

THE BELMONT HEALTH CENTRE
(Dr. J J Wijeratne & Partners)
Patient Participation Report
2012-13

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Approved by: Mr. Ian Mandel, Patient Participation Group Chair.

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Contents page

Page 3 - Preface

Page 3 - Patient Participation Group

Page 4 - PPG Meetings

Page 4 - Agreed priorities

Page 5 - The Questionnaire

Page 6 - Conducting the Practice Survey

Page 6 to 12 - Survey results

Page 13 - About the respondents

Page 13 - Comments from Respondents

Page 14 - The key discussion points.

Page 14 - Agreed action plan.

Page 15 to 16 - Steps taken to improve services.

- Patients' access.
- Improved clinical care.
- Non-discriminatory policy for new patients.
- Continuity of care by seeing the same doctor.
- Use of skill mix available in the practice.
- Choice of modes of contacts.
- Enabling care as close to home as possible.

Page 17 – Surgery opening times.

Page 17 – Out of hours arrangements.

Page 18 – Progress made with the 2011/12 action plan.

Preface

Dr J J Wijeratne and Partners is a group practice formed by six General Practitioners and is 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 11,100 patients, the practice caters to a diversified patient population in Harrow. The patient profile compared to previous year has not changed much. It comprise 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%. With 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 East European countries with eligible criteria are now registering with the practice.

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 appreciate all comments made by our patients and take serious note of any actions that need 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 welcomes new members especially the younger generation to join the group to raise their voice. Although we try to have a manageable number of members than a larger group, we expect to have a good representation of patients in the PPG.

Interested patients could join the PPG by speaking to the Practice Manager or they could get more details from the reception. Also the existing PPG members recommend any interested patients who would like to join.

Currently we have 15 members registered and 70-80% of the members attend regular meetings. The group now 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, Pakistani British, and Other Asians. Their expertise and individual backgrounds add values to the PPG. Mr. Ian Mandel remains Chairperson of the PPG.

The planned Virtual Patient Reference Group (VPRG) formations has to be delayed with the new computer system change over since we had some issues with transferring patients mobile numbers/email addresses to the new EMIS Web system. With the information collection process getting sorted out, we are aiming to form a proper VPRG by end of this year. We are yet to have any members joining the PPG from our branch surgery and this was mainly due to the distance issue and meetings are generally held at the main surgery during late evenings.

PPG Meetings

The Group met on three occasions in the 2012/13 financial year. The December 2012 meeting has to be postponed due to surgery and staff were going through a busy period with the new computer system and the winter period.

As always, in all meetings the group discussed relevant issues pertaining to the surgery services and patient care. The PPG decided to repeat the local survey that was carried out during last year about the services provided by the surgery with few modifications. All agreed to employ an out side agency 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 an action point from the previous PPG report, to have a good representation of patients from different backgrounds, this time the questionnaire had the option of asking for an interpreter to assist patients to complete the form. It was decided to include that statement on the questionnaire rather than printing it many languages.

Agreed priorities

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

1. Patient access to surgery (Appointments, waiting times etc.)
2. Reception related issues.
3. Clinical issues (Consultations, Prescriptions, Test Results etc.)
4. Facilities available at the premises for patients.

As mentioned in the last year PPG Annual report, the Group managed to have a combined PPG discussion with the other two practices in the premises to share some of the common issues faced by patients in all three practices. An overall improvement plan for the premises presented by an out side company was discussed in the meeting and a common proposal agreed by all thre practices were sent to PCT.

The PPG employed 'GP Direct' as an outside agency to carry out the local patient survey. The questionnaire was finalized, designed in a multiple choice format and distributed at the reception for patients to complete. The electronic version of the questionnaire was sent to all the patients who have given their email addresses to the surgery.

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) Thinking about the last time you tried to book an appointment to see a doctor more than two working days ahead were you able to do so?
- 3) If you managed to book an appointment ahead, how many days ahead did you manage to book?
- 4) Which method do you normally use to book an appointment?
- 5) Normally how easy is it to get through to the Surgery on the phone?
- 6) Normally how easy is it to speak to a doctor on the phone?
- 7) How easy is it for you to see your preferred doctor(s)?
- 8) How easy is it for you to see a practice nurse or health care assistant (HCA) at the Practice?
- 9) Overall how would you rate the appointment system at the Surgery?
- 10) Thinking about the last time you saw a doctor at the Surgery how would you rate them in the following areas?
- 11) Thinking about the last time you saw a nurse at the Surgery how would you rate them in the following areas?
- 12) Thinking about the receptionists at the Surgery, how would rate them in the following areas?
- 13) If you request regular medication, how would you rate the Practice in respect to the way they process your request? It is processed:
- 14) If you have requested test results in the past, such as blood or urine test results, how easy is it typically?

15) 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?

16) How easy is it to park at the Surgery?

17) In your view is their ample seating available at the Surgery?

18) Overall, how satisfied are you with the facilities at Belmont Health Centre?

19) How satisfied are you with the Practice overall?

As part of the last question, a section was included to fill about respondents' ethnicity and the age. This 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 at the reception. The search was conducted during early part of 2013.

In total, 185 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 were presented and discussed with the PPG Group. The discussion and the agreed action plan were documented.

Survey results

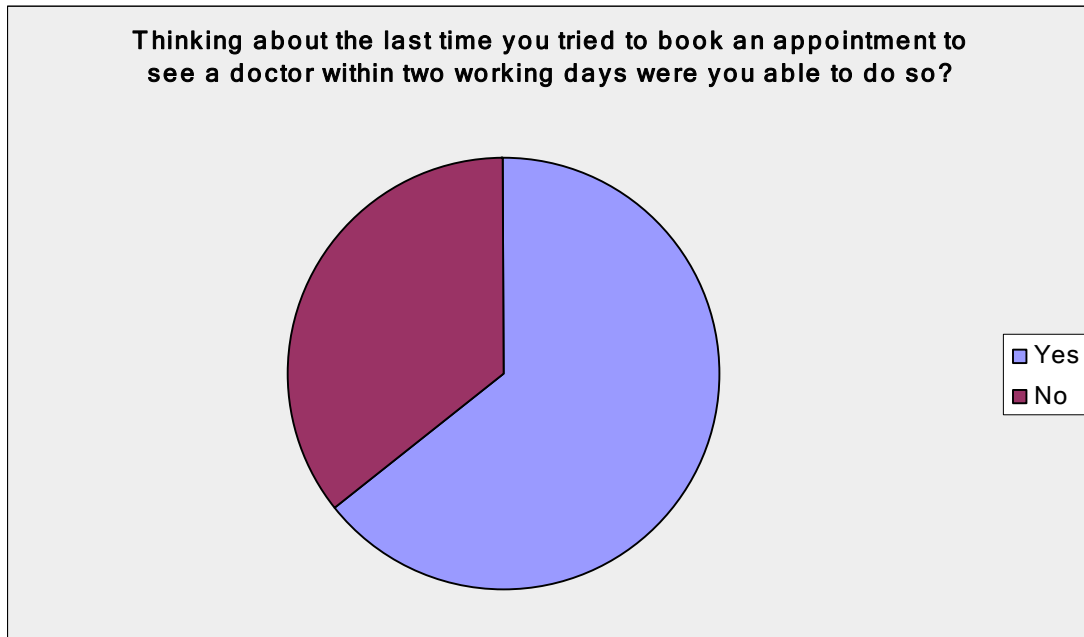
Majority of the patients were satisfied with the current appointment system, which included getting an appointment within 02 working days and the ability to pre-book appointments in advance. Overall 63% of the patients said that they were happy with the current appointment system and only 15% had some concerns. Most patients responded that they were satisfied with the overall service provided by the surgery such as accessibility to the reception over the phone, being able to speak to a doctor on the phone and were able to see their preferred doctor of their choice.

Patients satisfaction rate on clinical areas were evaluated as per a rating system and the figures showed a satisfactory level for doctors as well as for practice nurse.

The appointment system.

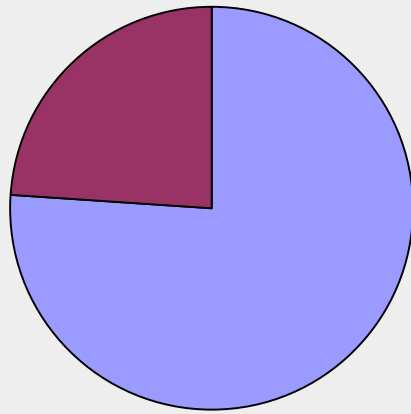
Overall 65% of respondents said the current appointment system was good or very good and less than 10% rated it as poor or very poor.

65% of patients were able to see a doctor within two working days which is 06 out of 10 patients.



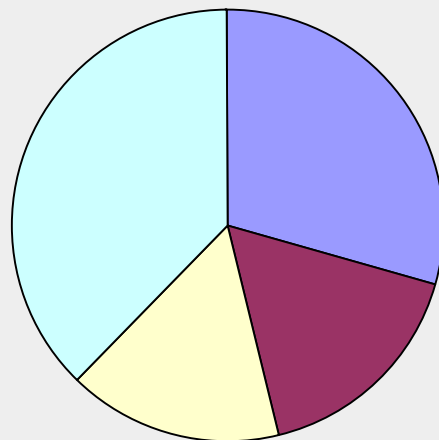
77% of patients were able to book an appointment more than two days in advance and 38% of patients said that they could book 06 or more days in advance.

Thinking about the last time you tried to book an appointment to see a doctor more than two working days ahead were you able to do so?



■ Yes
■ No

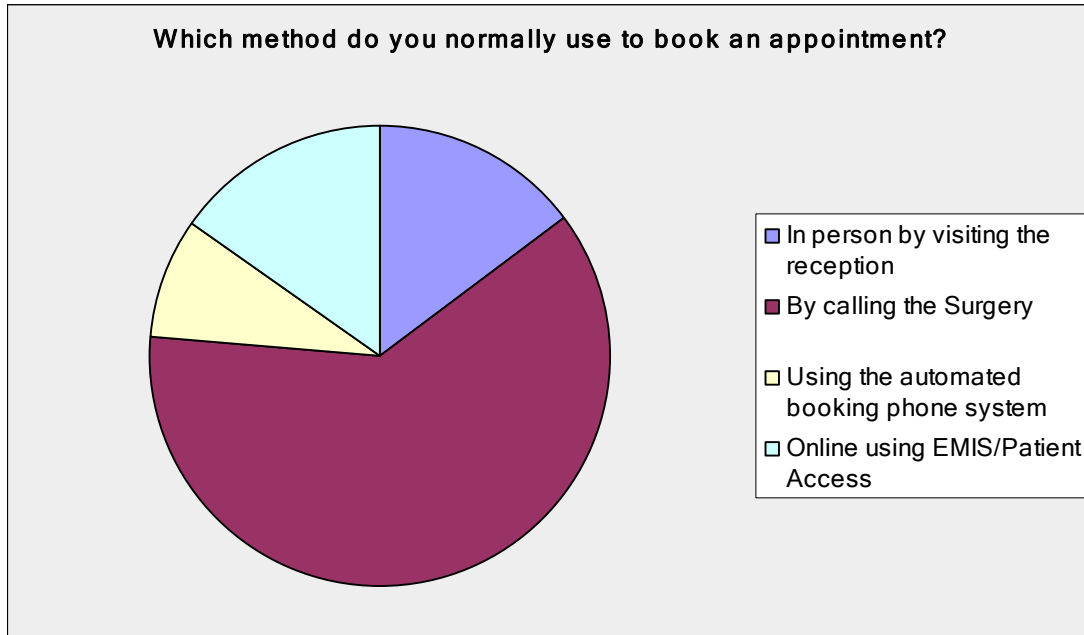
If you managed to book an appointment ahead, how many days ahead did you manage to book?



■ Three days
■ Four days
■ Five days
■ Six days or more

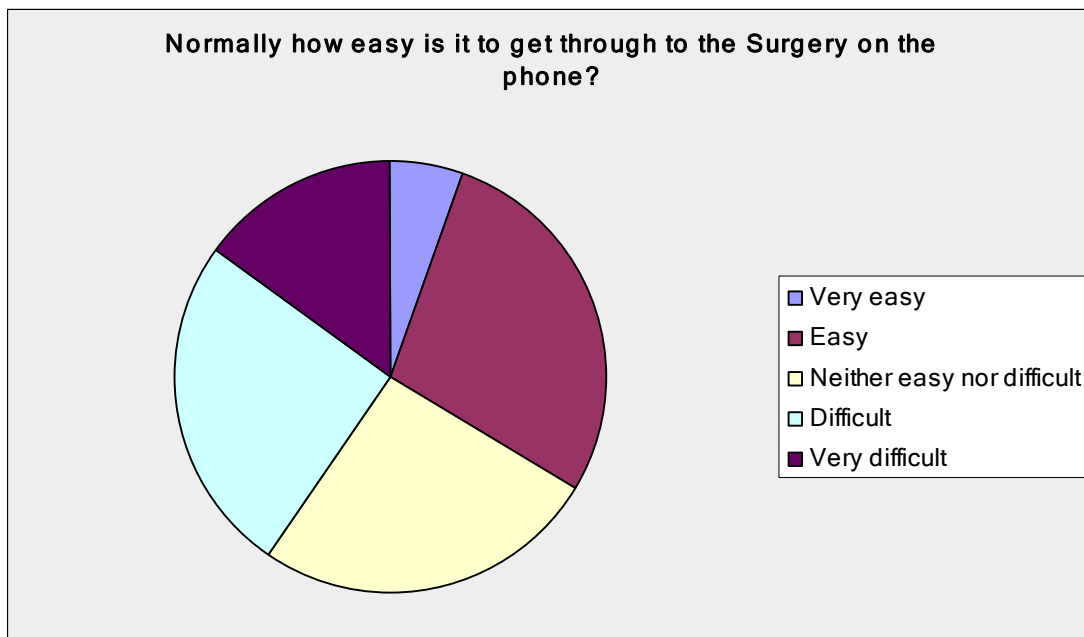
Method of booking appointments.

Patients use all available options to book appointments. Most patients still prefer to call the surgery reception to book an appointment. A significant number of patients are now booking appointments through the recently introduced online booking system.



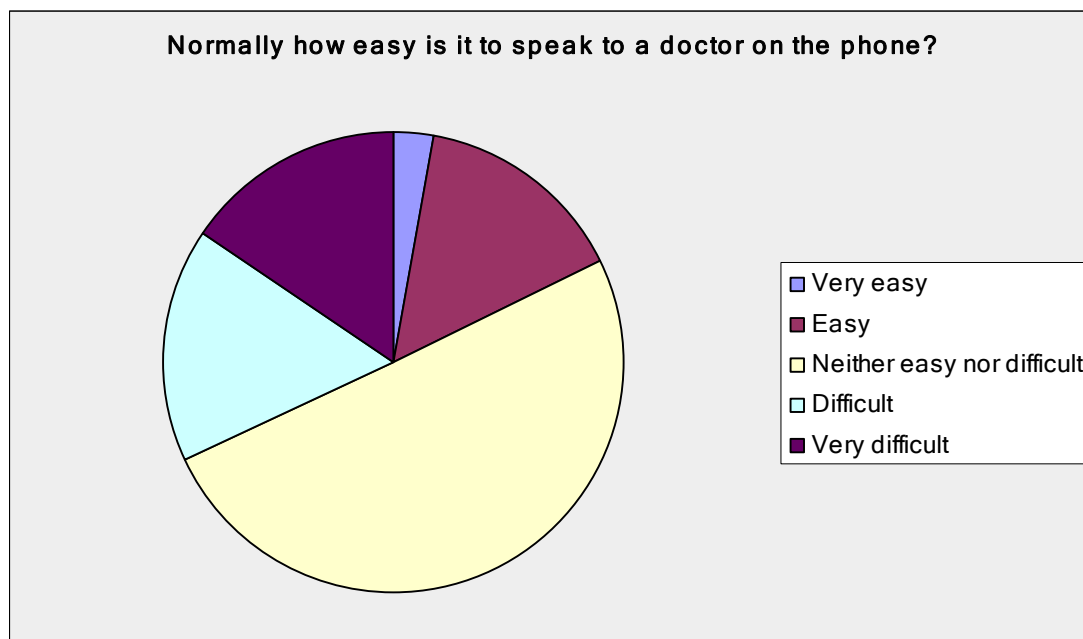
Getting through to the Reception

35% of the patients were in the opinion that they could get through to the reception without much difficulty and about 26% said that it is neither easy nor difficult.



Speaking to a doctor on the phone / seeing the preferred doctor

More than 50% of patients said it was neither easy nor difficult to speak to a doctor on the phone and around 18% said they could easily speak to a doctor. More than 38% of the patients could see their doctor of choice without much difficulties and 33% said it is neither easy nor difficult.



Able to see the practice nurse or Health Care Assistant

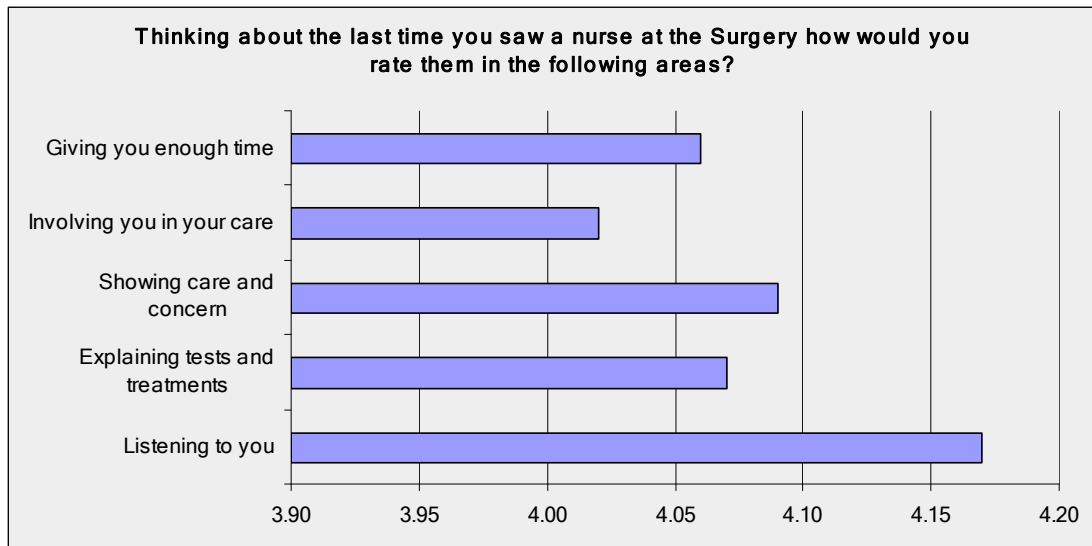
More than 50% of the patients were able to book appointment easily with the nurse or HCA and 42% said neither easy nor difficult.

Rating the doctors (as per the last visit by the patient to see the doctor)

The average rating received for doctor's service was between 4.0 – 4.2 out of a total of 5. The questions were whether the doctor asked about symptoms, gave them sufficient time, listened to them, showed care and concern towards them, explained tests results and involved them in their care plan.

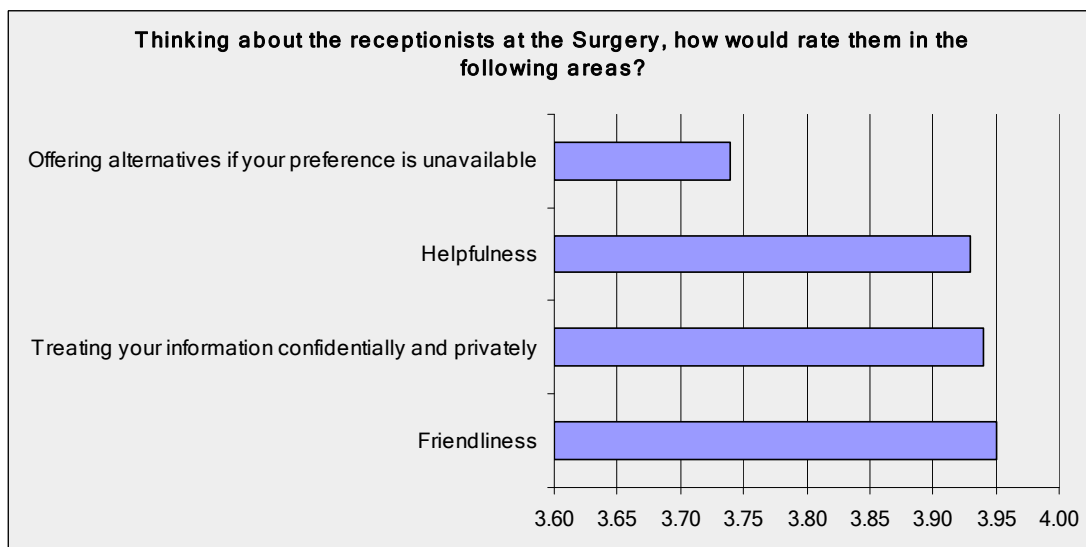
Rating the Practice Nurse (as per the last visit by the patients to see the nurse)

Overall a range of similar questions were asked and the response was an average score of 4.1 out of a total of 5.



Rating the Receptionist

The overall reception service was around 3.8 out of a total of 5 and this was measured across helpfulness, friendliness, offering alternatives and treating information confidentially by the reception staff.



Overall administration

Regular medication (repeat prescriptions) was processed in an efficient manner by the staff (around 86%) and less than 3% felt the service is inefficient.

51% of the patients felt that obtaining test results was easy and 33% felt that it was neither easy nor difficult.

55% of the patients felt that booking test appointments was easy and around 25% felt that it was neither easy nor difficult.

About the premises

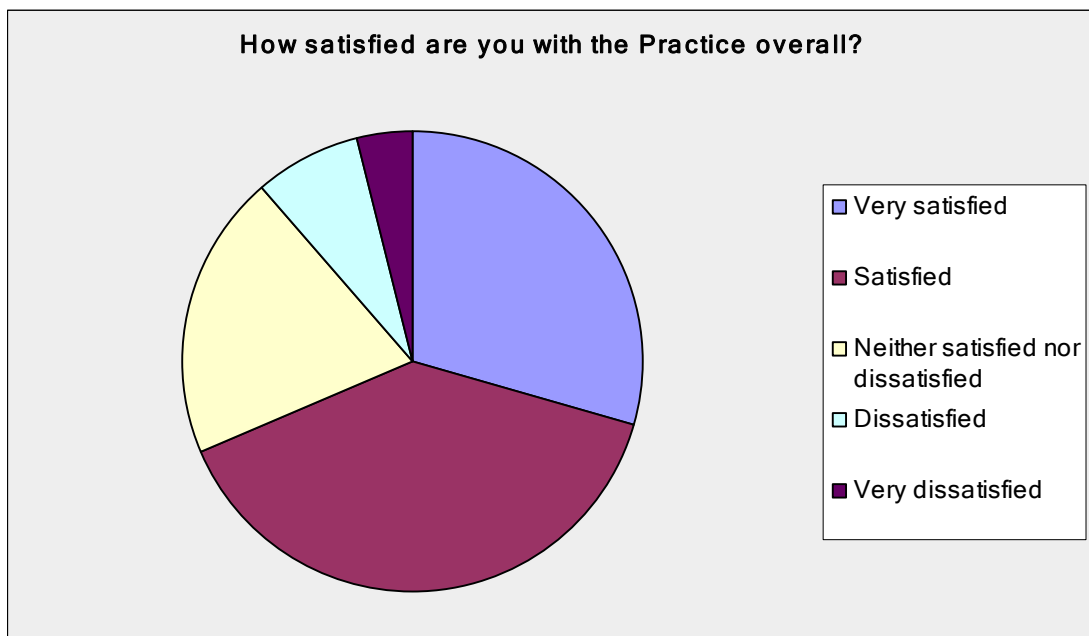
More than half the respondents felt that parking at the surgery was difficult and around 20% felt it was neither easy nor difficult.

85% of the patients said that there was ample seating facility available in the surgery waiting area.

Well over 64% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall facilities at the premises.

Overall satisfaction

Overall 70% of respondents said that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Practice and 20% remained neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.



About the respondents

The survey received 185 responses out of which 51% of them were males. The age range of respondents was between 16-90 years of age; however the majority were between the ages of 35 to 54. There was a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and the largest group being 'White British' followed by 'British Indian'.

Comments from respondents

A total of 61 comments were made, which included positive and negative comments. Some of the comments were about the services and some were directed towards individuals.

Positive comments

- Most of the doctors are excellent and they listen to your symptoms before reaching any conclusions.
- Overall the surgery is good
- I use both systems (phone & online) to book appointments. By phone on the day if urgent and prefer the online systems to book appointments in advance.
- Overall a very good service
- Excellent GP Practice (from an retired NHS consultant)
- 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 40 years and have always found them to be most helpful.

Negative comments

- Difficult to get an appointment quickly,
- Difficult for me to have enough time with the doctor.
- Had to wait long for my appointment time to be seen
- Appointments for blood tests are easy, but long waiting time.
- The surgery needs more space to improve facilities. Reception telephones are always busy and difficult to speak to someone.
- Don't understand why you can't show/explain more than one condition when seeing a doctor?
- Limited number of morning or late evening should be kept especially for working people rather than for elderly/retired or children who can visit surgery anytime.
- Doctor should not be disturbed by phone calls or Admin staff when they see patient.

The key discussion points.

Based on the survey results the following points were discussed at the PPG meeting.

- Should focus more on emailing the survey questionnaires since the response rate was high while concentrating on paper based questionnaire for patients who need help with translation at the reception to get an overall good representation of feedback.
- Appointment booking - Focus more on online booking option since it is becoming popular. Should consider all avenues to keep more bookable appointments in advance.
- Look for other areas to improve the current appointment system further and minimise appointment waste.
- Improve patient accessibility – Concentrate on investing on a new phone system, recruit new staff and make changes to ways of handling calls in reception area.
- Look for other areas to improve the current appointment system further.
- Try to reduce patient waiting time for clinicians.
- Add more appointments to the system - Improve patient accessibility through recruiting a new Nurse Practitioner.
- Improve clinical care – Patients to see the own doctor for continuity of care and as a result minimise waiting time.
- Improve Phlebotomy service.
- Parking for patients is a major concern.

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'.

- Get more people to complete the patient survey questionnaire. Reach younger population through emails and others through paper version. Focus on the new multi ethnic groups joining the practice and provide them with translation assistance to get a representative survey feedback.
- Increase the number of appointments kept open for 'pre booking' on the booking system form by two more appointments per session which is an increase from 33% to 40%. Patients should be able access these 'pre booking' slots through our Automated telephone booking system and the new 'online' booking system which is becoming popular. Also by simply visiting the surgery or telephoning the reception for a pre-bookable appointment.
- Minimise DNAs through the new text messaging system to reduce appointment waste. Reception staff to be more vigilant to check and update the mobile numbers of patients. Consider a new telephone system which could assist staff to update the phone numbers easily.
- I new phone system which could assist staff to handle calls faster and action it accordingly, to be considered to minimise call waiting time, handling time and to make the whole reception system more efficient. A call monitoring

software to be considered as a help for management team to take corrective decisions

- Recruit new members to the staff (additional receptionist) to assist the existing staff members.
- Feedback on long waiting time was discussed and following proposals were suggested. These were discussed with doctors and agreed to implement gradually.
 - Remind & educate patients that doctors could spend minimum of 10 mints with a patients and only to discuss one problem. A reminder poster in the waiting area, LCD screen message to be followed.
 - Doctors to work longer hours with in-between blank slots to keep room for unavoidable delays due to communication issues, female conditions etc. without compromising appointment numbers.
 - On call doctor to handle an ‘emergency only’ 1½ hrs session in the morning allowing patients to be seen quicker which need only emergency care.
 - A new Nurse Practitioner to reduce the pressure on the appointment demand and to reduce patient waiting time.
 - Always staff should try to book patients with the usual doctor to minimise the length of the consultation which is beneficial for continuity of care. A communication to be put in the waiting area.
- On going parking issue to be discussed further with the newly formed Harrow CCG. The proposed plan for premises improvement designed by an outside company which was submitted to previous PCT, to be followed up with the Harrow CCG in the new financial year.

Steps taken to improve services.

Patients’ access:-

- Employ second Nurse Practitioner to meet the appointment demand especially in the afternoons.
- Keep more appointments open for ‘online’ booking, for automated telephone booking and for reception to pre-book.
- Invest on a new telephone system to answer patient calls promptly. This system will have a call monitoring system which will help the management team to take quick decisions to improve reception function.
- All agreed action plans to minimise patient waiting time to be implemented gradually. This is considered as an important area for the surgery to focus on during the new financial year.
- All other services such as extended hours on Tuesdays and Saturdays, GPs working an additional one hour to add more appointments to continue.
- Appointments will be shared across the main surgery & the branch surgery to offer patients alternative when in need.

Improved clinical care:-

- We are actively involved in inviting patients for NHS Health Checks to identify health issues at early stages and doctors have started discussing Integrated Care Plans (ICPs) with patients who need comprehensive care across many provides. This has helped them to reduce their unnecessary hospital attendance and A & E attendance.
- Surgery has started its own Phlebotomy service and added an additional Phlebotomist to the system to increase appointments available to provide a better service.

Non-discriminatory policy for new patients:-

We 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 are eligible to join and we strictly adhere to the non-discriminatory policy.

Continuity of care by seeing the same doctor:-

Reception staff always tries to offer appointments with the same doctor when ever possible to provide continuity of care. By strictly implementing this, we try to reduce the long 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.

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.

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 on Tuesday are from 8.00am -8.00pm and 9.00am – 12.00pm on Saturdays.

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
Wednesday	08.00 to 18.30
Thursday	08.00 to 18.30
Friday	08.00 to 18.30
Saturday	09.00 to 12.00
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 provider 'Harmoni' on the following numbers 020 3402 1000 or 03001303017 (now via 111) if they need to seek medical advice or any medical attention when the surgery is closed.

This information is provided on all our surgery communications. (Notice board, at the reception, appointment cards, practice booklet, practice web page and on branch surgery front door).

Progress made with the 2011/12 action plan:-

We said	We did	The results
To have the survey questionnaire in other language to reach more patients	Included the option to have an interpreter if needed to complete the questionnaire. (on the questionnaire)	More patients responded to the survey which was a 29% increase.
To keep more 'pre booking' appointments for patients.	We kept more pre-bookable slots open.	Survey results shows that 9% of the patients used the automated phone booking system and 15% used the online booking system which was introduced very recently.
New ways of handling calls at the reception.	During morning busy hours, 03 rd reception counter will remain closed allowing the receptionist to handle calls quicker without any distractions.	Call handling speed has improved and reception operation has got bit smoother during busy hours.
Try to minimise DNAs by ways of using new methods to reduce appointment waste.	We introduced a new 'text messaging' system to remind patients about their pending appointments.	To a greater extend we managed to reduce the DNA levels.
Try to address the parking issues in the premises.	We said that we will take the matter up to the PCT level to find alternatives.	A strong proposal was presented along with a suggested improvement plan for the premises designed by a qualified architect company to the PCT. This has now reach the NWL DH and awaiting completion of Harrow CCG takeover to discuss further.
Look into ways of reducing waiting time.	Employed a new Nurse Practitioner to increase the available appointments and to reduce none urgent matters reaching GPs.	Nurse practitioners appointments get completely booked reducing pressure on GPs appointment time. More work need to be done in this area.

Correspondence address

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Branch:
252, Long Elmes, Harrow, HA3 6LF
Tel/Fax: 020 8428 4249

Availability of the annual PPG 2012/13 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.