

The Health Centre Practice Royston

Patient Reference Group Report dated 28 March 2014

Our patient reference group was founded in July 2011. We have been meeting on a two monthly basis, with a few exceptions, since. We have continued to recruit patients to the group and our numbers are growing. An invitation is included in our new patient packs, there are printed invitations at reception, an advert on the waiting room television screen and information and a joining form are on our website. Our group consists of 86 members of whom approximately 20 attend the meetings. All the group members are e-mailed meeting dates, meeting minutes and are welcome to come to the meeting.

At our meeting in October the members were asked for suggestions for our annual survey, these suggestions could be e-mailed or given in person. Unfortunately none were forthcoming. Our meeting in January was postponed and at the next meeting in February asked for survey suggestions again but again no-one had any suggestions. At this meeting we discussed potential changes to our appointment booking system, with a view to changing to triaging appointments. We had a long discussion during the meeting and patients were concerned about the volume of telephone calls that this would cause and would such a change really be beneficial to patients and GPs. The group then decided to conduct a survey into the methods patients use to book appointments and how easy it is to telephone the surgery to request an appointment. We also looked at how patients make their journey to the surgery; this information might be useful during discussions around the development of the Royston Hospital site. The site is on the edge of the town and needs to be easily accessible to all patients.

We gave out 250 surveys and received 182 replies. The surveys were completed by all ages, from under 18 year olds to age 85+. They were completed by a range of ethnic groups including British, Irish, Asian, and Indian.

Most patients prefer to book their appointments by telephone (60%), the majority found it fairly easy to get through (40%) although 28% of patients said it was not very easy. 95% of patients would like to know where they are in the queue of calls to be answered. 75% said they were able to see a GP on the day they wanted. 75% felt the receptionist was very helpful when they got through and 51% found the overall experience of making an appointment fairly good, 37% found it very good.

The GPs continued to have discussions within the practice about changing to a triage system of booking appointments. They have decided against this as there seemed little benefit to patients or the GPs.

We are reviewing our current telephone system and hope to make improvements. We may change provider if this will give our patients a better service and hope to be able to include call queuing as this is clearly a priority for our patients.

The Group were invited to attend a meeting to discuss the results of the survey but only two wanted to attend. The survey results along with this report will be e-mailed to all the members of the group.

Other issues that have been discussed during the year have been: care.data, the differences between the three different types of consent that are being requested, development of the Health Centre and Royston Hospital and an additional television screen for the waiting room.

We spoke at length about care.data and the lack of confidence the group has that all patients know about it, understand what it means and were aware of the opt out process. As a result of this a poster has been added to our waiting room television screen and placed in the waiting room and all consulting rooms. Opt out forms are at reception for patients to complete. The dissent to information being shared is then coded in patient records.

The group asked for clarification on the three different types of consent that are being asked for and these were clearly explained to them. There is a letter at reception detailing the three differences; the summary care record, sharing in and out and care.data, along with the forms to be signed by the patients. Again these are coded in their computer notes.

The group had asked for patient calling on the television screen which we no longer had once we had changed computer system. The practice should have been provided with an additional television screen but as we were due to undergo re-development it was not fitted. The refurbishment is not now due to take place but the GPs were told the surgery would have to purchase its own television screen. This would cost £2000+ so it was decided that this was too much money and so we would continue with just the call board that is above the

reception desk. We have been told we can now have a television fitted free of charge as this was part of the original contract! This should be fitted in the near future.

These are just some of the items that have been discussed during the past year and we look forward to the next 12 months.

Our next meeting is scheduled for 7th April 2014.

Our practice opening hours are:

Monday – Friday 8.30am – 6.30pm

We offer extended hours appointments as follows:

Monday 6.30pm – 8.00pm

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 7.00am – 8.00am.

Melanie Piggott

Practice Manager and Patient Participation Group Organiser