



PATIENTS FORUM

Notes from meeting held at Eastham Group Practice

Introduction

A meeting was held on 18th May 2011 between Tracey Fisher, Margaret Armstrong, Gerry Devine and Dr Bush to discuss queries raised at the Patient's Forum meeting in May and the results from the 3 questionnaires that have been conducted across a broad cross section to try to identify whether there were any areas that EGP could further improve on their appointment handling procedures.

General discussions were held about each of the points raised at the EGP AGM. The feedback was as follows:

Call answering – Currently there are 8 people in the morning then 5 after 9:30am.

Pre bookables – There are less prebookables on a Monday but more in the week.

Choice of doctors – It was suggested that patients might consider having 2 doctors that people feel comfortable with.

Update on staff – It has been recently announce that 2 of the Practice receptionists have announced that they have become pregnant.

Feedback on Practice service - Deaf mystery shopper has visited surgery and they received a glowing report except that they identified that they identified that there was no working hearing loop.

Proposals for changes at the Practice

Phone access - Opening phone lines at 8am instead of 8:30am but doors will be open at 8:20am.

Patient confidentiality – The queries from the latest Forum meeting in relation to patient confidentiality when discussing information with the receptionists were raised and the surgery are to look at the options.

Leaflets – The Practice table was discussed and its appearance. There was also concern that the table duplicated what the Forum are attempting to do with their monthly displays. It was explained that the Practice receive a lot of leaflets on other topics that need to be displayed and one option that was suggested was whether we can get a leaflet stand that can then be stocked with the relevant leaflets for that period of time. This is to be considered by the Practice team.

Notice board – There are a number of important messages that must be brought to the attention of the patients and it was therefore agreed that we need to have a specific area for key messages and alerts. The suggestion is therefore to potentially have a leaflet stand and an information board that can be used to make sure that these messages are brought the attention of patients.

Number of appointments available

Number of appointments: 800 appointments. On average there are 32 appointments per doctor per day. There are 8 doctors “bodies” in the building which as whole time equivalents is just over 6 doctors. There are also 3 registrars present. The Registrars are fully qualified doctors and can see patients on their own but they may have slightly longer appointments.

A number of the Practice Doctors have other specialisms, interests or responsibilities and this time is taken out of their working weeks but this does mean that they are not available for appointments. Therefore there is a need to be careful as to how the figures are interpreted and there is a need to communicate that the doctors hours are full time equivalent. Other activities e.g. administration and appraisals need to be done and training needs to be undertaken.

Surgery closure for training – Surgery used to close for half a day on average on a monthly basis. However, this hasn’t happened recently and generally the surgery has remained open for nurse’s appointments. Times and dates are dictated by the consortium and so there is no real flexibility in timings because out of hours need to cover the service and this is a costed service. However, GP’s are returning after their training session and meetings to offer appointments over and above what is required from them.

Wart clinic – The Practice would like to reduce the wart clinic provision because it has been shown that topical treatments are just as effective as the liquid nitrogen treatments that have previously been referred. The liquid nitrogen clinic would remain for certain conditions that needed the stronger treatment but for the other cases, there would be no wart clinic referrals. This will need to be communicated to the patients and it was suggested that the forum may be able to help with this. For more information, it is useful to visit the following site: Patients.co.uk – treatment of warts. This will need to be added as an item on agenda for next meeting.

Communication to patients – it was agreed that a leaflet communication was needed to let patients know about the change in appointments hours, prebookables and general updates on the services that are available. It was agreed that this would be produced by Gerry initially and that we can then work on this to shape ideas and words.

It was agreed that the responses would be further discussed by the Patients Forum members.