

SUNNYSIDE MEDICAL CENTRE – PATIENT REFERENCE GROUP REPORT OF PROGRESS TO DATE (MARCH 2012)

Dear patient

You may be aware that this year we sought to set up a representative group of patients with whom we could correspond to help us identify areas that the surgery can improve in. This has been a big task, but we are now beginning to put in place some actions that will benefit you in the future. The details below explain the progress that we have made during the past year and our plans for the future.

Developing a structure that gains the views of patients and enables feedback

The practice has a relatively young patient population when compared to many practices in Portsmouth. It was therefore essential that the membership of the PRG was demonstrably younger than past attempts with patient participation groups which are traditionally attended by our older patients. The ethnicity of Sunnyside patients is also quite diverse so the recruitment of PRG members should help to encourage membership from all ethnic backgrounds. In addition, the practice boundaries cover some areas of high deprivation so it is important to ensure that members from all backgrounds have equal opportunities to join and contribute to the group.

Accordingly, to ensure that we provided an opportunity to join the PRG to a wide range of patients covering different ethnic backgrounds, age ranges and personal profiles, a number of distinct PRG recruitment drives were run in the period up to end of November 2011. **6 distinct campaign approaches** were used as follows:

1. A detailed analysis of ethnic groups was completed and 300 patients were randomly selected in parity with the ethnicity of our patient register. They were contacted either by email or letter and invited to join the PRG either by completing an online survey or completing a form in the surgery.
2. Patients were given a direct invitation to join the PRG from GP's and nurses when attending patient consultations.
(run throughout October 2011)
3. Requesting patients to join the PRG by handing out application forms from reception to all patients who attend the surgery. Patients can either complete full registration paperwork or complete online registration questionnaire (copy enclosed)
(run from 1st September to end October 2011)
4. Using volunteer members of the Sunnyside patient group to encourage new patient membership during our Saturday morning flu clinics
(2 flu clinics, was attended by more than 1000 patients)
5. Staff members approached patients waiting in the reception area.
(run throughout November 2011)
6. Advertising posters in surgery encouraging all patients to join the group.
(June to December 2011)

Group Membership

The PRG evolved into the final group as members were signed up.

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A total of 246 patients signed up to the PRG between the period 1st September and 31st December 2011. Of these, 156 patients were female and 88 were male. Most importantly, the patient group was comprised of a broad range of ages as follows:

<24 14 patients
25-35 56 patients
35-45 54 patients
45-55 50 patients
55-65 33 patients
65+ 31 patients

Patients were invited to confirm their intention to participate in the PRG by completing a consent form. This form was also used to determine the initial opinion and priority about 8 key aspects of the surgery operation. A detailed survey was to be written against the 3 items given the most votes.

On 16th December 2011, our membership application drive was closed to allow us to focus on collating the results, determining our actions and plans. Although we made a positive attempt to encourage involvement from all cultural groups, the group is predominantly white British or European.

| Ethnicity | No of patients |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| White British | 215 |
| White & Black Caribbean | 6 |
| White European | 7 |
| Bangladeshi | 2 |
| Indian | 5 |
| Black or Black British African | 3 |
| Pakistani | 1 |
| White and Asian | 2 |
| Other | 3 |

All consent forms were retained and the patient data recorded. PRG members were assigned to an e-mail distribution list (if appropriate) so that email/electronic surveys could be easily encouraged.

Agree areas of priority with the PRG

The document used to obtain sign-up and consent for the PRG asked patients to prioritise any concerns within 8 key areas of practice business that were previously discussed and agreed at meetings of the Sunnyside Patient Group on 24th May 2011. These areas were as follows:

- Clinical Care
- Reception Issues
- Getting to the surgery
- Patient Awareness and education
- Getting an appointment
- Opening times
- Buildings and facilities

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- Waiting times

In addition a further option allowed for any additional comments to be made. Patients were asked to nominate as many areas as they thought needed our attention and these results were recorded on our database.

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Clinical Care | 31 votes |
| Reception Issues | 34 votes |
| Getting to the surgery | 33 votes |
| Patient education and awareness | 83 votes* |
| Getting an appointment | 134 votes* |
| Opening times | 35 votes |
| Buildings and facilities | 18 votes |
| Waiting Times | 93 votes* |
| Other | 44 votes |

The patient group agreed that the 3 areas receiving the most votes would provide the areas of questions that the patient survey would focus on. The three areas on which the survey would be written was agreed as follows:

- Getting an appointment
- Waiting Times
- Patient education and awareness

Collate the views through the use of a survey

The surgery opened an online account with survey monkey and created a questionnaire based on the 3 priority areas agreed above. 9 questions were created with 1 question pertaining to education and awareness as it received the least priority votes. The draft questionnaire was discussed and agreed with the partners and the members of the Sunnyside Patient Group before being made available for completion by signed-up members of the PRG.

The online survey was open for responses from the beginning of November and ran initially until 9th December 2011. During this time the patients were invited by e-mail (using the distribution groups identified in the patient database) or a letter, advising them of the link to the finalised web survey. Patients without e-mail addresses were also sent hardcopy surveys to complete. A follow up request to complete the survey was issued to PRG members before the survey was closed. To ensure the maximum number of responses were received the deadline was eventually extended until 16th December 2011.

Of the 246 patients who initially signed up to be members of the PRG, 126 (51.2%) of patients completed the survey. This is considered a good return rate despite the large number of non respondents.

Summary of survey results

- 79.4 % of those responding had attended the surgery within the last 3 months and a further 11.3% had attended within the last 6 months.

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- 64.9% of those responding prefer to book an appointment by telephone. 33.0% would be interested in booking appointments online.
- 28.1% of patients said that they wait between 4 – 7 days to get an appointment with a GP. 28.2% wait less than 3 days to get an appointment. This excludes the facilities of our duty team which gives same day access for emergencies.
- Although the majority of patients (36.1%) have not recently made an appointment to see our nurses, 20.6% of the remainder typically wait 4 to 7 days for an appointment.
- 90.8% of respondents said that it was either very easy or fairly easy to get through on the telephone. Only 8.2% said it was not very easy. 70.1% of those said that it was very easy or fairly easy to speak to a GP on the telephone.
- Excluding the duty team 91.7% of patients said they waited 30 minutes or less after their scheduled appointment time to be seen by a GP or nurse. 75.8% of respondents said that waiting times for duty team were reasonable and understandable. Only 2.1% said the wait was far too long.
- 55.1% of patients favour the GP's offering initial telephone appointments but 14.3% dislike the service.
- To help understand the variety of services that we offer 54.6% of patients would like email updates about service changes, 54.6% would like a newsletter, 51.5% would like text appointment reminders, and 22.7% would like a facebook page.

Provide the PRG with the opportunity to discuss the findings and reach agreement with the PRG on changes to services

Initially the Sunnyside Patient Group members met with the Sunnyside management team on 17th January 2012 to discuss the overall findings and to recommend and prioritise changes to services that had been identified through the survey. These recommendations were documented in the actions from the meeting and then members of the PRG were written to on 20th January 2012 seeking their comments on the proposed actions. A copy of the email requesting feedback by 6th February 2012 is attached.

No feedback or comments was provided by the PRG to our proposed action list so it was agreed to finalise the actions and take the plans to the GP partners for further discussion.

Agree action plan with PPG and seek PRG agreement to make changes

The PRG agreed that the main action points and assigned various priorities. The majority of actions would be completed by March 2013.

Priority 1 - Getting an appointment.

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The results of the survey indicate that generally the existing systems satisfy the patient needs and work well under normal circumstances, but they would benefit from some investigation and improvements to cope with periods of excessive demands. The telephone system generally seems to work well.

1. The surgery will **investigate** online appointment booking systems and text appointment reminder systems that will integrate with the existing clinical system. Selection of the number and type of appointments made available for online allocation would need to be carefully chosen. Proposals will be considered by the GP partners (ACTION PC – March 2013)
2. The surgery will **investigate** the possibility of reopening telephone lines during the lunch period (ACTION PC – September 2012)
3. Action must be taken to reduce the number of people who do not attend pre-booked appointments. Further analysis required. The need to cancel in advance will be emphasised in a patient newsletter (ACTION KR – September 2012)
4. Although the telephone consultations are liked by the majority there are still some frustrations. Making all GP's adopt the (stour) telephone appointment system should be avoided (ACTION PC – July 2012)

Priority 2 – Waiting Times

The results of the survey generally indicate that waiting times are NOT a major concern and most patients usually accept that unavoidable delays are acceptable. Improvements can still be made to avoid delays wherever possible and to help improve the management of patient expectation.

1. The method of prioritising children attending the duty team will be investigated and improvements implemented where practical to do so (ACTION PC – December 2012)
2. The surgery will seek to improve the timeliness of (ringback) telephone consultations (ACTION PC – December 2012)
3. Always ensure that patients are advised at check-in if there are any significant delays in duty or for routine appointments (ACTION PC – July 2012)

Priority 3 - Patient Education and Awareness

In addition to the existing facilities, the survey indicated that patients would appreciate the following:

1. The patient group will construct a regular newsletter to be sent to patients either electronically, for patient collection at reception or by post. The newsletter should include information about services and availability plus introduce specific health campaigns. (ACTION KR – September 2012)

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2. Investigate the possibility of e-mailing patients directly with surgery news (ACTION PC – March 2013)
3. Ensure that the Sunnyside Website and Facebook page are well advertised to patients. (ACTION PC – July 2012)

We will publish another report of progress against the plan later in 2012/2013.

Thank you for your continued help and support to the surgery

Dr D S Raw

Senior Partner

Our Opening Times:

Core opening times are 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday. We also offer extended hours appointments according to an alternating bi-weekly schedule (Week 1 – Tuesday and Thursday 6:30pm to 8pm; Week 2 Saturday 8am to 11:15am). Please see our website or ask a receptionist for further details.