

Patient Participation Group Annual Report for 2012-13

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Minutes

1. 1.

PROGRESS REPORT ON 2012-13 PRACTICE ACTION PLAN

At their meeting on 31st January, the group reviewed progress in the year to date. Key action points from the previous survey had been reviewed and progress in each area identified:

Action 1 – Improvements to Telephony. It was noted that during 2012/13 there had been significant financial investment to increase the number of incoming telephone lines and to improve handling of incoming telephone calls. It had been hoped that this enhancement to the system would also increase useability of the telephone booking system but, in the event, the telephone system was failing to live up to expectations. The Practice has called a meeting with the system providers to give account for the significant shortcomings being reported by patients and other system users.

Action 2 – Professionalism. It had been suggested that communications might be improved by the introduction of staff name badges. In discussions with the staff there had been reluctance on the part of some team members to wear identity badges. Several reasons had been identified for this and, whilst the practice remained keen to enhance communications, it had been felt important to maintain staff morale during a particularly difficult year by avoiding conflict. The group felt that this subject should be broached again with the suggestion that ID badges would initially be worn on a trial basis to reassure staff that their views would be taken into account.

Action 3 – General ambience of the surgery. There had been decoration of main patient areas during the year which it was felt had improved the areas to some extent. However, other issues had not been addressed, largely because of significant staffing issues which had affected the practice team for the whole of the year. It was hoped that greater stability would allow staff time to focus on improving the working environment, noticeboards, etc. Although Signage generally had been improved, it was acknowledged that more work needed to be done particularly in relation to check-in systems.

Action 4 – improvements to the website. The group felt that the site remains heavily text based but that it held a good volume of relevant information. This will be raised again with the practice IT lead for further development in 2013.

Action 5 – Accessibility. As a result of the previous survey the Practice had ordered on-line booking software early in 2012, however, as a result of ongoing technical problems identified by the system provider, this had not been implemented. However, during January the system providers had been able to carry out final commissioning and a plan for implementation would be proposed as soon as system training had been completed. A go-live date of April/May was considered feasible and early response from patients had been positive who had completed application forms to access the service

Action 6 – Representation. Little progress had been made during 2012-13 to increase patient involvement in the core group so that this will remain an ongoing focus for the

coming year. Group members were encouraged to share information about the group with their peers in order to improve engagement locally and the practice would renew its efforts to raise the profile of the PPG among the patient population generally.

1. 2.

PATIENT SURVEY 2013

At their meeting in January the group had reviewed the content and responses of the previous survey and modified the content to target areas for the coming year. Over previous surveys it had become increasingly difficult to secure levels of response from patients. It was felt that the survey should again be kept short in the hope of maximising response from patients albeit it was acknowledged that the on-line survey media allowed respondents to skip questions, potentially detracting from the value of the responses reported.

The survey was held as planned, however, response levels remained very low with only 51 respondents completing the survey within the specified period. At their meeting to review the survey the group had agreed to extend the survey period into mid April before drawing final conclusions and agreeing further actions.

1. 3.

PPG ENGAGEMENT WITH STAFF

The group had discussed various aspects of practice operations and including telephone consultations and availability of appointments and remains keen to seek the views of staff within the practice to contribute to planned future developments. The group acknowledged staffing difficulties in the previous 12 months and there had been discussion on the impact this had had on patient services. Notably the group felt they could work to develop a new "Patient Charter" to set out expectations and obligations for patients and this will be revisited during 2013 as a key action point.

1. 4.

DATES OF NEXT MEETING

The current group although still relatively small has now established excellent working relationships and has a clearer understanding of practice operations and the factors which affect it most directly, enabling them to move on to provide valuable patient input to practice developments.

A further meeting in early Summer will re-examine the final results of the extended survey and proposals for a new Patient Charter. It is anticipated that this meeting will take place in May.

At that point, the full results will be circulated to members of the wider Patient Representation Group for their input.