

Marston Medical Centre

Patient Survey 2007/8

Run May 2007

Our response to your comments

Patient Survey 2007/8

We ran this survey in an atmosphere during a time when the media have not been very positive about GP practices. Huge GP salary figures have been in the headlines which do not bear any relation to our reality! Expectations have also been raised by the government that GP services will be available in the evenings and weekends when we have signed a contract with the Department of Health in which our working hours are 8.00 - 6.30 weekdays only.

In this atmosphere we were not surprised to receive less satisfaction than in previous years and feel upset that this is through no fault of our own.

However, we do appreciate your comments, both in the survey and during the year and we do listen to what you are telling us and can offer the following responses to the individual comments made:

Opening hours

Your comments

- A Receptionist manning the phone over the lunch hour instead of a recorded message
- Obtaining the last appointment of the day is very difficult. Would like appointments with both doctors and nurses at 6.00pm
- Evening surgery for people who work would be beneficial
- A Saturday emergency clinic would be helpful
- Could be open Saturday morning
- Open at lunchtime

Our response

Our contract with the government only provides for the surgery to be available on weekdays during the core hours of 8.00 - 6.30. Although there has been a concerted government campaign to encourage patients to express their dissatisfaction there have been no discussions between GPs and the Department of Health. There are GP services available out of these core

hours which can be accessed by telephoning our regular phone number and you will be transferred to the Out of Hours service. You can obtain telephone advice from a doctor; be seen by a doctor at the Out of Hours centre (in East Oxford) or if it is necessary a doctor will visit you at home.

We had many comments closing the surgery between 12.00-2.00 daily. We have had telephone access over lunchtime for the past 2 years. We realise that it is inconvenient for patients that the doors are closed during this period but this is not because we are having a long lunch break. We use this time to do the many administrative tasks that we need to do to keep the surgery running efficiently.

We do not run lunchtime appointments as both doctors and nurses are employed per session (morning or afternoon) and often work somewhere else in the other half of the day. Doctors who are here all day use the time between morning and afternoon surgeries to speak to patients on the phone, do home visits and deal with hospital referrals, insurance reports as well as attending training sessions or practice team meetings.

Having said this, we will review our opening hours during 2007-8. More and more services are now being based at our premises and we may have to run different clinics at different times of the day in order to be able to offer a fuller range of these services.

Because of the pace of change with IT we also often use the lunchtime period to sort out any computer problems which means that they cannot be used during this time.

Telephone

Your comments

- The new, longer phone number is difficult to remember
- The new phone number is more costly and less user friendly
- Why change a phone number that was easily remembered?
- I don't like the new telephone system

Our response

We know the change in telephone number has been unpopular and we did not change it without consideration.

Our old switchboard was on its last legs and we needed to find a replacement. Nearly every system we looked at now provides the facility of offering options for where you wish your call to be directed. The service we chose offered the best range of options for our surgery set up and whilst we would have preferred to keep the old number we had to change to move onto a new network with our new supplier.

The 0844 is a local call number it is not a premium rate line.

The new system does provide both the patients and practice staff with benefits. Patients no longer get the engaged tone and know they are being held in a queue rather than having to constantly re-dial during busy periods. They can also cancel appointments when we are closed.

Appointments/Appointment times

Your comments

- Longer appointments
- Time is a big matter. You have to wait a long time to get an appointment. If someone needs a blood test they may have to wait a week. The doctors should have more time, if possible, for each person
- I would prefer a different day for blood tests as Thursday is not convenient.
- Can't always get an appointment when needed
- Too long to wait for appointments
- Sometimes want a double appointment

Our response

Punctuality is something we take very seriously. Our standard appointment times are 15 minutes (a few are 10 minutes and some are 30 minutes) which are longer than in most practices. These timings are specifically so that

patients have enough time with the doctor and that we run to time. However, what we cannot anticipate are patients who consistently turn up either after their appointment time or 10 minutes into their 15 minute slot and expect their full appointment time. This obviously puts the whole morning or afternoon out of kilter. We also cannot anticipate what patients consult their doctor about - some issues may be more complex or upsetting and may need more of the doctor or nurse's time. Not everything can be tightly timetabled. We also often have to urgently admit a patient to hospital during a morning or afternoon surgery and this may often delay patients who are waiting. Unfortunately, this is the nature of general practice. We do our best so that patients are not kept waiting and will advise patients of any significant delays.

All of our GPs are popular and all of them are part-time. Unfortunately this means that they do get booked up ahead as they are not here every day. We have tried different methods of managing demand but demand is growing at an incredibly fast rate. We have seen another huge increase in demand for appointments this year. Bearing in mind the restrictions on the number of rooms we have available and the hours the doctors can work and are available here, we do the best we can.

We employed another doctor last October who is regularly here for a day a week and sometimes more. We have employed another nurse and have trained up 2 of our practice Receptionists to take blood to give us some more capacity and flexibility with blood tests. The problem is not always having the staff on the days that patients would like their tests to be done but also having a room in which to do the test and the facility to transport the sample to the hospital laboratory. We used to be able to access blood tests at the hospitals but this has not been permitted since the autumn of 2006.

We will always see any patient who requests a same day appointment that day but this will obviously be with the doctors we have here that day.

We will always make a double appointment if you feel that you need half an hour with the doctor.

We have also introduced (from July 2006) telephone triage on Monday mornings and days following a bank holiday. In these clinics any patient who rings up will be phoned back by the duty doctor. The problem will be assessed and if it can be dealt with by telephone, it will. If you need to come in, the doctor will make an appointment for you. We are using this system as another way of trying to meet patient demand.

Our nurse is now fully trained to run minor illness clinics and can deal with a variety of problems for which you may have previously seen the GP.

We are never going to get all these issues right for everybody but as you can see we are trying a variety of ways to meet your comments.

Staff

Your comments

- One specific Receptionist is very polite. If the others could do the same it would be nice

Our response

We do our best to be helpful and friendly at all times. Sometimes when demand is high our high standards may slip and we apologise. It is very pressured at the front desk where Receptionist are trying to juggle the demands of patients in the surgery, patients on the telephone, the doctors and nurses here, hospital requests and other agencies requesting information.

General comments

Your comments

- Baby clinic is always busy and the doctor or health visitor always have to rush
- The surgery could stop growing. It worked better smaller.
- Seems to be too busy, but really can't be helped, or can it?
- I have a hearing problem and cannot always hear my name being called

- A yearly MOT for the over 65s would cut out a lot of anxiety
- I would like to ask for my prescriptions by e-mail

Our response

We are aware of how busy baby clinic has become. We now have our practice nurse helping in baby clinic as well as the doctor and health visitor. We have also trained up our Receptionists to assist in weighing babies to give more time for other issues.

We have also introduced a Health Visitor open clinic on Friday mornings, where parents can access the health visitor. This gives parents another option on days to see the health visitor.

The surgery has not grown significantly. We have only 300 patients more on our list than we had 10 years ago! The difference is that many services which used to be hospital based are now in GP surgeries. This makes the place feel busier. Expectations have also risen about the speed of access to doctors and referral to hospital. Patients have become more informed about their health and we conduct more screening and checks than in the past.

We investigated putting in a tannoy system after a request for this last year. However most systems that would link into our computer are more advanced than this and an updated system would cost the practice several thousand pounds even though we would only take advantage of this aspect of the upgrade. Colleagues in a local practice recently installed a visual calling system as a compromise response to this request and have ended up with more negative than positive comments. We will continue to look at this.

Patients can always make appointments for health checks with our Practice nurse. If she has any concerns she will advise or make an appointment with the doctor for you.

We will be introducing a system for ordering repeat prescriptions on-line via our website during the summer of 2007. We will also be setting up the facility to book/cancel appointments on-line. Our new phone system also allows for cancelling appointments whilst we are closed.

We will never satisfy everybody but the huge amount of positive comments we received make us feel that we do get something right!

Positive comments

Your comments

- Everyone is lovely here, an unusual experience. Well done
- This doctor is an excellent listener that takes care of their patients. They should be taken as an example by other doctors
- I am delighted with the practice, doctors and administration staff
- I have never been to such a caring practice. Everyone is so kind, lots of reminders and lots of help. My doctor is very kind and thorough.
- This doctor gave me lots of advice and helped me overcome my illness. They are excellent.
- Apart from cloning the doctor, no improvement required!
- My whole family are impressed with the new doctors
- Reception is exceptionally good and helpful. I have no complaints! Good nurse
- The practice is all lovely. The nurse is a lovely person.
- It is not possible for the nurse to improve
- The practice is doing a great job in looking after the welfare of its patients and thrives to improve. What more could you ask?
- Always treated well and looked after by the practice
- The nurse puts patients at their ease
- As a new patient I am happy with everything I have seen so far
- I find the doctors attentive and informative
- I am really pleased with the doctors and the staff
- Very, very good nurse
- Fully satisfied, could not improve. First class already!
- Excellent service.
- Could not improve

Our response

Thank you. We do all work hard to achieve a high standard of care for our patients. We always like to hear what you think about us. Don't just wait for the next survey!

June 2007

Wendy Greenberg
Practice Manager

Main points for improvement from 2006/7 survey

Baby clinic/Health Visitor is too busy
Improve telephone access
E-mail ordering of repeat prescriptions
More phlebotomy
More patient information

Actions since last year

Since we received comments last year we have changed aspects of the way we run things to meet patient requests:

- We have expanded the phlebotomy service in the practice (taking blood tests) and trained up 2 receptionists to take blood samples to increase flexibility.
- We have arranged for this year's flu clinics to include some early (8.00-8.30 am) and some late (5.00-6.00 pm) sessions for patients who work. In 2007 we will also be running a Saturday clinic.
- We have added more doctor appointments to the week with an additional doctor. We have added additional nurse appointments.
- We have added more staff to the baby clinic to try and reduce waiting times and set up a walk in clinic for the Health Visitor on a separate day.
- We have introduced the capacity to order prescriptions on-line via our website (July 2007)
- Our nurse has been studying for the Nurse Prescribers course
- We have installed a new phone system
- We have added more patient information and weblinks to our practice website. We have increased our capacity for patient health information leaflets in the surgery.

This year's priorities for change will include:

- We will review lunchtime opening
- We will increase on-line access to our systems enabling patients to book/cancel appointments on-line
- Adding an extra consulting room to enable additional clinics to run from the practice

Planning for the future
Priority setting for 2008-9 and beyond

- We have been looking to expand the premises for some years and look at every opportunity that arises. If we find the right premises and can secure the right funding we will expand the practice or move to a new site. (Delayed by death of Dr Scarfe - December 2006, who owns 40% of current premises). The ownership of the building will change and we will have to review our options.
- We wish to remain a high quality high achieving practice. We plan to become a training practice during 2008 and are working to achieve all the quality targets required.
- We will be looking at implementing booking and cancelling appointments on-line. (2007-9)
- We will continue to train and develop staff so that we can best meet patients' demands (on-going). We have a practice away day planned for September 2007 so that we can work on a 3-5 year practice development plan. We also have confidentiality and diversity training planned as part of our training programme for the coming year.
- We will continue to inform patients about new developments via the practice and the website and welcome comments, compliments and complaints from patients about how we are doing. There is a comments book in Reception or patients can contact Wendy Greenberg (Practice Manager)
- The lead for all these developments is Practice Manager, Wendy Greenberg

Gaining additional information on patient experience:

- We feel that we are being inundated with surveys and currently do not wish to further survey our patients. We found that this IPQ survey and the Access survey completely contradicted each other this year and so wonder about the usefulness of surveys on such a small scale.
- We have discussed other initiatives and would ask patient groups for views on big changes to the system. We regularly discuss patient views at our weekly management meeting (Mondays 12.30 - 2.30) if radical change is proposed by us rather than imposed from outside.

IPQ Patient Questionnaire Comparative Data

	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	National practice data 2004-5
About Practice				
Q1 Opening Hours satisfaction	54	53	49	55
Q2 Telephone access	62	63	48	47
Q3 Appointment satisfaction	60	62	51	56
Q4 Practitioner within 48hrs	49	48	39	49
Q5 Practitioner of choice	41	42	34	42
Q6 Speak to practitioner on phone	41	46	43	41
Q7 Comfort of waiting room	63	64	57	54
Q8 Waiting time	43	48	42	40
About Practitioner				
Q9 Overall satisfaction	78	77	71	74
Q10 Warmth of greeting	80	78	74	75
Q11 Ability to listen	79	79	76	76
Q12 Explanations	78	78	74	73
Q13 Reassurance	74	73	73	72
Q14 Confidence in ability	79	79	77	77
Q15 Express concerns	76	77	71	73
Q16 Respect shown	81	82	78	79
Q17 Time for visit	66	68	60	64
Q18 Consideration	73	74	68	70
Q19 Concern for patient	73	76	72	71
Q20 Recommendation	78	77	75	75
About the staff				
Q21 Reception staff	76	73	69	66
Q22 Respect shown	75	75	69	66
Q23 Information of services	66	68	61	60
Finally				
Q24 Complaints/compliments	57	55	51	52
Q25 Illness prevention	61	64	56	58
Q26 Reminder systems	59	59	54	54
Q27 Second opinion/Comp medicine	57	57	53	54
OVERALL TOTAL	66	67	61	62

