

Higham Ferrers Surgery

Patient Participation Group Report 2013/14

Date Published: 16th March 2014

PRACTICE PROFILE

The Practice currently has a list size of 5353 patients, with a breakdown as follows:

MALE	2577 patients
FEMALE	2776 patients

AGE (Years)	PATIENT COUNT
0-16	1119
17-24	413
25-40	1006
40-60	1513
60-70	643
70+	659

Although age groups are reasonably distributed, the largest group of registered patients is aged between 40 and 60 years (1513 patients).

When a patient registers at Higham Ferrers Surgery we collect data on ethnicity. This is beneficial to patient care and it gives us a better understanding of our Practice population. Our recorded data shows that over 70% of patients are White British/Mixed British. Other ethnicities recorded are Irish, Indian, Pakistani, Black African and Chinese.

Opening Times

The Practice is open from 8.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Appointments can be made in person, or by telephoning 01933 412777. When the Surgery is closed, telephone numbers are given to contact out of hours and emergency services.

Repeat prescriptions can be requested by posting in the "prescription box", handing in at reception, by post, fax, or via our website. Regrettably we are unable accept prescription requests over the telephone.

Information regarding our services is available on our website. We do offer clinics for our patients with long term conditions and specific care groups (for example asthma, COPD elderly patients). Patients registering will be given a Practice/Information Leaflet.

1. WHAT IS A PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG) & WHO ARE ITS MEMBERS?

Patient Participation Groups are made up of volunteer patients and the Practice Manager. The Group meet on a regular basis to discuss how improvements can be made to the services for the benefit of patients.

Higham Ferrers Surgery Patient Participation Group's main objective is to gain patient feedback. Action plans can then be implemented to improve services and communication. The Group also raises awareness of issues and services within the community.

Meetings are held at the Practice on the last Thursday of each month, at 7pm. Previous meetings were Chaired by the Practice Manager. This year, as the Group has become more established, a Patient Chair has been elected, with other members of the Group acting as Vice Chairs in her absence. Minutes are produced following each meeting.

Member Profile

Regrettably, during the summer of 2013 some members of the group resigned, leaving us with only 4 members. Posters, leaflets, website advertisement and recruitment drive during busy clinics failed to attract any new members. Therefore, the Practice Manager and existing members attended the Higham Ferrers Farmer's Market morning in August 2013. This attracted a lot of interest from patients and their carers and we now have 10 members who attend our regular monthly meetings. A member of the Group also attends locality patient forums and meetings.

Breakdown of members profile is as follows:

AGE (Years)	No. OF MEMBERS
16-24	0
25-40	1
40-50	1
50-60	1
60-70	2
70+	5

This is made up of 8 females and 2 males. We also have 3 virtual members in the 50-60 year old age group.

We do recognise that we have no representative from the 16-24 year age group and will continue to encourage these and other patients to join our Group. We plan to attract new members by attending future Market mornings in the town and holding talks on health related topics which will be open to all patients to attend. Talks relevant and informative to 16-24 year olds will hopefully encourage new members. However, we do feel the group is a reasonable and representative cross section of the practice population as it covers ethnicity, disability, carers, young mothers and elderly patients.

2. HOW DID THE PRACTICE & PPG DECIDE WHICH QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE PRACTICE SURVEY?

For our 2012/13 Patient Survey, the Group decided to cover all areas of General Practice to gain feedback on all services provided (please see Survey Report 2012-13 for results)

This year, the group reviewed the 2012-13 survey and discussed the results. We then decided which areas needed to be reviewed. The group decided to look at areas where patients' issues and priorities were prevalent, such as:

Issues and themes resulting from complaints (i.e. any common complaints or recurring problems)

Upcoming changes within the Practice

Care Quality Commission (CQC) related issues

National GP patient survey issues

Patient care

The Group felt we needed to concentrate on patient care, together with access and availability for booking appointments. The Practice Manager agreed that, in General Practice, appointments remain an ongoing theme for complaint. The Group felt they needed feedback on how patients book appointments and how easy it is to make appointments (i.e. getting through on the telephone / are appointments available to book?). They also felt the clinician/patient relationship is very important. The Group decided on the following key priorities:

Appointments

How appointments are made, is the appointment system user friendly and are staff helpful?

Do patients utilise the emergency "book on the day" system or prefer to book appointments in advance?

How long do patients expect to wait to be seen by a Clinician?

Treatment

Do patients utilise the provision of Nurse Practitioners and if so do they feel treatment is appropriate?

Are patients able to see the Doctor of their choice?

Do the patients have confidence in their GP, are they put at ease and given enough time to listen to concerns?

How do patients rate the care received at the Surgery.

The Group decided each member would compile a list of possible questions. All members presented their questions and the group discussed, utilising NAPP resources (National Association for Patient Participation). A final list of questions for the survey was decided upon and agreed by all members. It was agreed we include an opening question regarding patient age and ethnicity. The Group decided to include a section where patients could add their own comments.

The Practice Manager compiled the Patient Survey from the list of questions agreed by the Group and this was approved by the Group.

3. HOW WAS THE PATIENT SURVEY CONDUCTED?

The Practice obtained the views of registered patients by making the Survey available on the website and in the waiting room. Members of the Group attended local events to offer the questionnaire in the community. Reception staff also asked patients if they would like to provide feedback by completing the Survey, posters were put up in the Surgery and a message was added to the waiting room electronic board inviting patients to complete the Survey. The Group felt that this was the best way to obtain a reasonable sample of views by engaging patients of all ages, ethnicities and abilities.

4. SURVEY RESULTS / SUMMARY?

The survey results were collated by the Secretary and analysed by the Patient Participation Group, with a view to formulating action plans.

The results were made available on the website and in the waiting room (please see Patient Survey Results).

From the results we see that 102 questionnaires were completed. These were completed by an almost equal ratio of male:female patients and evenly distributed across all age groups (from 16 to 65+). The majority of patients were white British, with a smaller number of ethnicities covered. The Group felt that this was a fair representation of the Practice population.

Positive Feedback

Overall, results are encouraging and the Group were pleased to see that 50% of patients felt the level of care at the Surgery was good, with 39% advising it is excellent. 7% felt care was average and regrettably 1% felt it was poor. The group agreed that because the survey is anonymous, it would be difficult to establish the reasoning behind this 1%.

We see that the majority of patients make their appointment by telephone, feel that it is easy to get through and find the reception staff helpful.

Encouragingly, patients are utilising the services and skills of our Nurse Practitioners 95% feel that they have good knowledge of conditions and 85% advise that blood tests and treatment were proposed.

89% of patients have trust and confidence in their Doctor and 95% feel that they are given enough time to explain concerns and are involved in treatments and decision making about care. 94% of patients feel comfortable and at ease with their Doctor and 90% feel the correct diagnosis is being made.

Negative Feedback

Areas of concern to the Group are 23% of patients have been unable to see the Doctor they prefer. 18% of patients have wanted to make an appointment up to 2 weeks in advance but appointments have been fully booked. 64% of patients would like appointments available in the evening (6.30pm to 7.30pm). Patients also expressed an interest in booking appointments online.

Patient Comments

Again, overall, patient comments were positive. Negative comments advise that patients prefer to see a regular Doctor, rather than a locum and continuity of care can occasionally be an issue. Also, more appointments with Dr Onimole are requested.

5. ACTION PLAN & HOW CAN THIS BE IMPLEMENTED?

Once the Group analysed the results, key priorities were established and an action plan implemented.

Key Priorities

Appointments 2 weeks or more in advance.

Evening Appointments.

Internet Booking.

Appointments with regular GP.

The Group discussed their priorities with the Practice Manager, who in turn discussed the results and views of the Patient Participation Group with the GP Partners.

Action Plan

Appointments 2 weeks or more in advance:

The Group felt that if the Surgery offered appointments bookable more than 2 weeks in advance then patients would have more choice. The Practice Manager explained that in past years patients could book up to 6 weeks in advance and this resulted in many patients not attending appointments (which prevents another patient from being seen and wastes the valuable time of the clinicians). However, with a new computer system sending text reminders to patients, this should no longer be an issue. The Group also felt it would be beneficial to offer appointments up to 4 weeks in advance, as often a clinician will ask them to come back for review, but they are unable to book a follow-up appointment at the time. It was agreed to trial booking up to 4 weeks in advance and review in 3 months. The Practice Manager will audit the appointments to see how many patients are failing to attending.

Evening Appointments:

The Group felt that given the Survey results showing a requirement for booking appointments after 6.30pm the Practice should review extending opening hours. The Practice Manager has discussed this with the Partners and this is currently under review to see how we can best accommodate our patients' needs.

Internet Booking:

The Group felt this would be an important step forward. The Practice Manager agreed and the Practice is currently working on opening internet booking for patients.

Appointments with regular GP:

This, unfortunately, is an ongoing issue for the Practice. The Group discussed at length and the Practice Manager felt that this is due to losing our salaried GP in the summer of 2013. There is a county shortage of GPs wishing to become salaried Doctors and as a result the Practice has found it difficult to recruit. It has been necessary to employ the services of Locum Doctors in the meantime and the Practice does understand this can be difficult for continuity of care. The Group agreed to monitor the situation and discuss at future meetings. The Practice will continue with the recruitment plan.

More Appointments with Dr Onimole:

As several of the comments mention more appointments with Dr Onimole, the Group discussed the possibility of this. The Practice Manager explained that Dr Onimole is our GP trainer and as a result of this needs to run joint clinics with our GP registrar. However, Dr Onimole has reviewed this following the Survey and no longer offers longer session times.

6. UPDATE ON ACTION PLANS FROM 2012-13 SURVEY?

The Group reviewed the Action Plans from the 2012-13 Survey and the Practice Manager provided an update.

A queuing system/barrier for patients to wait behind at reception:

Unfortunately this proved unsuccessful – mainly due to the automatic door at the front of the building. Reception staff received many complaints during the cold weather. It was then decided, in conjunction with the Group, that we display a notice in reception suggesting privacy is respected and stand back. The Group also recommended a notice be displayed advising patients to ask the reception team if they wish to discuss a matter in private (the patient can be guided to a private room). This has proved successful.

The Practice will continue to try to attract new members by adding a note on prescriptions, posters in local venues advertising the Group and third parties attending the meetings for talks on health related topics (e.g. Carers Association, Commissioning Representative, GPs): This remains ongoing. The Practice Manager and Group will continue to attend the Farmer's Market mornings as this proved successful and now the group is becoming more established, we plan to hold regular events or talks for all patients to attend.

The Practice Manager will attend the Higham Ferrers Steering Group Meetings with the Mayor and Town Council. Our plan is that this relationship between the Town Council and Surgery will result in improved communication and awareness within the community:

This remains ongoing.

If you feel joining our Patient Participation Group may be of interest to you please contact higham.ferrers@nhs.net or telephone Mandy Hack on 01933 412777 for more information.

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