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## **Practice Patient Participation Group Annual Report and Action Plan**

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) is now in its third consecutive year. The purpose of the PPG is to ensure that patients are more involved in decisions about the services provided and commissioned by their practice. Our Practice Patient Participation group was formed in 2011, and the first meeting was held in November 2011. In order to recruit members of the group we put details on our website (including online application process), posters in the waiting room, advertised on our quarterly newsletter, and put appropriate information in the new patient registration pack. We also put details on our Patient Call System screens in both waiting areas.

We continue to actively promote the PPG by regularly updating our media screens and the practice booklet. We have a poster in the baby clinic room to encourage and invite young mums to join. On our website we have started a forum for the PPG which is known as a Virtual Patient Participation Group and is accessible to all our online registered patients.

We endeavour to improve its popularity amongst our patients and subsequently increase the group size. We currently have 20 group members as a fair representation of our entire patient population. However, this group is not entirely reflective of our demographics, and we would encourage more patients who cannot attend face-to-face meetings to join us by using the virtual patient participation.

### **Aim 1: Develop a structure that enables the practice population to feedback to the practice.**

The practice has always been keen to seek the views of patients regarding different aspects of the service provided, and have been well-assisted by members of the PPG in achieving this.

### **Aim 2: Agree areas of priority with the PPG**

From the result last year's survey areas of concern were mainly around the appointment system and the telephone system. There were also some concerns expressed about the customer service, and the availability of nurse's appointments. In the PPG meeting held on the 31.1.14 a draft survey questionnaire was presented to the PPG members covering the areas of priority.

It was therefore decided to canvas opinion based on the changes we have made in the practice regarding the above issues, as well as new developments involving patient care agreed by the PPG. It was also decided to make this year's survey more informative and

awareness driven; therefore a questionnaire (appendix 1) was formulated to gather views and ideas.

**Aim 3: Collate patient views through use of survey**

The survey was designed in line with what was agreed between the PPG and the practice. We opted for limited questionnaires by post due to low response rate we had from that platform last year. (From 300 questionnaires sent out we received only 71 responses).

Members of the reception team spent time asking patients to complete the questionnaire in the waiting rooms, and it was also accessible from our website. In addition, a text message with a link to access the survey on our website was sent to all patients who have a mobile phone number recorded in their notes.

We would like to thank you for returning these surveys and your involvement with the running of the services we provide. If you wish to add any further comments we are happy to receive them on the following email address: [lewccg.g85003-general@nhs.net](mailto:lewccg.g85003-general@nhs.net) by the 30th April 2014.

In total we collected 100 responses to this year's survey. The means of response were as follows:

- 60 – in person at the surgery
- 24 – via the website
- 16 – via email

**Profile of respondents to this year's survey (Refer to appendix 2)**

**Age profile of respondents**

Under 16	1%
16-44	29%
45-64	49%
65-74	21%
Total	100%

**Ethnicity**

White British 92% Black British/Asian 4% Asian British 3% Mixed 1% Chinese 3%

**Gender**

Male 32%  
Female 68%

The survey result 2014 can be viewed in Appendix 3

**Aim 4: Provide PPG with the opportunity to discuss the survey findings and reach agreement with the PPG on changes to services.**

Following our last meeting 21/03/14, results of the survey was discussed with the PPG. The below action plan was decided on:

**ACTION PLAN BY THE PPG GROUP MEMBERS DURING THE MEETING HELD ON 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2014**

Areas of Improvement	Recommendation & Action required	Review and achievement date
<p>1. Telephone access – quicker access to the practice. Access remains a critical issue which has significantly improved but it is a long term and on-going project which needs to be reviewed.</p> <p>The practice is tied up in a contract for three additional years with our telephone system provider which cannot be changed due to high cost implications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reception team have noticed that patients are ringing at the busiest hours of the day between (8am to 9.30am) to request non –urgent information for e.g. to check results or book routine appointments as a result keep the lines busy.</li> <li>❖ Reception has suggested – changing the automated message on the telephone system, informing patients to ring after 9.30am for non-urgent queries and to provide information in the practice that non-urgent queries will not be dealt during the first peak hours of the day and they will be asked to ring back after 9.30am. This will free up lines and provide quicker access to patients requiring same day or urgent appointments.</li> <li>❖ One member of the PPG felt that most of the calls in the morning are made for urgent appointments and that would not be the solution. After an interesting discussion, it was agreed there is no perfect system however, the practice should trial ways to improve access.</li> <li>❖ With the advanced telephone system we have, one member suggested that we publish a report on the amount of calls we receive daily and how many calls are answered. Providing this report should help the patients to have a better understanding of volume of calls the practice deal with.</li> </ul>	<p>Update will be provided in the next meeting.</p>
<p>2. Telephone consultation appointments and website online access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Based on the survey report it emerged that many patients are still not aware that both services are available in the practice. Reception will need to invest more time informing patients about the telephone consultations and our website.</li> <li>❖ PPG member suggested that staff should not ask for a brief explanation of their medical problem when booking a telephone consultation. Samara explained that receptionists use a script under guidance provided by the Drs in order to avoid inappropriate and unsafe telephone consultations.</li> <li>❖ Put a robust marketing strategy in place involving reception staff, leaflets, letters to patients and newsletters to raise patients’ awareness on both available services.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Constant update of the website</li> <li>❖ One PPG member highlighted that he has signed up to the newsletters on the website but has not received any newsletter from the practice – Mark our IT manager will look into this issue on the website.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. Extended Hours surgeries</b></p> <p>Monday 18.30-19.30pm</p> <p>&amp; Thursday 0700-800am</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The survey report indicates that the 61% of responses are not aware of this service and only 19% of patients who responded have used the service. This also shows that out of the 19% who used the service 78% found it very helpful.</li> <li>❖ A suggestion was made that the poster on the entrance door should be updated. Another separate poster should be displayed on the door about the extended hours and the system with the appointments for the extended hours.</li> </ul>	Posters should be regularly updated and to be reviewed in the next PPG meeting.
<p><b>4. Customer services training for reception staff being delivered over the coming months from outside sources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Contact the Local Clinical commissioning group to provide (half day) training for all reception staff.</li> <li>❖ Conducting regularly training within the practice for e.g. viewing dvd about improving customer care provided by the practice management networks.</li> <li>❖ Completing Online conflict resolution training</li> <li>❖ Role Play</li> </ul>	Monitoring will be ongoing and discussed quarterly with the group members.
<p><b>5. Phlebotomy clinic</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ This was an agreed priority from last year's action plan. This year we have provided training to one of our receptionist Collette and awaiting competency sign off check by the Nurse Practitioner Julie Morton.</li> </ul>	Providing the clinics on regular basis. The
<p><b>6. Visually Impaired patients</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ One Group member mentioned that the survey questionnaire was not designed for visually impaired patients and even posters in the practice are not in the format for blind or partially sighted patients</li> <li>❖ The practice will record the format service users require for information, such as appointments, treatment and test results, and ensure that future information distribution is provided in this format.</li> <li>❖ Posters will be made in larger prints for visually impaired patients.</li> <li>❖ Staff should be trained in disability awareness issues and able to offer assistance when it is required.</li> </ul>	December 2014

## Aim 5: Agree action plan with the PPG and seek PPG agreement to implementing changes.

### Areas of concerns and Agreed action plan in the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2014

#### 1. Telephone access.

Patients complained about the difficulty getting through to the practice on the telephone. The enhanced telephone system was introduced to allow patients to queue rather than receiving a constant busy tone. However, we received mixed feedback about the '0844' number from the previous survey, and the group agreed we should introduce a local rate number alongside with the '0844' to give a choice to patients. Based on this year's survey it shows that 32% out of 100 responses found it not very easy to get through to the practice and 11% of out 100 responses found it very easy to get through. This clearly shows that the telephone access is still problem and patients are finding it difficult to get through to the practice. Although the feedbacks received show that patients are happier with telephone access however, due to some comments and suggestion from the respondents of this year's survey (refer to Appendix 4) we have decided to keep this issue on our action plan 2014 as we felt there is always room for improvement.

As suggested by the reception team, we should encourage patients to free up lines during the busiest hours of the mornings and advise them to ring after 9.30am to enable patients to have easier access when booking urgent appointments. One member of the PPG felt that most of the calls in the morning are made for urgent appointments anyway, and that would not be the solution. After an interesting discussion, it was agreed there is no perfect system. It was agreed that the automated system will ask patients to ring back after 9.30am for non-urgent queries, and receptionists will do the same. With the advanced telephone system we have, one member suggested that we publish a report on the amount of calls we receive daily, and how many calls are answered. Providing this report should help the patients to have a better understanding of volume of calls the practice deal with.

#### 2. Appointment system – changes and telephone consultation appointments

In last year's survey a common area of concerns was changes in appointment systems – telephone consultations were initiated as an innovative and helpful appointment system which reduces waiting time. Based on the last year's survey it was obvious that many patients (60%) were not using this service because they were not fully aware of the provision of telephone consultation appointments whilst this year still (66%) patients are not well informed about this service. Although a higher rate 54% of patients in comparison with last year 17% is finding it very helpful this year. This is moving in the right direction and we have agreed with the PPG members that raising awareness and consistently informing patients should be an ongoing process. Therefore we have kept this on our action plan 2014 as one of our priorities, and will strive to further improve this over next year. The PPG suggested that a text message should be sent to raise awareness about telephone consultations, online access for booking appointments, extended hours and requesting repeat prescriptions. The PPG agreed text messages should be sent

regularly to promote and inform patients about services we provide, for e.g. being able to book appointments four weeks ahead.

The doctors could perhaps direct patients to make a telephone consultation as a follow up, if appropriate. Another suggestion was the posters should be re-organised as there are too many to look at, and only important information about the services we provide should be displayed. However, all our posters are in sections with headings, and we feel we need to inform people about other local services e.g. carers groups, etc. The practice section is next to the door that leads into the consultation rooms.

### **3. Good patient care from all staff at Belmont Hill Surgery**

Whilst there are some areas we need to improve however the results of the survey are overwhelmingly positive in comparison with last year and we are pleased to see that 81 % of respondents rated the doctors or nurse they last saw as very helpful and involved them in their care. The receptionists the respondents spoke to were rated 69% as being very helpful, and 86% felt that the receptionist they spoke to couldn't have done anything differently.

The comments and feedback of respondents from the survey can be viewed in Appendix 4

We would welcome any ideas from group members and registered patients of Belmont Hill Surgery for the PPG to work on in the forthcoming year and welcome any ideas on how we can improve the practice and our services - we are continually striving to improve.

We continue to welcome new members to the group and hopefully we will see the numbers in the group grow again this year to make it a continued success both for the practice and for our patients.

**Appendix 1** – Survey Questionnaire

**Appendix 2** – Profile of the survey respondents

**Appendix 3** – Survey results

**Appendix 4** – Comments and feedback from the survey respondents