by speaking to a receptionist on the phone, 35% on the internet and only 9% by the automated phone system.

92% of those who use the automated phone system say it is easy or satisfactory to use. There were a few comments about it being slow

93% of those who use the internet to book appointments say it is easy or satisfactory to use.

Comments were mainly about difficulties with passwords not working, the previous system being easier to use and the lack of nurse appointments online

Availability of appointments

Most patients wait 3-5 days for a routine appointment
75% say that the wait is acceptable

34% of the 25% who said the wait for a routine appointment was too long did not take the next available appointment. About half of them said this was because they wanted to wait to see the clinician of their choice and half said the next available appointment was at an inconvenient time

26% patients were not aware they can book telephone consultations with doctors and nurse practitioners

Comments included that there are not enough appointments available with female doctors, not enough evening appointments and that phone lines are often engaged for a long time

Urgent appointments

91% said they had found it easy or satisfactory to make an urgent appointment

15% said that the wait to see the clinician was unacceptable once they had arrived for their urgent appointment. The waits deemed unacceptable ranged from 10 minutes to 1h 25mins.

84% said the clinical care they received for their urgent problem was excellent or good.

Prescriptions

59% patients order prescriptions online, 21% via the pharmacy, 15% in writing and only 5% via the automated phone system.

91% said ordering their repeat medication was easy or satisfactory
There were numerous negative comments about Systmone online being difficult to use and password problems. There were many complaints about the prescription phone line being discontinued. People seem unaware of the automated phone system for ordering repeats and a lot of people commented that ordering repeats is more difficult now for older people.

32% of patients do not use the internet for appointments or repeats, mainly because they find other methods easier.

Communication

26% patients have not seen our surgery website

45% of those who have seen it said it was good, 16% fair or poor

Patients commented that our website needs updating, the layout needs improving and they would like more details about staff and up to date pictures of GPs. There were also good suggestions for improving links.

81% patients receive text reminders for their appointments, 93% of these patients say they are helpful.

Comments included the possibility of receiving texts for their children's appointments and the possibility of communicating with clinicians via email. Patients suggested that changes within the practice could be communicated directly to them via text, email or letter such as staff changes or changes to the urgent appointment system. They also suggested we could perhaps send them texts or emails when their results were in or when their prescription was ready. There were many complaints about receptionists being rude and unhelpful and miserable looking. There were also some very positive comments about our receptionists. Several patients asked for a surgery newsletter.

Out of hours

12% patients had used the out of hours service recently

16% of patients said they went to Accident and Emergency or called 999 when the surgery was closed

67% said their experience of out of hours care was excellent or good
 Complaints included long waits for call backs and visits and being asked too many irrelevant questions

ACTION PLAN

The doctors and the practice manager discussed the results and came up with an action plan. This was also sent to the PPG for comments and ideas to be added. The action plan is as follows

Problem highlighted in survey	Solutions suggested
<p>Patients having difficulty getting through as phone lines are engaged</p>	<p>We are unable to increase the number of phone lines or the number of staff available to answer the phones due to limitations of resources and space.</p> <p>Practice manager to look at adjusting staffing levels to allow for peak times.</p> <p>Look at “cloud technology” (a better queuing system for the phone calls)</p> <p>Ask patients with non –urgent queries to call after 14.30</p> <p>Encourage and enable as many patients as possible to book and cancel appointments via the internet or automated phone system – look at publishing instruction leaflets and clearer instructions on our website.</p> <p>Communication with patients about the option of a telephone appointment with a doctor or nurse practitioner</p> <p>Nurse appointments to be made available on the automated phone system (unfortunately the software will not allow us to have nurse appointments available for online booking)</p>
<p>15% patients say wait once they have arrived for their urgent appointment was unacceptable</p>	<p>Audit of urgent clinic waiting times to be done</p>
<p>Receptionists not always being helpful and some comments about them being rude and miserable</p>	<p>We were very sorry to hear such negative comments about our reception service. In the last year we have again changed our appointment system and upgraded our computer system. These major changes have inevitably caused problems for patients and a small minority of patients have taken out their frustrations on the reception staff. Their morale has therefore been quite low but it is improving as things settle down.</p> <p>We will look into customer service training and equality and diversity courses for our receptionists.</p>

	<p>Comments (positive and negative) to be fed back to them at the next receptionists meeting</p> <p>The role of the receptionist explained to patients in a newsletter and/or on the website (a day in the life of...) to help patients understand the challenges of their job</p>
Communication with patients	<p>Unfortunately, with our current level of funding, we do not have the capacity for doctors to deal with email queries from patients. Email is not secure so there is a risk of breaches of confidentiality. We will, however, improve and update our website to aid communication about changes within the surgery.</p> <p>We will look into publishing a newsletter which will be linked to our website, emailed to patients and be available as paper copies at reception</p> <p>We will develop a system whereby text messages are sent to parents to remind them of children's appointments up to the age of 12 (to maintain confidentiality for teenagers)</p>
Prescriptions	<p>Although many patients complained about the changes to our repeat prescription system, only 9% reported that obtaining a repeat prescription was difficult. We must highlight that the prescription phone line was discontinued in the interests of patient safety as there were a small number of patients who did abuse it. The prescription phone line system would not be approved by the Care Quality Commission and is not a facility that is available at any other local surgery. We will therefore not be reintroducing it. We have, however switched on the automated telephone system so patients can still safely reorder their prescriptions over the phone.</p> <p>We will try to help patients by publishing leaflets about how to order repeats online and via the automated telephone system. Alternatively, these instructions could be put into the newsletter. These details will also be available on our website.</p> <p>Doctors to be aware of how to provide a passcode during a consultation for patients to use the automated phone system</p> <p>We will try to make more elderly patients aware of the option of the pharmacies ordering for them.</p>
Problems with the out of hours service	<p>The survey results will be fed back to the out of hours service</p>