

Neston Medical Centre

Patient Participation Group

Meeting Thursday 21 March 2013 1.30pm @ Neston Medical Centre

Minutes

In attendance:- Mrs Pat Clare, Mrs Betty Smith, Mr Brian Slack, Mr John Gilfoyle, Dr Chris Steere, GP; Mrs Dot Stevenson, Practice Manager

Apologies: - Mrs Moira Andrews-Chair, Mr John Gibbon

1. Minutes of Last Meeting:- The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as accurate. Mr Gilfoyle signed-off the minutes as a true record.

2. Matters Arising From Last Meeting:- None

3. Patient Survey – The Practice conducted a Patient Survey in February 2013 with a company called Patient Dynamics (same as last year). The results of the survey were previously distributed to the Group members and the main aim of this meeting was to discuss those results and come up with an action plan.

The Group were extremely pleased with the results of the Survey. (Even though Mrs Andrews could not attend the meeting, she sent an email sending her congratulations to all doctors and Practice Staff on a good result from the survey.) Looking at the 24 questions on page 3, 'Report Ratings', the majority of the ratings were excellent. In 17 of the 24 questions we scored 90 or above; 2, between 80 and 89, 2, between 70 and 79 and 3 between 60 and 69.

As last year the 2 questions where we scored the lowest were:-

- How easy is it to get through to someone at your Practice on the phone? (66)

This is an improvement of +5 on last year's survey which is very encouraging. However year after year patients complain that they cannot get through on the phone at 8am. As in previous years, Dr Steere thought that the principal problems and patient comments identified in the survey were difficulty getting through on the phone and getting the doctor that you wanted. Consequently we have introduced a new appointments system which started 2 weeks ago. There are now many more appointments available each day for each doctor on duty. This greatly increases the number of patient contacts on any given day. The doctor telephones the patient and they jointly agree the best way forward depending on the nature of the problem. So far we have had excellent feedback from patients who seem to find it much easier to get in touch and more responsive to their needs. This is at present increasing the GP's workload but, in the main, enabling them to deal with all the patients who

make contact on any given day. It also negates the need for patients to ring at 8am (or queue outside) to get an appointment. Hopefully by the time we conduct our next survey our results will have improved. (See information leaflet regarding our new system attached)

- How easy is it to book ahead at your Practice? (62)

Again this an improvement on last year (+2) – Last year when we discussed this the group asked us to advertise our appointments system as they felt that patients did not understand our ‘guaranteed next day appointment system’ – we duly did this in the Neston Local Magazine and this may account for our improvement. Again Dr Steere felt that our new appointments system may further improve our results.

Further discussion took place around our new appointments system:-

- Failure to attend rates (which we discussed last year) – it is felt that these will decrease dramatically.
- Mr Slack felt that the GP’s were spending time doing reception work, i.e. booking appointments when required after speaking to patients. Dr Steere said that indeed this is true but there was no other way around it. They do however speak to many more patients and see a lot less than previously.
- Mrs Clare asked about remote diagnosis now that the GP’s were speaking to a lot more people rather than seeing them and could there be cause for concern. Dr Steere explained that we have been doing telephone consultations for a number of years and he feels that the GP’s are very experienced in this area. He feels that this system promotes the best use of the GP’s time and is more efficient. However the discussion is a joint discussion/decision with the patient and safeguards are built in to ensure that patients who need to be seen, or indeed if patients feel that they need to be seen, they are seen.
- Mr Gilfoyle said he had spoken to a few patients about the new system and all the feedback and comments had been positive.

Further discussion took place around some of the patient comments arising from the survey.

- ‘I don’t like the radio’ – the Group understood the need for the radio outside Dr Steere’s room – confidentiality – Dr Steere agreed that it would be better if we had speakers in the walls or ceilings but at this time the cost was prohibitive. Mrs Clare wondered if it would now be feasible for all patients to wait in the main reception area rather than ‘down the corridor’ if waiting for Dr Steere or Dr Sillitoe. Mrs Smith thought not as it could take some time for the elderly infirm or people like herself, in wheelchairs, to get down the corridor.
- ‘Difficult to get through on the phone at 8am’ – previously discussed (see above) – we now have a notice on the door specifically asking patients not to queue outside at 8am.

- 'Need childrens books and toys' – we used to provide books and toys but were advised to remove them when swine flu was prevalent a few years ago, in order to minimise the spread of infection. The Group felt that it was unreasonable for parents to rely on the practice to provide books and toys and that parents should have such items with them to amuse their children.
- 'An excellent medical centre with pleasant staff' – 'wonderful practice and staff' – 'very helpful, friendly and caring' – 'would be reluctant to move from the practice' – These sorts of comments are in the majority and all present are very pleased with the results.

Action Plan – all to be achieved by 31 March 2014

- i. New appointments system – continue to monitor and evolve our new system. Mrs Clare suggested conducting an internal patient survey to assess patient satisfaction with the new system. All agreed that this was a good idea and the plan is to conduct a survey in about 3 to 4 months time.
- ii. Now that our new computer system has 'bedded-in' we plan to commence on-line booking of appointments later this year.
- iii. Last year we re-commenced publication of our 'failed to attend appointment' rates. It is felt that these rates will fall with our new system. It was decided to publish the rates and compare them with the same month last year, to see if this is the case.
- iv. The Group also suggested monitoring patient complaints to see if there was any increase in complaints about the new system. This was agreed.

4. Any Other Business - Nil

The meeting closed at 2.30pm

Next meeting Wednesday 26 June 2013 at 1.30pm

Age / Sex 10 Year Band

Parent Population: All Patients Age/Sex Register March 2013		
Last Run: 25-Mar-2013 16:54		
Relative Date: 25-Mar-2013 16:54		
Patient Count	Males	Females
7515	3600	3915

	Age	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	100+
Gender▼												
Female		343	381	392	397	506	590	604	449	207	44	2
Male		344	380	383	325	493	542	562	370	173	28	0

We attempt to recruit patients to our Participation Group by:-

- Putting the information on our Practice website
- Having handouts at reception
- Putting up posters in the Practice
- Word of mouth by GP's

The Age/Sex profile of the Group is:-

F	72
M	74
F	68
M	63
F	69
M	72

Confirmation of Practice Opening Times

Our Practice is open from 8am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday.