

## **The Garden City Practice: Patient Reference Group report 2012/13**

### Composition

In the summer of 2011 dozens of flyers were printed and distributed to the waiting rooms, reception, GPs and nurses to invite patients to join the group. Barely a handful of these were returned. More were printed and given to the receptionists with instructions to hand out with collected prescriptions. Many people handed the forms back saying they would not have the time to participate, and even fewer returned completed forms. Therefore, in a further attempt to help supplement the membership, a database was created of patients aged 18 and over with 'QoF conditions' and a number of significant other conditions (such as rheumatoid arthritis, Barrett's oesophagitis, deafness,...) and this was used to ensure there were non-traditional British names (in an attempt to capture ethnicity), people registered as carers, people living in outlying parts of the practice boundary, people in residential homes, and so forth. A random sample of 70 of these and 30 other patients were then sent an invitation to join the group. Only about a dozen responses were received and it was decided that this method was not effective. Word of mouth may be a better approach and we hoped to work more closely with the PCT's patient participation department.

In the summer of 2012 an updated version of the flyer – to better capture demographic details - was again produced and circulated in the surgery. Despite such efforts a demonstrably representative sample of the patient population either in terms of age or health status was not achieved. Although membership has varied throughout the year, of the approaching 50 members, most are in the 60+ age group.

### Priority Areas

Members of the PRG were asked to identify broad areas which our patient survey should seek to address. The most frequently suggested areas were: appointment availability; clinician helpfulness; and reception.

## Patient Survey

These areas indicated that the GPAQ questionnaire was the most appropriate survey tool. This had the advantage too in that it would allow direct comparison with previous years' survey results.

Patients attending surgeries throughout January 2013 were asked to complete the patient survey. Over 500 forms were distributed. The majority were not returned.

Members of the PRG were invited to help with the analysis of the 185 completed returns. One member with academic experience of conducting/analysing surveys volunteered and this member subsequently conducted the analysis and reported that questionnaires were completed from a broadly representative section of patients.

Her report was circulated electronically to members of the PRG and simultaneously all members were invited in to the surgery to discuss the results amongst themselves and with the team here. Her analysis identified the following significant results: 94% of respondents rated the receptionists as good or better; 72% felt that the opening hours were good or better; 79% of those who had need had been able to see a GP on the same day in an emergency; 93% felt the GPs were good or better and 95% felt the nurses were good or better. Generally then these figures mirror the Department of Health's annual patient survey for the Practice although we would be interested to hear from those who say they could not see a GP in an emergency on the day as, other than those whose 'emergency' then takes them off to work and means they cannot attend the surgery when they wish to, the Practice policy is to always see patients in an emergency and surgeries close only after the last emergency patient has been seen.

The PRG meeting took place on 12 March 2013 at Guessens Road surgery and was hosted by Dr Sachin Gupta who took the opportunity to discuss the differences between the PRG and the PCT's PPG. Dr Gupta reported that the Practice was pleased with the results and the PRG members expressed their happiness with their surgery. Dr Gupta expressed the desire to work with our patients to build on the achievements.

An action plan was agreed at that meeting with the following priorities:

1. Improve patient/practice communications by (i) producing a regular newsletter (ii) developing the practice website. [We aim to produce quarterly newsletters from the summer and improve the website from late April. We have received some suggestions about the content from those who responded to the draft of this report but would hope also to receive ongoing patient feedback (or more active volunteering) about the sorts of matters to be included.]
2. Decommission the 0844 number. [We have already undertaken not to renew the contract with the current supplier and will make an 01707 number available as an additional option for patients by end of April. A replacement telephone system will be introduced by 2015 and we are working with patient representatives on this.]
3. PRG involvement at the Practice to increase to help ensure that the practice moves forward with the support of its patients. [Dr Gupta will lead the involvement but other GPs will be involved too.]
4. Parking to improve. [We are restricted in what we can offer as we have no dedicated spaces for anyone (including doctors) at either our Knightsfield or Haldens sites. At Guessens Road we have fewer spaces than car users (including doctors, nurses, phlebotomists and counsellors) and every week staff also find that they cannot park (or get their car out because it is blocked in by someone who is in consultation and so cannot be disturbed). Parking is thus a problem for us but we propose to label one space for disabled use (although disabled car users can of course park on the yellow lines outside the surgery).]

The prioritised action plan was then circulated to all PRG members asking for their support or reasons for any objections. Solid support was received for implementing the changes was received with a few members also expressing willingness to be further involved.

### Opening Hours

There have been no changes in practice opening hours – but we are required to remind you that reception services at both Guessens Road and Knightsfield surgeries are open from Monday-Friday 8am to 6:30pm. Haldens is open from 8am until 1pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Outside these hours you should freephone 111 and will be connected to the out-of-hours service. Surgeries commence from 8am until about 6:30pm (further details can be found in our latest practice leaflet available elsewhere on our website).

Knightsfield surgery is also open by appointment on the mornings of the first three Saturdays of the month. An early nurse session is available on Friday mornings at Guessens Road. Limited on-line booking is available via our website ([www.gardencitypractice.nhs.uk](http://www.gardencitypractice.nhs.uk)). We hope to build on our web-presence and on-line services in the future but are currently restricted by NHS policies (this however is due to change and indeed **must** change by 2015).

During surgery hours you should phone 0844 499 7050 to make appointments.

Appointments can also be made in person at any of our branches.