

Posterngate Surgery

News

March 2007

2006 Patient Survey

We have received the results of our 3rd nationally approved survey carried out in November 2006. After 2005's poor results, we did not know what to expect, but hoped you felt we had done better. During the year, we have received numerous compliments from patients about the high quality of service we provide, and the feeling that the 2005 survey was very unfair to the practice.

Overall, it appears that you are very happy with the care you receive from the Practice, with many very positive comments. However, you remain disappointed in the organisation of the practice in terms of the phone system, the appointment system, and the wait to see the GPs or Nurses.

In overall terms, you rated us as an average practice compared to over 400 practices nationally.

What do we do well?	What do we get wrong?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You like the clinical care we offer.• You rate the satisfaction with your visit well• You commend the explanations you are given• You like the time for the visit• You rate our staff well• You get satisfaction from the appointment• You like the use of the internet to make appointments and order prescriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You feel we are not open long enough• There is a wish to bring back Saturday morning surgeries• You do not like the telephone access, especially 8.00 am to 9.00 am each morning• You do not feel you can see the practitioner of choice• You do not like the waiting time• It appears that men seem to be slightly less satisfied with all aspects of the surgery than women.

Telephone System

One of the big problems voiced by you is frustration with the telephones and booking appointments. Our new phone system connects to our 2 branch surgeries, as well as Posterngate. This means that staff can answer calls wherever they are. On mornings when we have a Receptionist at one of the branch surgeries, we have even more staff available now.

Ideally we could do with 20 lines from 8.00-9.30 am and 3 after that. It is not realistic to have staff available like that, and therefore we try to maximise the numbers of staff when we know the phones are going to be most busy. We will continue to look to improve the call handling in order to help you get through quickly.

Patient Survey

After the poor ratings we received last year, and the very positive comments that patients made about the practice during the year, we had hoped to see better results this year.

Overall, there was some improvement, but not as much as we would have hoped.

What we have changed since last year

- We have additional GPs working in the practice, increasing the number of appointments available overall. This has made it easier for people to get appointments.
- We have introduced additional staff to the Nursing team.
- We have provided additional reception hours to help with telephone answering, in particular.
- We have put in an additional phone line and altered the phone system, to try to ensure better access particularly in the morning.
- We have altered the appointment system to make additional appointments available in advance. Now there are some available up to 2 weeks in advance.
- We have run an evening surgery on Mondays from 6-8 pm for working-age adults. We are not aware of any other practice locally, in Selby or York, that currently offers this service.

What we can do this year

- We can continue to adjust the appointment system to suit the demand. We are trying to look even more carefully at the known demands and try to tailor our appointments to suit these times

- We can reduce the answering message on the phone system, meaning it is quicker to get to the Receptionists. This should mean we deal with calls more rapidly, particularly when it is busy.
- We can review the length of appointments.
- We are looking to provide better information systems in the waiting room, to let you know what is happening, and to help make the waiting time more relaxing.

What we cannot do

- Unfortunately, we cannot make it easier to see the Practitioner of your choice. Several GPs work part-time, others have additional commitments on their time, including working at branch surgeries. We recognise the ideal to provide better continuity, but in practice, it becomes more difficult.
- We can try to keep waiting times in the surgery to a minimum, but we cannot just increase the appointment times from the current 10 minutes to perhaps 12 minutes, which would initially have a benefit. Experience has shown that every time we have lengthened appointment times, there is an initial period when it seems ample, followed by overruns as the time gets absorbed. We would expect the same to happen again. This time would quickly overrun and we would reduce appointments by as much as one fifth. This would mean even less continuity for patients.
- We will review our opening hours, in line with national guidance. Clearly this is topical at present, and we may be commissioned by the PCT, to open for longer hours, in which case we will consider it carefully.