

PPG profile:

Manchester Road Surgery set up a patient participation group in 2012.

We encouraged people to join the group in several ways including joining and promoting patient opinion to gain feedback, advertising on the practice website, in our newsletter, on prescriptions and also by directly contacting patients and asking them if they wanted to join. The latter was by far the most effective method and most of the original members remain in the group. A new member joined the group this year as they were particularly interested in the work we were doing around carers.

The group remains largely virtual, the practice manager emails the group when necessary to raise awareness of any changes within the practice or in the wider NHS that directly affect the practice such as the formation of the CCG. The group did meet recently to have a discussion about how best to meet the needs of carers who are registered with the practice and to listen to a presentation by someone from the Sheffield Carers centre. Minutes of this meeting are available on request.

Patient representation:

The group currently has 10 members who are all patients of the practice.

In terms of age and gender our patient demographic is as follows –

Age	Gender
0-16 19%	Male 49%
17-64 61%	Female 51%
65+ 20%	

50% of the PRG are female and 50% male, all members of the group are white.

Four members are over 65	40%
Three members are 60-65	30%
One member is 40-50	10%
One member is 50-60	10%
One member is 30-40	10%

One of our patients is registered as disabled and 2 are carers.

Priority issues:

In 2012 as a result of a meeting with the PPG and the subsequent survey, several changes were made to the services we provide here at Manchester Road. As a response to requests for more flexible appointment times we trialled and then made permanent the early morning surgery on a Monday, this has proved very popular with our patients. We also introduced the facility to book appointments on-line and have seen a steady increase in the number of patients using this facility. In 2013 members of the PPG were keen to discuss ways in which the surgery could improve the service we give to carers as this was another concern that was raised after the results of the 2012 survey had been collated. To make a start we had a meeting early in 2013 and were given a presentation by the Sheffield carers society. Several good ideas were raised at the meeting and some actions have already been implemented by the practice. In terms of our questionnaire after discussion with the PCT it was clear that to just focus our questions around carers was too restrictive and not all members of our patient population would be able to give an opinion. In light of this an after an email exchange with

the whole of the PPG (some couldn't attend the carers meeting) it was decided to base this years questionnaire mainly around the area of appointments.

Balancing appointment demand and exploring best options for booking appointments is something we are keen to get right and it was felt that this would be a good time to get our patients and PPG's perspective on the topic.

Obtaining the views of patients:

The survey was prepared and distributed to patients attending in person during a 1 week period in March 2013. 106 surveys were completed and analysed. It was felt by the PRG that an "in house" survey from those patients physically attending for appointments was more relevant than a postal/web based survey which may include patients with historical rather than current experiences.

Obtaining the views of patients and the PRG

Survey results:

Q1: Your age range

16-34	35-64	64-74	75+
12	56	21	17

Q2: When did you last see a Doctor at the Surgery?

In the past 3 months	Between 3 and 6 months ago	More than 6 months ago
64	17	16

Q3: Which of the following methods do you prefer to use to book an appointment at the Surgery ? Please tick all the boxes that apply

In person	By Phone	Online
22	82	12

Q4: In the past 6 months have you tried to see a Doctor fairly quickly? By fairly quickly we mean on the same day or in the next two weekdays that the surgery was open.

Yes	No	Can't remember
66	33	3 (102)

Q5: In the past 6 months, if you have tried to book ahead for an appointment to see a Dr were you able to get an appointment? By 'booking ahead' we mean booking an appointment more than two weeks in advance.

Yes	No	Haven't tried
47	11	40 (98)

Q6: If you weren't able to get an appointment or the appointment offered wasn't convenient why was that? Please tick all the boxes that apply

There weren't any appointments	Time didn't suit	Appointment was with a Dr who I didn't want to see	Another reason
17	8	4	6 (35)

Q7: What did you do on that occasion?

Went to the appointment offered	Got an appointment for a different day	Had a consultation over the phone	Went to A&E/Walk in centre	Saw a pharmacist	Contacted the surgery another time	Didn't see or speak to anyone
11	19	2	2	1	10	6 (51)

Q8. Did you know that we offer an early morning surgery on a Monday with appointments starting at 7.30 a.m?

Yes	No
31	68

Q9. How easy is it for you get an appointment with a Practice Nurse at the surgery?

Haven't tried	Fairly	Not very	Not at all	Don't Know
18	67	3	0	8

Q10. In the past 6 months how easy have you found the following ? Please put a tick in one box for each row

	Haven't tried	Very Easy	Fairly easy	Not very easy	Not at all easy	Don't know
Getting through on the phone	6	41	40	9	1	1
Speaking to a Doctor on the phone	53	9	15	7	1	12
Speaking to a Nurse on the phone	69	5	6	0	1	16
Obtaining test results by phone	46	25	19	0	1	17

Q11. Do you have carer responsibilities for anyone in your household with a long-standing health problem or disability? (if you do we would like to add you to our carers register so please tell a clinician or the receptionist)

Yes	No
3	90

Discussion of survey results:

After the results had been collated they were sent to all members of the PPG for comment (9 via email, 1 by post). Members were asked what if any changes they thought should be made as a result of the survey results and to give their opinion of the current system.

Comments from the group:

Suggestion to communicate better the fact that we have an early morning surgery on Mondays (several members pointed this out!). Found it difficult to speak to a Dr on the phone (despite being asked to do so!) No problem getting through on the phone, prefer this method to book appointments, please no automated systems! No problems booking appointments with a nurse or a Dr, if no appointments available I take the next convenient one. Results of the survey are good, we should include a service priority question next time too. Have we thought about telephone consultations, this might mean that some patients don't need a consultation after all?

Action plan:

The PRG have suggested that the practice look at further ways of advertising the early morning surgery. This information is already on the website, on a notice in the surgery and has been featured in the Crosspool clarion, and in the practice newsletter. We will put the information on to prescription counterfoils which is another good way of getting a message to our patients and put the details of the service on the front page of the website for a time.

From the above comments it seems that we need to make it clear to our patients when and how they can speak to a Dr on the telephone rather than making an appointment. We don't feel as a small practice that a telephone triage service would work for us at our current clinical staffing levels, however there are certain circumstances where it is less time consuming for both patient and GP to discuss things over the telephone rather than take up a full 10 minute appointment. This is something we are keen to investigate in consultation with the PRG. As a starting point we will encourage patients who need a medication review to arrange for a Dr to call them and conduct the review by telephone rather than booking an appointment. This should also have a positive effect on freeing up appointments for other patients as the survey suggests that 33% of those surveyed had difficulty in booking an appointment to see a Dr fairly quickly.

Practice opening hours:

The Surgery doors 8.15 am to 6.00 pm Monday to Friday except for Thursday afternoons when we close at 1pm, most Mondays we have an early morning surgery starting at 7.30 am. We do not close at lunchtimes. Phone lines are open 8.30-6pm Monday to Friday apart from Thursday afternoon. Patients can access services during these hours by either telephoning the Practice or walking into the building.

Appointments can be made by phone, internet or in person at the desk.

Outside these hours the practice is part of the GP collaborative and patients can access this service by calling the surgery. The call will be transferred directly to the out of hours service (either 111 or GP collaborative depending on when they call). Repeat prescription requests can be made in person or by phone, email, internet, fax or post. Signed prescriptions can be collected, or posted out if a SAE is enclosed, or patients can arrange for a local Pharmacy to collect them on their behalf.