

The Glen Medical Group

Minutes of Patient Reference Group

Held on Thursday 14th March 2013

Seminar Room – The Glen Primary Care Centre

Present: Mrs Lynn Crutwell (Practice Manager)

Mrs Jeannette Mullen (Asst Manager)

Mr M S PRG member

Mrs J R “ “

Mr G F “ “

Mr M K “ “

Mrs M R “ “

Mrs T R “ “

Apologies for absence: Dr Ramachandran, Mrs D H, Mrs V S, Mr J S, Mrs S B, Mrs M S & Mr A R

Review of previous minutes

Patient Wide Forum – members had asked previously if this was to continue following the disbandment of the PCT at the end of March as 2 members were interested in joining. Mrs T R advised she is currently a member and was of the impression that they only required 1 patient per practice to participate but would endeavour to clarify for the next meeting.

A&E Attendances Survey – Lynn informed members that all Practice’s had been asked to carry out a further audit of A&E attendances and would again be looking at their patients in the following categories, children, over 65’s and frequent attendees. The results of which will be brought to the next meeting.

Summary Care Records – The Practice is still waiting to change to a new clinical system, EMIS Web as the current system (PCS) is not compatible with the Summary Care Records. This had been put on hold due to the change over from the PCT to CCG but was hoped to go ahead some time in the summer.

Results of Patient Survey

A survey was produced with the help of our Patient Reference Group in October 2012. The group agreed that key areas to cover were patient access, including telephone contact and appointment availability. Members themselves agreed the final questions, wording and layout of the survey.

This was distributed to a cross section of patients throughout January 2013. A total of 500 surveys in all, 400 given out at reception and the other 100 posted out to patients. A total of 353 surveys were returned (approx 70% compared with 38% from a previous survey).

Results showed:

Booking appointments – the majority of patients telephoned the practice to arrange an appointment, with the remainder making them in person or on line.

81% found it very **easy/fairly easy** to see or speak to a GP with urgent problems.

80% found it **very easy/fairly easy** to book a routine appointment in the next 2 weeks.

83% stated **fair/good/excellent** in being able to see a GP or nurse of choice.

84% found it **fairly easy/very easy** to get through on the telephone.

97% found reception staff **fairly helpful/very helpful**.

47% of patients travelled to the surgery by car, 26% walked, 21% by bus and the rest by Taxi, bicycle or Metro.

Although the above results seemed very favourable there were still comments made as to difficulties in getting through on the telephone, particularly early in the morning and the availability of appointments within a reasonable time, particularly for employed patients. General consensus was that the option of same day or a wait of up to 2 weeks for an appointment with nothing in between was unacceptable.

As a consequence of discussions with the PRG and the results of the survey the Practice plan to implement the following changes:

- Change the way in which appointments are released. Same day appointments stopped and reintroduce a number of 48 hour appointments. Appointments would be split between a number of pre bookable up to 4 weeks in advance and a number of appointments released 48 hours prior, these would be programmed to be released at 8.30am and 1.00pm therefore enabling to patients calling at different times of the day having access to an appointment. The same day 'triage' system would remain for those patients requiring more acute care. These changes would be outlined in the next Practice newsletter and on the Practice Website. GPs were also looking at the possibility of working different times to try to better accommodate the needs of those patients who have difficulties attending during normal working hours.
- The Practice intends to have a further promotion of Emis Access in April/May. This gives patients the facility to book appointments on line at their own convenience and also order prescriptions. A couple of members of the PRG have kindly offered their services to come along and show patients with the use of a lap top in the waiting area how to register on line and use this system. This will also be promoted through posters, Practice Newsletter and the Practice website
- The telephone message system had been changed along with the queuing system and more staff are now available to answer calls during busy periods of the day. It is planned to relocate the telephone lines from the office at the back of the reception area to upstairs. This will give better patient confidentiality when talking to patients and enable the management to monitor calls and problems encountered more closely. Staff carrying out admin work in the back reception office will be more able to help at the reception desk

during busy times as they will no longer have the responsibility for answering the telephone.

- Extend the opening times of the prescription line, currently only open 10-11am, PRG members suggested later afternoon availability for those patients that have difficulties due to work commitments. Promote ordering of prescriptions through EMIS Access.
- Further training for reception staff. A customer care training programme had just been carried out and a 'Telephone Techniques' course is planned.

To help facilitate these changes Lynn advised members that the Practice was in the process of employing 1 new permanent receptionist and 2 new apprentice receptionists. The Practice has had great success with current apprentice, Kate Woodhouse whom they have been able to offer the post of Junior Medical Secretary/Administrator. Although there was no guarantee that there would be a permanent position available at the end of their apprenticeship, the Practice felt it could offer them an opportunity to gain an NVQ qualification and acquire invaluable transferable skills through an excellent training programme in conjunction with Gateshead Council.

Car Parking Update

The Practice is currently in discussions with the Landlord as to the possibility of erecting a 2nd barrier to section off the rear of the car park for staff thus leaving the front section of the car park available for patients. It was hoped an update would be available for the next meeting.

Next meeting 11th June 2013