

THE BELMONT HEALTH CENTRE
(Dr. J J Wijeratne & Partners)
Patient Participation Report
2013-14

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Preface

Dr J J Wijeratne and Partners is a group practice formed by six General Practitioners situated at Belmont Health Centre at No 516, Kenton Lane, Harrow, HA3 7LT. The practice is in the East of Harrow and operates a branch surgery at No-252, Long Elmes, Harrow, HA3 6LF. With a current list size of 11,150 patients, the practice caters to a diversified patient population in Harrow. As per the recent patient survey reports the practice patient profile has changed slightly when compared to last year. It comprises 51% of females and 49% of males. Majority of the patients are between the age group of 17-44 which is about 41% and 30% are between 45-74 yrs. From the total list about 23% are children between 0-16 yrs of age. The elderly population of 75 yrs and above is 6%. The practice list is a diversified ethnic back ground mainly comprising of White British, Indians, Indian British and other Asians. The practice cares for most of the acute and chronic illnesses in the community. A number of new patients from the European Union are registering with the practice now.

At Dr J J Wijeratne and partners, we always value our patients' views and comments. We strongly believe in 'providing improved patient care' and we take all necessary action and effort to listen to patients to improve our services. We wellcome all comments made by our patients and take serious note of any actions that needs to be taken.

Patient Participation Group

The surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG) which was formed in 2009, meets quarterly to discuss matters concerning overall patients' care and other surgery related issues. The practice always encourages new members to join the group especially the younger generation to bring a mixture of the patient population to the PPG group. We try to have a manageable number of members than a larger group which could function smoothly.

Patients who are interested could join the PPG by speaking to the reception or the Practice Manager. Additional information could be obtained from the reception desk. We also have notices in the waiting area and on our LED screen inviting new members. The existing members always recommend any interested patients who would like to join the group.

Currently we have 16 members registered and 50-60% of the members attend the meetings regularly. The group comprise 40% females and 60% males. They represent the age group of 35-70years and from different ethnic backgrounds which includes White British, Indian British and Other Asians. Their expertise and individual backgrounds have added values to the PPG. Mr. Ian Mandel remains Chairperson of the PPG.

The planned Virtual Patient Reference Group (VPRG) formations didn't have much success and only one member has responded positively with whom the PPG communicate regularly. We are selectively sending emails to potential joiners informing about the PPG hoping that more patients may join by next year. We didn't have much success with attracting new members from the branch surgery yet but we are still looking for some new joiners by communicating and advertising at the branch surgery.

PPG Meetings

The Group met on three occasions in the 2013/14 financial year. The December 2013 meeting has to be postponed due to surgery and staff were preparing for a CQC visit.

As always, in all meetings the group discussed relevant issues pertaining to the surgery services and patient care. During discussions the PPG agreed to repeat the local patient survey that was carried out during last year with some additional questions. Patients contacting the surgery, booking appointments and lack of patients 'awareness' of some key services offered, thought to be concern areas and the group agreed to include these issues in the patient survey. As in the past an out side agency was employed to carry out the local patients survey on behalf of the practice. Based on previous Group discussions the survey questionnaires were modified to seek answers for particular issues. As agreed in the previous year action points, interpreter assistance was offered when completing the survey questionnaire which helped to collect feed back across a diversified patient population.

Agreed priorities

The Group agreed to focus on areas that were mainly affecting patients on a daily basis. Such as,

1. Patient access to surgery (Availability of appointments and the system etc.)
2. Call handling by receptionists.
3. Maximise available services by using them properly to minimise pressure on system.
4. Patients' satisfaction about service (Consultations, Prescriptions, and Test Results etc.)
5. Issues with other services (Repeat medication, Blood test appointments, Smear test appointments etc.).

The Group met few times this year and had fruitful discussions. The ongoing NHS / CCG changes and the possibilities of improving the premises were the key areas of these discussions.

The PPG employed 'GP Direct' as an outside agency to carry out the local patient survey. The questionnaire was designed as a multiple choice questionnaire format and printed copies were distributed at the reception and by the doctors for patients to complete. The electronic version of the questionnaire was sent randomly to selected number of patients with email addresses.

The Questionnaire

The following questions were included in the questionnaire for the local survey and patients were given a multiple choice of answers. The assistance required to complete the questionnaire with an interpreter was mentioned on the top of the questionnaire. This was an agreed action plan from the last PPG Annual report.

- 1) Thinking about the last time you tried to book an appointment to see a doctor within two working days were you able to do so?

- 2) Overall how would you rate the appointment system at the Surgery?

- 3) Normally how easy is it to get through to the Surgery on the phone?

- 4) Please indicate your awareness of the following services at the Practice
 - The availability of a telephone consultation to speak to a GP
 - An up-to-date Practice website
 - The ability to order repeat prescriptions online
 - The ability to book appointments 2 weeks in advance
 - The ability to book GP appointments online
 - Text message reminders of all advance appointments if we have your consent and correct mobile number
 - The ability of the Practice to supply your prescription direct to the pharmacy
 - The Practice opening hours
 - The option to pre-book Saturday morning appointments

- 5) How would you rate the Practice on each of the following?
 - The quality and service received from the doctors
 - The quality and service received from the nurses
 - The way you are treated by the receptionists
 - Being able to see a doctor quickly if it is urgent
 - Being able to book an appointment at a time that suits you
 - The quality and amount of general information provided to patients by the Practice

- 6) Except in emergencies do you prefer to see the same GP?

- 7) If you request regular medication, how would you rate the Practice in respect to the way they process your request? It is processed: (only answer if applicable)

- 8) If you have requested test results in the past, such as blood or urine test results, how easy is it typically? (only answer if applicable)

9) If you have tried to book a test appointment at the Surgery, such as a blood test or smear test, how easy has it been? (only answer if applicable)

10) Overall, how would you describe your experience of your GP Practice?

11) Analyse and compare responses from different backgrounds within our Practice population.

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Comments.

The last question allowed us to get a general profile of the respondent.

Conducting the Practice Survey

The internet market research site ‘Survey Monkey’ was used by ‘GP Direct’ to develop and distribute the questionnaire online. Printed copies of the questionnaire on Microsoft word format were given to patients by the reception and by doctors. The search was conducted during early part of 2014.

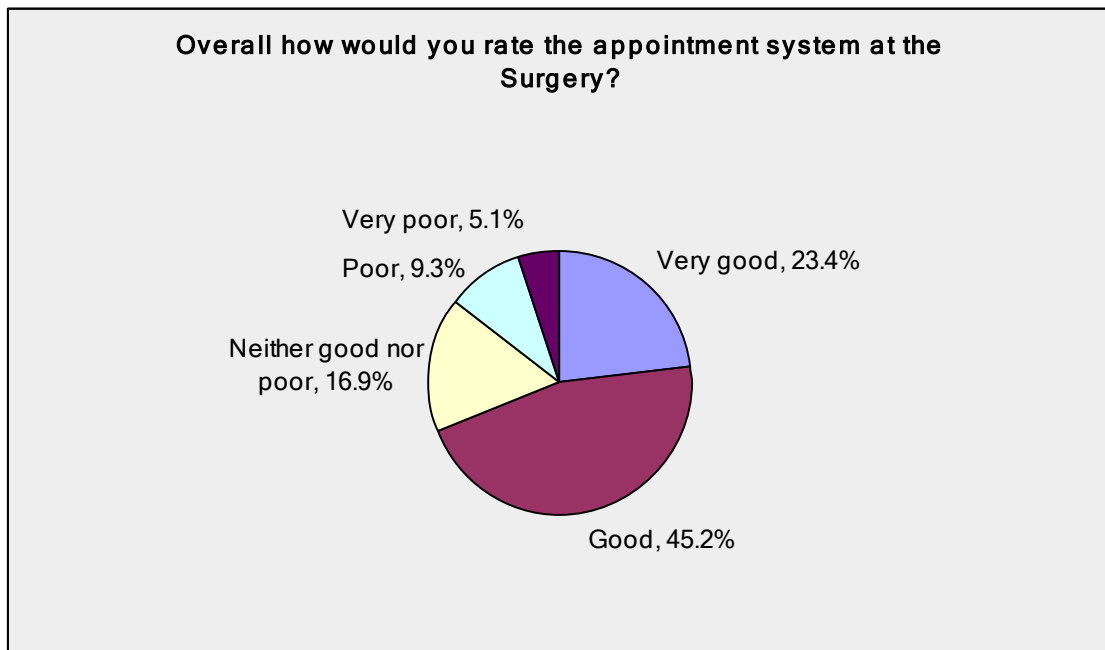
In total, 346 patients completed the questionnaire online and the paper format. The results of both online and paper format were collated to produce the final survey results. As expected the online response rate was quite significant compared to paper format. All the completed questionnaires are available for further audit purposes.

The survey results after analysing were presented and discussed with the PPG Group. The discussion and the agreed action plan were documented.

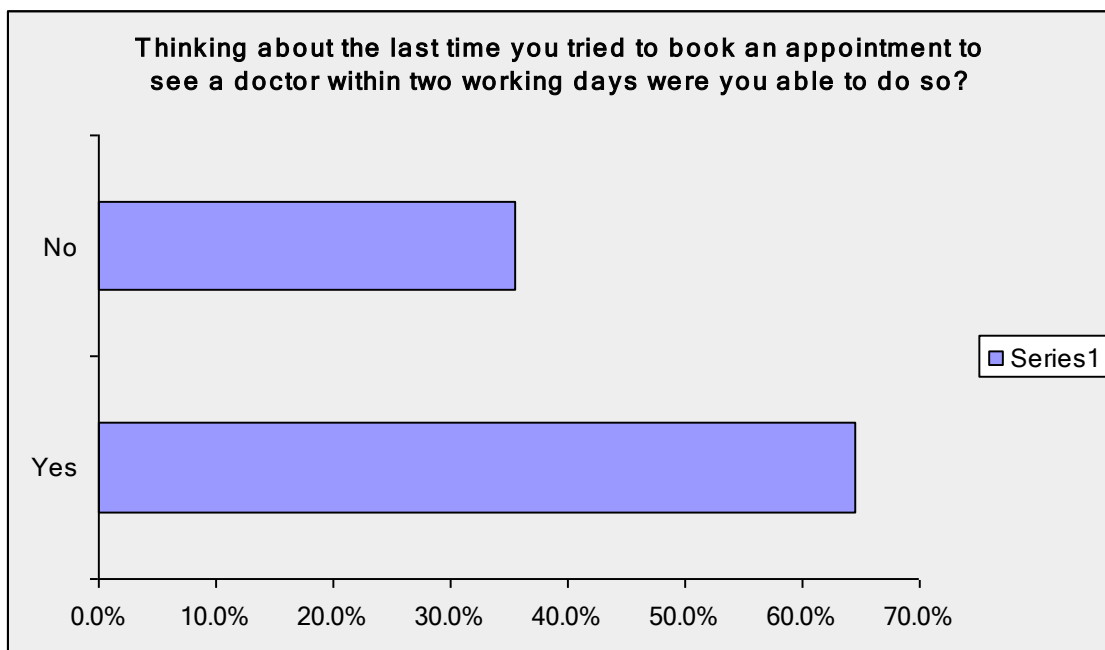
Survey results

Overall the steps that practice had taken after last year’s patient survey has shown some significant improvement in service provided. Majority of the patients were satisfied with the current appointment system and 68% of the patients said that they were happy with the current appointment system which is 5% better than last year. More than 64% of patients said that they could get an appointment within 02 working days. 39% of the patients’ responded saying that they were satisfied with the accessibility to the reception over the phone which is 6% better than the previous year.

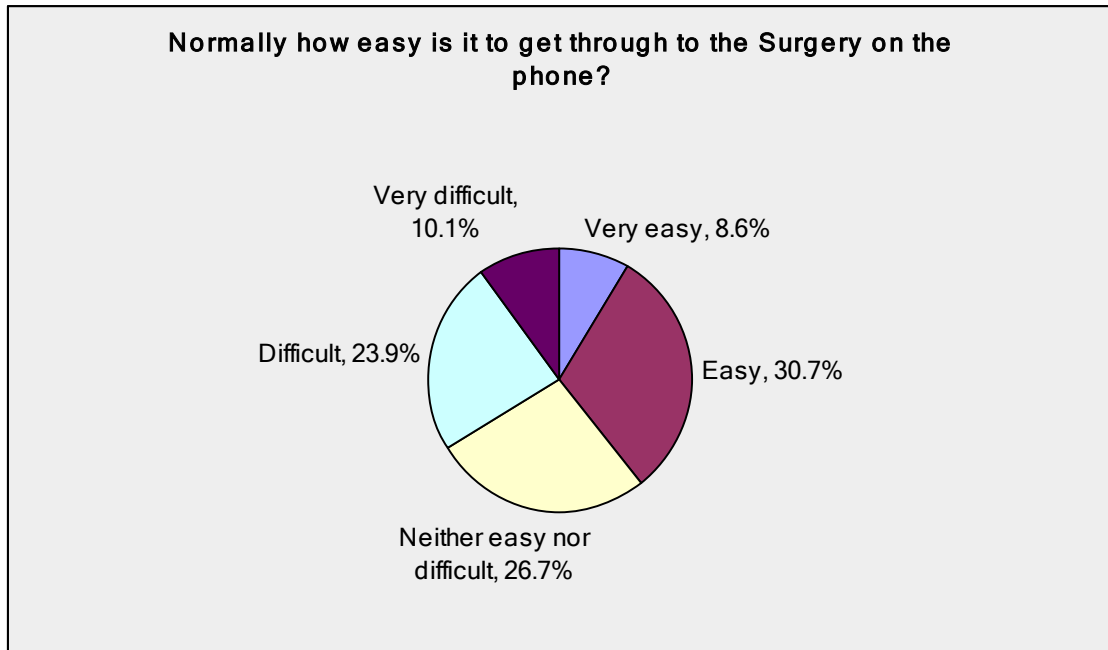
More than 68% of the patients said that the current appointment system is 'very good' or 'good' which is 5% better than last year.



Around 64% of patients still could see a doctor within two working days.



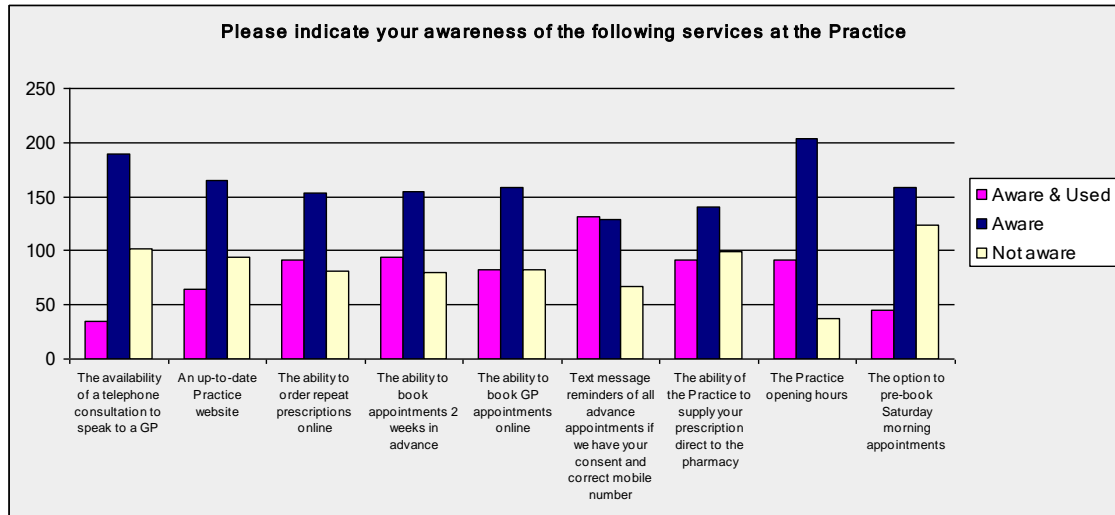
Accessibility to the reception over the phone has improved by 6% when compared to previous year



Awareness and use of improved practice service.

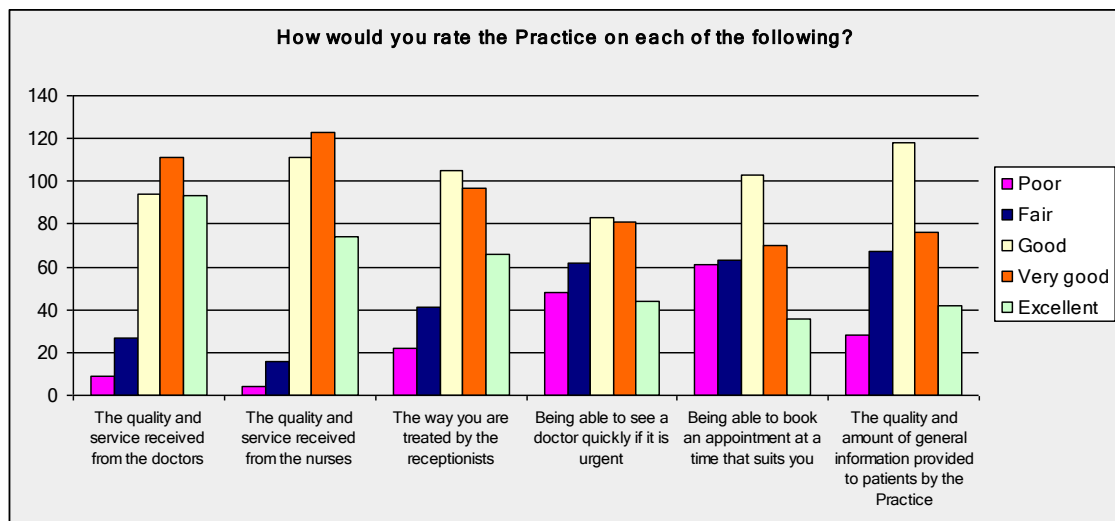
The new question was asked in this years' patient survey to find out the awareness of some of the newly introduced services among patients to maximise use of these services to minimise pressure on the current system which is struggling to cope with the demand. Majority of the patients were aware of most services although they have not used some of them. The results show that some of these services still need to be communicated to patients. A significant increase in the use of 'online' appointment booking system (11% increase when compared to last year) clearly shows that patients prefer to use the online service rather than calling reception over the phone hence need more 'online' slots available for booking. It is encouraging to see that 28% of patients have started using the newly introduced electronic prescription system where patients could collect their repeat prescriptions directly from the pharmacy.

Most patients are aware of the service but are not using them



Patients' satisfaction of services provided by the practice.

More than 90% of patients rate 'High' of the services provided by the clinicians and other staff members. More than 75% of the patients were satisfied with then quality of general information provided by the surgery. 72% of the patients said that they could book an appointment at a time that suits them and 78% of the patients said that they could see a doctor quickly if it is urgent.

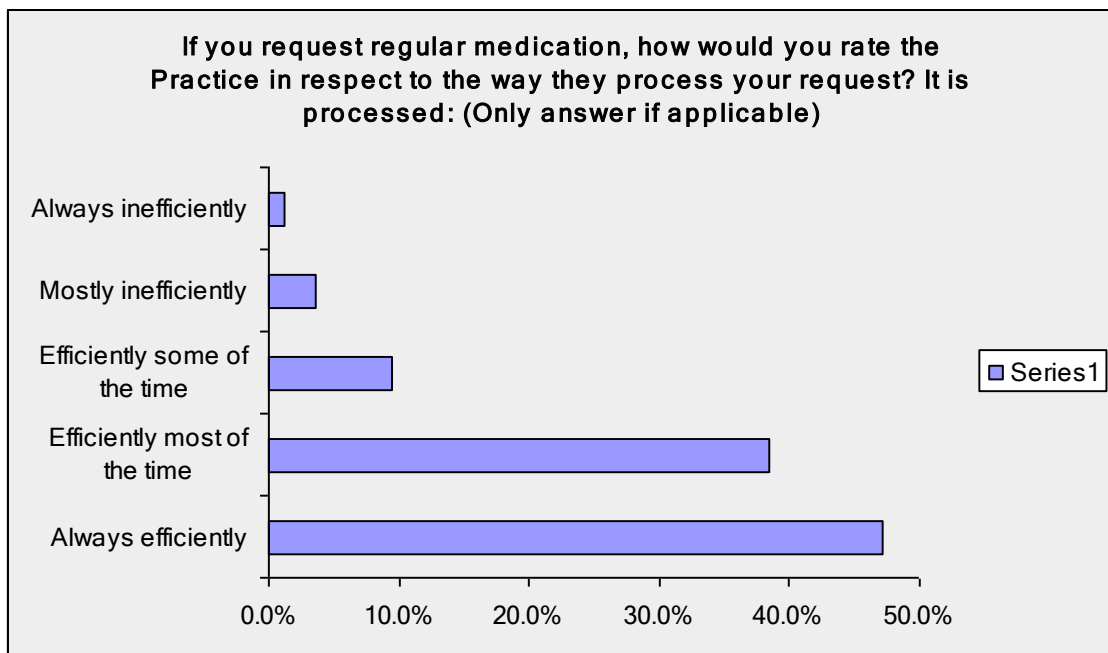


Continuity of care by the same doctor.

Around 86% of the patients prefer to see that same doctor to have a continuity of care except in an emergency.

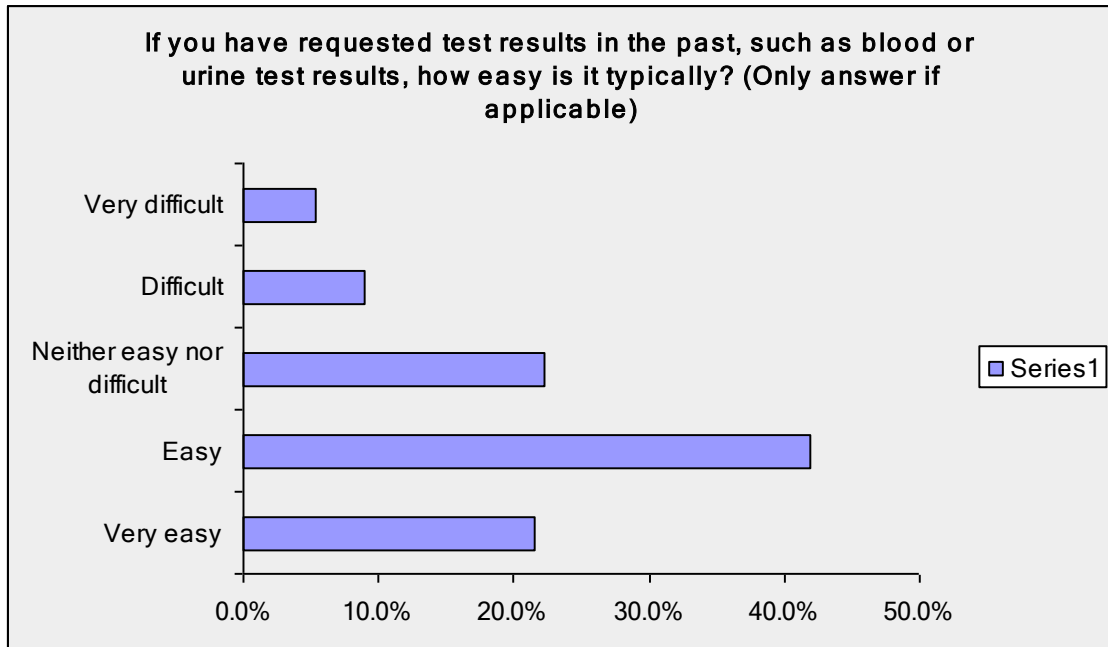
Rating medication request service

More than 95% of the patients feel that their regular medication requests are processed efficiently.



Rating test results request service

More than 75% of the patients feel that their regular medication requests are processed efficiently. This is an 8% increase compared to previous year.

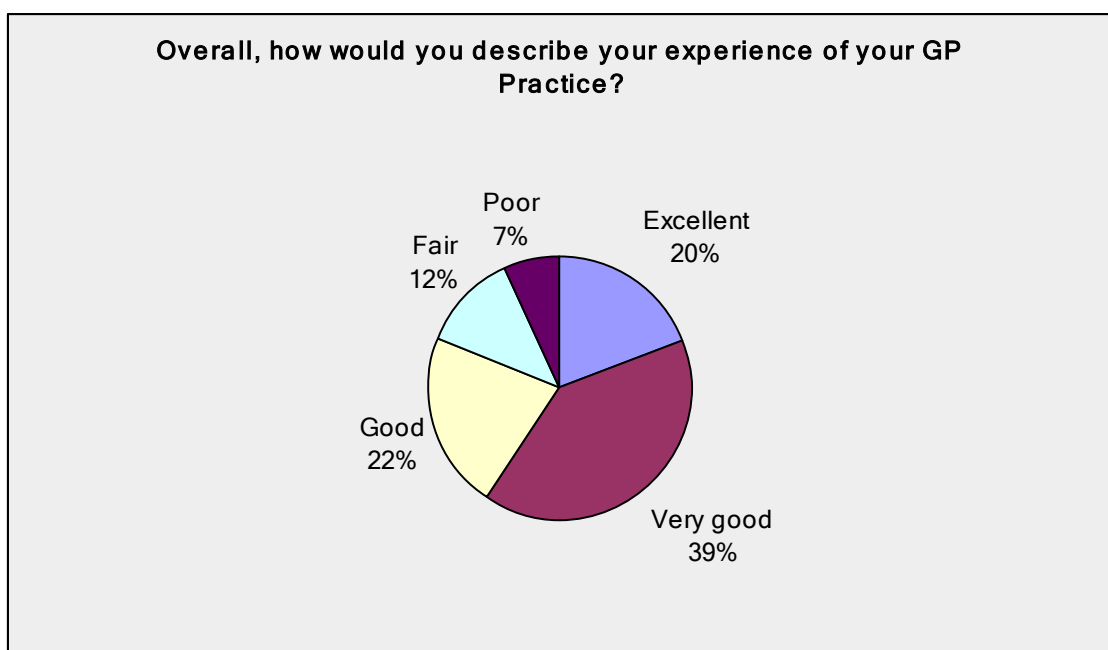


Booking blood test/smear test appointments at the surgery.

More than 76% of the patients said that it is easy to book these appointments. This is encouraging inspite of higher demand and system being stretched.

Overall patients' experience of the practice.

Overall 81% of that patients are satisfied with the Practice which is an 11% increase compared to previous year.



About the respondents.

The survey received 346 responses out of which 45% of them were males and 55% were females. The age group of the respondents were between 17-84 years and majority of them were between the ages of 25-64. Patients from many different ethnic backgrounds took part in the survey and most respondents were 'White British' followed by 'Indian or British Indian' origin.

Comments from respondents.

Majority of the respondents made general comments about the services, short coming and the improvements that they expect from the practice. Some of the positive and negative comments were summarised for the report.

Positive comments

- Good service received from all doctors.
- Staffs are always polite, friendly and helpful.
- Very understanding and professional at all times. (doctors, nurses & receptionists)
- Most of the doctors are excellent and they listen to your symptoms before reaching conclusions.
- Always treated with utmost respect and dignity even concerning delicate matters of a personal nature.
- Online booking system is helpful.
- Overall a very good service
- I have always been treated efficiently with care and courteously
- The receptionists are excellent and go out of their way to help. They work very hard!
- We have been patients at the surgery for more than 30 years and now we are moving out of Harrow. We are very sorry to lose this GP practice.
- Having recently joined the practice, I found the whole experience very strait forward, professional and all the staff very welcoming. Thank you.

Negative comments

- Blood test appointments are difficult to book.
- Telephone lines very difficult to get in the morning.
- Waiting time to see doctor needs to be improved.
- Had to wait long for my appointment to be seen
- Premises getting cramped. The surgery needs more space and improve facilities.
- To discuss only one condition when seeing a doctor is not possible.
- Wide range of days and time for 'online' booking not available.
- To have more nights opened. (late evenings)

- Practice is getting busier and the staffs are stretched.
- Practice has taken too many people.
- Need more female doctors. Difficult to get appointment with a female doctor.

The key discussion points.

Based on the survey result which was presented to the PPG and subsequent discussions, the group agreed on some key areas for further discussion and action.

- Appointments – Improve system further and increase availability of ‘online’ appointment. Reduce DNAs to minimise appointment waste.
- Accessibility - Improve phone answering speed further and minimise reception waiting time.
- Improve patient communication – Concentrate on all improved services and promote them to maximise usage to increase service efficiency.
- Reduce patient waiting time.
- Improve continuity of care – Patients to see the own doctor for continuity of care and as a result minimise waiting time.
- Improve Phlebotomy service.

Agreed action plan.

After discussing the key areas of concerns based on local survey results, the PPG agreed following action plan to be set for the improvement of ‘Patient care’ further.

- Practice to increase availability of appointments for ‘online’ booking per doctor per session from 03 to 06 (100% increase) giving more options for patients to pre book. Online appointment booking has increased by 11% compared to previous year.
- Having more extended opening hours, more late evening surgeries and weekend surgery hours were suggested as improvements for patient access. It was agreed to go along with the current ongoing CCG discussions on the possibility of a ‘7 to 7 hub’ for East Harrow patients.
- To reduce DNAs and to minimise appointment waste, the current ‘text alerting’ system to be used more efficiently. All reception staff to use the newly introduced ‘Caller identification’ software more efficiently to maximise correct texting by updating correct phone numbers.
- Although there is an improvement in getting through to the reception over the phone when compared to last year, it was decided to improve the call handling system further by training reception staff to use the new telephone system more efficiently. The new ‘Caller identification’ software which triggers the caller’s details to pop-up on screen when patients call the reception, is helpful for the staff to handle calls quicker. Also it was agreed to have an additional receptionist to handle calls from back office during busy hours to minimise call waiting time. To implement this, practice need

more space and all agreed to put pressure on CCG to speed up premises development plan.

- Improve patient accessibility by maximising all available resources. Have additional staff members at the reception. Improve current 'Automated telephone appointment booking system' by changing the answer phone message options during out of hours. It was decided to do the necessary changes immediately since the current out of hours phone message does not give the option to book appointments when surgery is closed through the 'Automated telephone booking system'.
- A new communication campaign to remind the improved services was agreed and all available communication modes to patients to be used to remind patients about available improved services to minimise pressure on current services.
- As previously discussed all PPG members agreed that patients should be educated and reminded about the allocated time a patient has with a doctor for a consultation. A reminder communication campaign was suggested. Possibilities of an additional part time GP partner joining the practice, was discussed. This should add more appointments to the system and minimise pressure on the current doctors.
- The reception staff is be constantly reminded that routine appointments (not emergency) should be booked with their regular GP for continuity of care and to minimise lengthy consultation time and long waiting time.
- Improve Phlebotomy service was discussed and it was agreed that practice would employ additional locum phlebotomies to meet the demand when necessary. More staff members to get involved and monitor the system.

Steps taken to improve services.

Patients' access:-

- Increase availability of 'online' appointments by 100% to gives patients more chances to access the surgery.
- The new telephone system along with the other supportive phone software should help reception staff to handles calls more efficiently and effectively which would increase patients' access.
- Employing additional staff members to answer calls and start answering calls from back office was agreed.
- Necessary changes to the current 'Automated telephone appointment booking' system to be carried out soon to allow patients to book appointments via the 'automated telephone system' even when surgery is closed.
- All were in agreement with the suggested extended surgery hours project and all agreed to work closely and support the CCGs current '7 to 7 hub' proposal to NHS England.
- Possibilities of an additional part time GP partner to join the practice to bring more appointments and to increase patient access.

Improved clinical care:-

- We are fully focused on inviting patients for NHS Health Checks to identify health issues at early stages and we continue to carry out Integrated Care Plans (ICPs) to reduce unnecessary hospital attendance and A & E attendance. All necessary steps taken to be compliance with the updated Information Governance (IG) to be inline with new ICP approach.
- We have started focusing on Carers and started inviting them for necessary Health Checks as an on going care plan.
- Practice to invest on additional locum Phlebotomy cover to minimise long waiting time for appointments. Staff to provide alternative available options to patients such as, Jacks ward at Northwick Park for Children and Wealdstone clinic when necessary.

Non-discriminatory policy for new patients:-

Our practice would continue to be an 'Open list' practice to all the new patients who wants to register with us. Patients living within the surgery catchment area and meet the eligible criteria could join the practice and we strictly adhere to the non-discriminatory policy.

Continuity of care by seeing the same doctor:-

The reception staffs are constantly reminded to offer routine appointments with the patients' regular doctor to provide continuity of care and we try to reduce patient waiting time.

Use of professional skill mix in the practice:-

Reception staff always tries to get the right information before booking appointments to get the best care and to reduce unnecessary lengthy consultation time. They have been instructed to ask the appropriate questions in an appropriate manner.

Choice of modes of contacts:-

We always try to improve patient access by giving more options for patients to contact the surgery. Patients can contact the surgery by visiting in person, contacting the reception desk over the phone, via email or through the newly introduced 'online' booking system from our web page. Also patients can use the automated telephone booking system even when the surgery is closed.

Patients can order their repeat prescription by email or via 'online' Electronic Prescription system (EPS) where patients have the choice of collecting their medication without coming to surgery to collect any prescription.

Enabling care as close to home as possible:-

By using STARRS service and ICP care plans doctors always try to provide the necessary services for patients at home or in a close proximity to their geographical location.

Surgery opening times.

Extended hours are on Tuesdays' from 6.30pm -8.00pm and on Saturdays' 9.00am – 12.00pm.

Day	Details of opening hours at Belmont Health Centre (Main Surgery)
	Reception time
Monday	08.00 to 18.30
Tuesday	08.00 to 20.00 (Extended hours)
Wednesday	08.00 to 18.30
Thursday	08.00 to 18.30
Friday	08.00 to 18.30
Saturday	09.00 to 12.00 (Extended hours)
Sunday	CLOSED

Day	Details of opening hours at Long Elmes (Branch Surgery)
	Reception time
Monday	08.30 to 13.30
Tuesday	15.00 to 19.00
Wednesday	08.30 to 13.30
Thursday	14.00 to 18.00
Friday	08.00 to 13.00
Saturday	CLOSED
Sunday	CLOSED

Out of hour arrangements.

Patients could call our out of hours service by dialling 111, if they need to seek medical advice or any medical attention when the surgery is closed. For any medical emergencies the voice message will direct them to call 999.

Since the above changes took over recently, necessary steps have been taken to update all surgery communication to patients. (Front doors poster, Notice boards, reception area, appointment cards, practice booklet and practice web site)

Progress made with the 2012/13 action plan:-

We said	We did	The results
To reach more patients to complete the survey and provide language options to reach other multi ethnic population.	Provided interpreter option for patients when completing the questionnaire and used email option to reach more patients for the survey.	346 patients responded to the survey, an 87% increase compared to previous year and around 5-10 patients requested for interpreter assistance to complete the form.
To increase 'pre bookable' appointments for patients.	We kept more pre-bookable slots open for 'online' booking. Reception staffs were instructed to offer pre-bookable slots as much as possible.	Survey results shows that more than 77% of the patients were aware that they could pre-book appointments two weeks in advance and out of this, 62% have used it. The survey shows 68% of the patients, which is more than 5% compared to last year', rated the current system as 'good' or 'very good'.
Minimise DNAs and cut down on appointment waist and introduce new software to collect updated phone system.	The 'text messaging' system is constantly monitored for a better service and the new telephone software (from Metier/ Samsung) was introduced to help the staff to updated mobile numbers.	Patients are satisfied with the text messaging system and it has reduced appointment DNAs by about 5%. Reception staff are successfully using the new software and updating mobile numbers. More work need to be done in this area to improve the success rate further.
Introduce a new telephone system to handle calls efficiently.	The practice invested on a new Samsung phone system along with three supportive software. A 'caller recognition' software, a 'call management' software from 'patient identification' software.	Reception staffs are more geared to answer calls faster and more efficiently than earlier. The response speed has increased. Overall the patient survey shows around 39% of the patients saying that it is 'Very easy' or 'Easy' to get through to the surgery on the phone which is 6%

		more compared to previous year.
Recruit new members to the reception staff to handle calls.	The new Call Management software helped Managers to take strategic decisions to recruiting additional staff to handle calls during busy hours. Also placing staff in the back office allowing them to answer calls with minimum disturbances has helped to handle calls faster.	A 6% increase in the satisfied patients who tried to get through to surgery on the phone.
Try to reduce waiting time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Posters and leaflets reminding patients that a doctor will attend only to one issue during a 10 mints appointment. - Blank slots have been introduced in-between appointments for GPs and increase their session time but to reduce patients waiting time. - Few slots kept open for the 'On call' doctor to see as emergency appointments and reduce waiting time. - Staff always try to book appointment with the usual doctor to minimise lengthy consultation time. - Additional 'Nurse Practitioner' recruitment is on hold due to space issues in the premises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More work need to be done in this area and some strategic decision have been planned to improved this. - Doctors with 'blank slots' have managed to reduce their patients waiting time significantly. - Most patients are slowly getting used to stick to their allocated '10 minutes' consultation time. - When staffs offer appointments with the regular doctor, patients accept it and are willing to wait. The practice survey shows that 86% of the patients are prefer to see the same GP.
Address the parking issues.	Still in negotiation with the new CCG to get the premises development plan approved.	With the current NHS England '7-7 hub' project, things have got delayed. Currently plans are on hold at the CCG end.

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Availability of the annual PPG 2013/14 report.

An electronic version of the report will be available on the surgery website and printed version available at the reception on request. Availability of the annual PPG report will be communicated via notice board and the web page.