



Heathgate Medical Practice

Patient Survey 2015/2016 Results analysis and action plan



(Designed in conjunction with the Practice Patient Reference Group)

January 2016

Background

December 2014 saw the introduction of the national Friends and Family Test (FFT) in Primary Care, which through two questions, is used by NHS England to measure levels of satisfaction with the services offered by our Practice.

In the three years prior to the FFT, we were under contract via a Directed Enhanced Service (DES), which, in conjunction with our Patient Reference Group (PRG) required us to undertake an annual patient survey.

Whilst in April 2014, the requirement of a DES annual survey ceased, our core General Medical Services (GMS) contract still required us, again with our PRG to review patient feedback (from a range of sources).

Both the Partners and the PRG were still keen to undertake a more detailed patient survey than the FFT and in the summer of 2014 this was undertaken in the form of patients sending us a 'summer post card' with their views on five areas of our service.

The survey included a general question on patients overall satisfaction with the services we offer with each postcard having a second question chosen from the list below:

- How close to booked appointment times patients were seen
- How to access urgent care when we are closed
- What other medical services we could offer
- The earliest and latest appointment times we offer

The full report on the patient survey is available on our Practice website.

During the PRG meetings in 2015, we shared the outcomes of the FFT with members and despite promotion of the questionnaire with patients, the number of respondents has been disappointing; particularly compared to the large number (269) from our own 'Send us a Postcard' survey last year.

The PRG therefore asked us to consider surveying patients again outside of the FFT. The Practice was happy to undertake another survey and the 'Send us a Christmas Card' survey was created. The questions were agreed with the PRG.

As well as a further general satisfaction question, members were keen to explore with patients whether some of the local promotion of the 111 service we have undertaken has been a success. 111 is now the route patients reach out of hour's services when the surgery is closed.

We have also shared with the PRG our increasing frustration with the number of patients that are not keeping their booked appointments. These missed appointments (known as DNA's – did not arrive) have been highlighted to patients through our Practice newsletter, website articles and the large pull up banner we have installed in our waiting room, which flags

up with patients the amount of lost clinical time in the previous month as a result of DNAs.

The questions for our Christmas card survey were agreed.

The survey questions

This scan of the back our 'card' illustrates the four questions we asked our patients.

Question 1

Please tell us how you would obtain, or who you would contact, for urgent medical care when we are not open.

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Question 2

If you had an appointment today, how close to your booked appointment time were you seen by the doctor or nurse? Please circle from the options below.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Under 5 minutes | 5 – 10 minutes |
| 10 – 15 minutes | Over 15 minutes |

Question 3

An increasing number of patients are failing to attend for their appointments without telling us they are not required. This is wasting clinical time and preventing other patients having those appointments. How should we manage this with them?

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Question 4

Overall how would you rate your satisfaction with the surgery?

Fully satisfied / Partially satisfied / Unsatisfied / Very unsatisfied

Comments

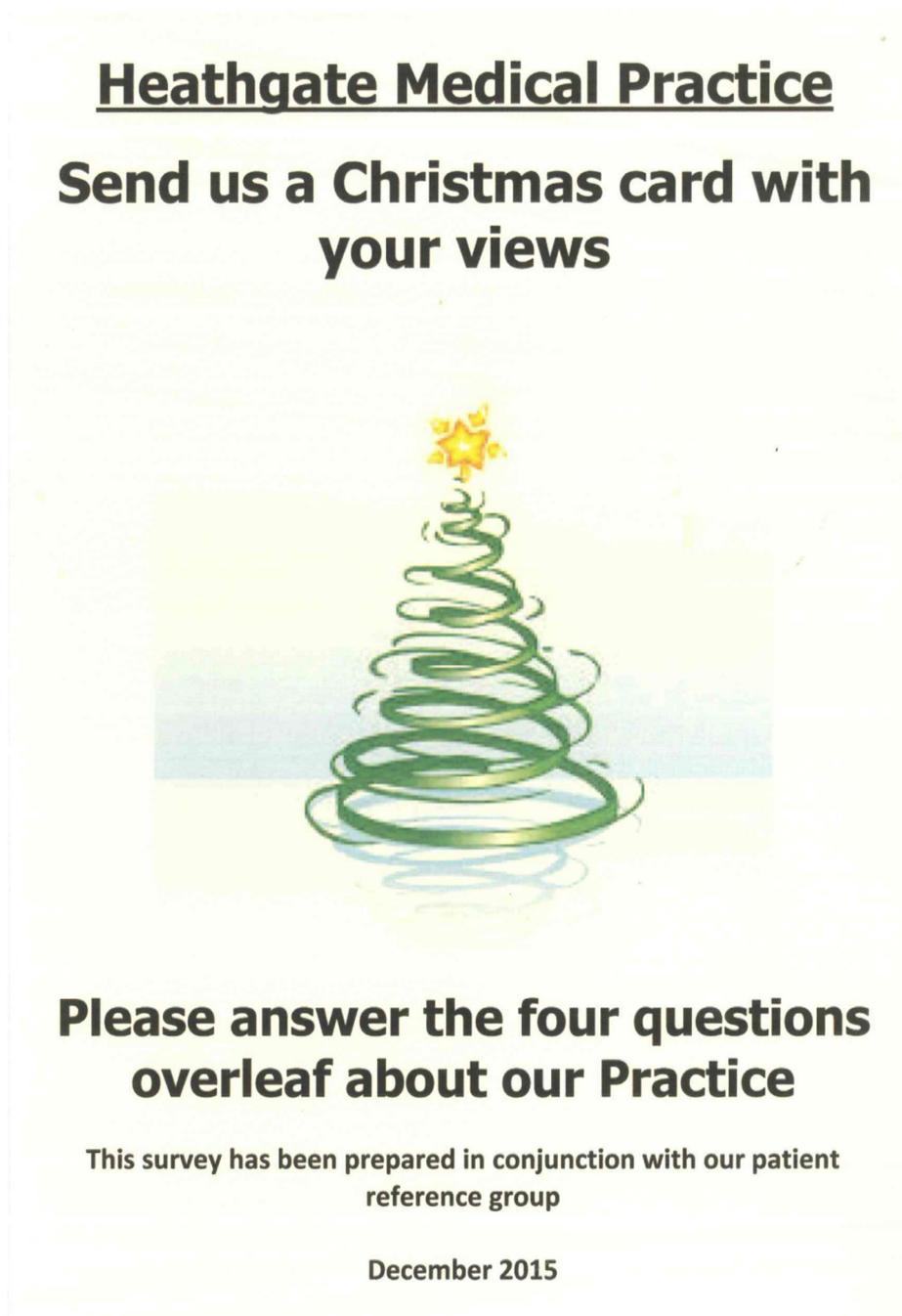
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Survey period

This second scan shows the front of our card that was asking our patients to complete the questions on the back.

They were available for completion from the Reception areas of both surgeries over the two week seasonal period commencing 7th December 2015, with an electronic version online.

Many patients, liking the Christmas card theme, commented on the originality of collecting views this way.



The results

The response was not as good as the summer 'postcard' campaign had been in 2014. We received just 49 responses compared to 269 in 2014. However, we must remember that as well as our in house survey, we are contractually obliged to offer the FFT all year round and so this had to run at the same time as our local survey. Were patients suffering from 'survey fatigue'?

Question 1

Please tell us how you would obtain, or who you would contact, for urgent medical care when we are not open.

Answer	Number of responses	% of overall responses
Attend walk in centre	2	4%
Call 111	21	43%
Attend A&E	3	6%
Call 111 or visit pharmacy	1	2%
Call 111 or 999	7	15%
Call 999	6	12%
Depends on the problem	6	12%
Attend A&E or the pharmacy	1	2%
Visit NHS Direct website	2	4%
Total	49	100%

As with this question last year, we accept the question is quite general. i.e. we do not describe what constitutes 'urgent medical care' as this could be signs of a stroke or to others that they have run out of their medication.

What this result does show is that the overall awareness of the 111 service has increased. Overall 60% of the respondents refer to 111 in their answer. This is up from 19% in last year's survey.

Question 2

This is a repeat of last year's question around how close to booked appointment times patients were seen.

If you had an appointment today, how close to your booked appointment time were you seen by the doctor or nurse?

Here are this year's results:

Answer	2015 result	2014 result
Within under 5 minutes of appointment time	36%	63%
Within 5 - 10 minutes of appointment time	36%	25%

Within 10 – 15 minutes of appointment time	16%	10%
Over 15 minutes of appointment time	12%	2%
Not applicable today	5 respondents (excluded from %)	9 respondents (excluded from %)
Total	100%	100%

These figures suggest from the sample of patients that responded, there has been an increase in the length of time patients are waiting beyond their booked appointment time to see our clinicians.

Whilst of course we aim to see patients on time, this can be difficult to balance as sometimes if there is an urgent situation requiring attention or someone is particularly ill, upset or needing extra time to explain their situation, some patients may need longer than the allocated 10 minute routine appointment time with the doctor or nurse.

Some patients can present with a list of issues they would like to discuss, which unless some are deferred to another appointment, can cause clinics to overrun.

All our clinicians apologise if they are running late and our Reception team try and keep patients up to date if it is likely that the time they actually see our clinician is beyond their booked appointment time.

Our clinical team have been made aware of the results, which have been discussed as a whole. Some clinicians are aware they can run late more than others and we have discussed 'best practices here'.

Question 3

An increasing number of patients are failing to attend for their appointments without telling us they are not required. This is wasting clinical time and preventing other patients having those appointments. How should we manage this with them?

This open question has led to some varying responses:

Answer	Number of responses	% of overall responses
Send text reminders to patients	12	26%
Do nothing	1	2%
Fine patients	8	16%
Send a warning letter and fine if repeat	3	6%
Send a warning letter	7	14%
De-register patients (including 3 strikes and out!)	4	8%
Create a name and shame list that	5	10%

will require a Manager speaking to them before further appointments can be booked		
Telephone patients the day before to remind them	5	10%
Promote lost clinical time because of DNAs	1	2%
We should support these patients and not sanction them as they make have problems remembering appointments	1	2%
No answer	2	4%
Total	49	100%

We hope you will agree there are some really interesting views here.

Looking at the comments, we are unable to fine patients but we do have a policy asking patients to leave the Practice register if they do not keep three appointments in a row. Registering elsewhere will help our Practice reduce its 'lost clinical time' but may just pass the problem to the new Practice, which does not help the NHS overall.

We have already undertaken a number of campaigns to promote the lost clinical time with newsletter and website articles as well as the banner in our main waiting room which highlights the amount of time in hours that was lost the previous month through missed appointments.

We are aware of some NHS services (particularly smaller dental Practices) that telephone patients to remind them of their appointment the day before but with some days 13 doctors and nurses working, each seeing a minimum of 24 patients, this would be an operational challenge in terms of staff resourcing.

We do acknowledge the value of text reminders and writing to patients who DNA and have included these areas in our action plan summarised later in this report.

Finally, we accept that we should be mindful of patients who may need 'support not sanction' over missed appointments and or Reception team do offer reminder slips to patients that they feel need a written note of their appointment time.

Question 4

The final question was to gauge the overall satisfaction of patients experience with the services we offer.

Overall, how would you rate your satisfaction with the surgery?

Every card returned had a response (49):

- 47 patients (96%) responded as fully satisfied with the service we offer
- 2 patients (4%) responded as being partially satisfied with the service we offer
- No respondents were either less than satisfied or unsatisfied

Compared with last time, the figures look like this:

Response	2015 result	2014 result
Fully satisfied	96%	94%
Partially satisfied	4%	4%
Unsatisfied	0%	0%
Very unsatisfied	0%	6%
Total	100%	100%

Again, this year we are very pleased with the results, particularly as this year there were no respondents who were unsatisfied with the service we offered.

Comments on cards

Just as valuable are the comments which accompanied the responses to question 4. These comments are recorded below:

- I have never had the least complaint and have often felt I have got more than expected.
- You treat conditions identified by patients seriously and investigate further if necessary.
- I think we are very lucky to have such an efficient caring Practice; thank you!
- Can't praise the staff enough. Excellent service.
- You are the best!
- Bright, cheery receptionists and a nice bright waiting room.
- Very helpful staff.
- The doctors and staff are excellent although too long a wait to see the doctor.
- Was seen the same morning as I made my appointment.
- Dr Palframan has been very supportive of my situation.
- Have been well treated and advised over many years.
- This surgery is the most helpful and friendly we have ever been to.
- Always friendly, helpful and very efficient. Thank you for the service which generally exceeds expectations.
- Your surgery and all staff are so brilliant. Always helpful and smiling which makes you feel better even before treatment!
- Always lovely and helpful – all staff.
- Lovely caring staff.
- Dr Ames has such a caring manner.
- Just don't ever close Rockland Surgery.
- Doctors are good and do listen to patients.

- We have found everyone very kind and helpful.
- The doctors, nurses, dispensers and receptionists are always helpful, polite and efficient, which is not always the case with patients, I'm sure.
- Thank you!
- Very professional and friendly staff with pleasant and caring doctors and nurses.
- Excellent service always.
- Heathgate offers an excellent service – from start to end. Friendly helpful staff and caring doctors.
- Kind, obliging and professionally thorough relationship with patients. Also a helpful back up team.
- Difficult to get an appointment so had to go to Rockland instead.
- So lucky to have such a wonderful team in your Practice. We are indeed so grateful of everyone involved in the running of the surgery – both at Rockland and Poringland. Well done to you all.
- I wish I did not have to wait so long for a preferred doctor. I could be cured or dead.
- It is a long wait for an appointment with a specific GP but access generally is fine.
- I have never had any problem. Excellent care.
- I was surprised with the long wait last week, which I had not ever encountered before. Although the doctors and reception staff are all excellent – thank you.

Thank you for all your comments. We strive to run a safe, well led, caring, responsive and effective service for patients. We acknowledge there are some comments about waiting times for appointments and these can vary week to week, clinician to clinician.

Some patients choose to wait for their preferred doctor and this has value with continuity of care but for same day or urgent need care, this is provided on the day with provision made some days for up to 40 patients to be seen on the day they book their appointment.

We stay close to our waiting times and regularly review the situation.

Action plan

As a direct result of the responses, we have created the following action plan:

Obtaining urgent medical attention when the surgery is closed	Whilst the results of the survey indicate an increased awareness of the 111 service, we will continue to promote this and the appropriate use of A&E in Practice, via the website, newsletter and in our patient leaflet.
Waiting times compared to booked appointment times	These figures suggest an increased waiting time for patients compared to the booked appointment times they have to see a clinician.

	<p>We are aware that some of our clinicians run closer to time more regularly than others and they will share best practices.</p> <p>We will continue to encourage the use of double (20 minute) appointments if certain patients regularly need more time with clinicians.</p>
<p>How to handle the increasing number of patients that are not keeping their booked appointments</p>	<p>We plan to:</p> <p>Continue to offer text confirmation of appointments at the point of booking.</p> <p>Continue to highlight/promote the problem and our frustrations with the lost clinic time in an attempt to make people aware of the issue, encouraging them to keep or cancel appointments if they are not required.</p> <p>Write to patients when they DNA appointments. In January 2016, we will write to all patients that miss booked appointments, highlighting the loss of clinical time in an 'already stretched' NHS.</p> <p>Start using the text reminder service to patients who have booked appointments. As part of this, we will run a campaign to collect/update patients mobile telephone numbers in our records</p>
<p>Satisfaction levels</p>	<p>Without becoming complacent, we plan to continue with all our efforts across the Practice to deliver the appropriate care, at the appropriate time in the appropriate setting with our five core Practice values at the helm of everything we do.</p>

Summary

This report will be shared with all members of the Practice team, our Patient Reference Group and wider members of the Practice population via our website. Our February 2016 newsletter will include a summary of the results and details of the action plan.

We would like to thank all the patients that participated in the survey and our Patient Reference Group for their continued interest in reviewing and monitoring the levels of care that we provide to our patients.

Garry Whiting
Managing Partner
23rd January 2016