

## **Local Patient Participation Report – March 2013**

### **Dr Lewis & Partners, Audley Mills Surgery, Rayleigh**

#### **Introduction**

This is the second year of the Directed Enhanced Service that the Surgery signed with the local Primary Care Trust for Patient Participation. The purpose of the Enhanced Service was to ensure that patients are involved in decisions about the range and quality of services provided and, over time, commissioned by their Practice. It aims to encourage and reward Practices for routinely asking for and acting on the views of their patients.

The main way that it does this is to ask for the establishment of a Patient User Group and for questionnaires to be sent to a group of patients, which are then reviewed by the Patient User Group and action suggested as a result of this.

#### **Actions from 2011/12**

##### **1. The phone system cost and queueing**

SystemOnline has been promoted using the display boards in the waiting room and advertising on the web. The queue for patients phoning has been increased so that they can, if they wish, hold on the line until they are connected. The Surgery has approached several suppliers with a view to changing from the 0844 number, but a decision has yet to be taken as the contract currently has nearly 3 years left still to run.

##### **2. Reception staff and lack of politeness**

A slip was given out to patients for a two week period to ask them to provide feedback regarding how well they were treated on the day. Perhaps not surprisingly, very few unfavourable comments were received. This did however reinforce the message to the receptionists that some patients felt they could have been treated more professionally.

##### **3. Repeat prescriptions and communication issues if there were problems.**

Staff are now telephoning patients with repeat prescription queries, provided there is sufficient time and the staff in the evening particularly do this. The surgery has now started using mobile phone texts for appointments and is considering using this for prescription messages, although there are confidentiality issues around this.

##### **4. Difficulty in seeing a particular doctor**

As suggested, there are now notices in both waiting rooms to remind patients that they can book up to 3 weeks ahead and this should make it easier if they want to see a specific Doctor.

##### **5. Difference between different types of appointments**

A notice has been placed in both waiting room summarising the differences between appointments that can be booked ahead with the GP, appointments that can only be booked on the day and urgent appointments.

## Questionnaire and actions for 2012/13

The User Group decided that for this year some of the questionnaires would be sent to patients who were actively visiting the Surgery, as opposed to the traditional questionnaire which goes out to patients on a random basis and more often than not gets responses from patients who only visit the Surgery very infrequently. They were sent as follows :

- 100 emails to random patients from the list of email addresses
- 20 posted to patients currently pregnant
- 40 posted to patients with a long term condition (COPD)
- 40 posted to patients who had 4 or more items on repeat

82 responses to these 200 questionnaires were received. The results were collated and sent to the Patient User Group and then discussed at the User Group meeting on 13 March 2013. (The full minutes of the meeting are elsewhere on the Surgery website.)

The Chairman of the User Group had summarised the results and pointed out that there were 47 people making 63 positive comments, 38 people making 59 negative comments and 29 making positive and negative comments. He said that although the overall scores had confirmed that the Surgery was providing a good service, he suggested that the User Group focus on the four main areas where several patients had raised concerns. These were;

- waiting time trying to make an appointment –( 10 patients )
- the cost of the phone system (seven patients)
- the attitude of receptionists (seven patients)
- some doctors appear uncaring (five patients)

- **Waiting time trying to make an appointment.**

**Action :** Perhaps to have more book on day appointments at the beginning of the week, particularly on Monday, so that at least there were appointments to be offered if patients were waiting for a long time on the phone.

Also to explain why nurse appointments couldn't be made using SystemOnline, the problem being that there were too many variables -- depending on what patient needed to be seen for, which nurse, which room and what length of time was involved and this is something that the receptionist had to decide. An explanation could be produced to go in the practice brochure, on the website and perhaps displayed in the waiting room as this would help patients to understand. Ideally, it could go on SystemOnline as well.

- **Attitude of receptionists**

**Action :** It was noted that there were some good comments regarding the improved attitude of receptionists, but ideally it should be possible to still give an impression of being polite and helpful even if when were no appointments available. The Practice manager said that she would discuss the questionnaire with the receptionists at future meetings.

- **Cost of 0844 system**

**Action :** To continue to look for a system that could provide a local line (which would be included in mobile phone and other packages) but also allowed for a queuing system.

- **Some doctors appear uncaring**

**Action** : The comments were noted, although it was agreed that with 15 doctors and with some difficult consultations it was no doubt inevitable that some patients would be dissatisfied. However, appearing uncaring was not acceptable and would be discussed at the next Doctor meeting. It was agreed that the Chair of the User group could attend one of the meetings.

### **Questionnaire for 2013/14**

It was agreed to write to :

100 patients who have email addresses  
40 on the CHD register  
40 males between 55 & 65  
20 parents of children between 5 & 12.

It was felt that this would provide a good cross-section.

Please see the attached files for the questionnaire and responses. Finally, the DES suggests that the Surgery opening times are advertised here – please see the section in the website which provides full details.

Steve Doherty  
**Practice Business Manager**