**Patient Survey – The Healthcare Centre – 2022-2023**

Following the completion of the 2022/2023 Patient Survey the following are additional comments or requests made on the forms that we would like to respond to:

**YOU SAID:** Blood Clinics / Blood Appointments

**OUR REPLY: This is a service we are already providing to ALL our practice patients in the event of any emergency and for your routine annual birthday reviews for patients with Chronic diseases. These clinics are held at The Healthcare Centre branch as we have more parking there. Please ask our team who can you book appointments in our bloods clinic.**

**YOU SAID:** Renal Clinic

**OUR REPLY: Unfortunately, this is a secondary care service and provided in hospitals by Specialists.**

**YOU SAID:** Tetanus Booster Clinic instead of attending A&E

**OUR REPLY: We have been advised by the Clinical team that if we are unable to fit the patient in within a 7-day window to a tetanus prone wound we must advise A&E. Tetanus injections are not required frequently in General practice so we don’t hold a routine clinic or high stock of these items.**

**YOU SAID:** I find it impossible to obtain an appointment Just recently I spent 45 minutes on hold to be told there were no appointments.

**OUR REPLY: We are sorry to hear of your recent experience. We have extended our telephone system to include more incoming lines and have all our telephone stations manned by the team. For your information and to give you an idea of the increase in call volume, we now take between 20,000 and 27,000 telephone calls per month from patients and NHS colleagues. Our practice population is 13,200 patients. We are unsure how we can improve this any further at this time other than to try and get some appointments available to book online.**

**YOU SAID:** Easier access into the premises for the disable /walking in

**OUR REPLY: We will be undergoing a refurbishment soon and a significant part of our plans is to ensure the practice is more accessible to all. We will be getting automatic doors at the entrance and lowering the reception area at some point for wheelchair access. Unfortunately our refurbishment plans were put on hold due to the pandemic.**

**YOU SAID:** Looking forward to the updating of the premises as always found it very depressing and dark.

**OUR REPLY: We fully agree with you and all the team are looking forward to this long overdue refurbishment that was unfortunately halted due to the pandemic.**

**YOU SAID:** I find the practice to be excellent most of the time and I’d like to thank everyone at the surgery for that. My only criticism would be is sometimes the posts on Facebook come across as a little unprofessional. I’m referring to those that chastise patients. I appreciate that patients can be abusive towards staff and it’s unacceptable speaking from experience. However how this is posted on Facebook is particularly unseemly almost like those posts from people airing their dirty laundry. The way it’s worded is completely wrong and is more likely to aggravate people than gain support from them. There have been others and I understand the stupidity you’re faced with on a daily basis but the tone of your Facebook posts come across as badly as what the surgery is complaining about. I would like to see more information posts on Facebook promoting clinics and less don’t ring us we’ll ring you. If the information was readily available a lot would take notice unfortunately, you’ll never rid the world of stupidity.

**OUR REPLY: Thank you for your kind comments, we really do appreciate it. Unfortunately due to the high level of abuse the staff received on a daily basis we took advice from our local Medical Council and Clinical Commissioning Group as to how we can deal with this in the best way without sending zero tolerance to all the abusive patients which is costly and we don’t particularly have the time or resource to do this. They agreed generic content from their communications teams which we should put on the practice websites, facebook and any other social media platforms so we are sorry to hear that you feel they could potentially aggravate. This is not the intention; the intention is a kind plea to please not be abusive to the team. We re-post and share ALL clinics and screening campaigns. During the pandemic our calls have increased and remain at around 20,000 to 27,000 per month.**

**YOU SAID:** I believe that you should be able to pre-book non urgent appointment, that patients can plan into their own diaries, same day attendance/triage is not always possible when working, especially trying to call into the surgery. Also the online prescription service does not take into account holidays/weekends in the reordering period meaning you may run out of tables due to not being able to reorder/process the repeat order over holidays/weekends

**OUR REPLY: Pre-bookable non-urgent appointments are available, please ask the team. Please also note that you can put comments on the online prescription ordering service informing us of your reason for ordering early such as planned holidays, these are issued if the prescribing clinician has the information they need. Also the prescribing process is two working days so this needs to be taken into account when ordering at weekends.**

**YOU SAID:** I have had excellent medical care since covid started and before. Very happy with the way I have been treated. Very quick and reliable service using the phone triage system, would be happy to see that continue.

**OUR REPLY: Thank you for your kind comments. The feedback we have received from our patients reflects your opinion also and a high percentage of patients want a mixture of telephone triage and face to face appointments for the future which is the system we have in place currently.**

**YOU SAID:** It’s a terrible system that all appointments have to be booked at 8:00, meaning even if it’s a non-urgent routine request you have to queue with people requiring urgent care. It’s ridiculous not to be able to prebook appointments. Not everyone is able to suddenly drop their work plans or commitments that day because they can finally get an appointment. You need to allow flexibility and planning. Many people have school runs at that time too so I’ve no idea how they manage to get their kids an appointment. Also, its incorrect to say all appointments are triaged because if you call up and everything is gone, you don’t get triaged you just get told to ring the next day.

**OUR REPLY: All appointments do not have to be booked by 08.00am and we are sorry to hear that you feel this is the case. If you require an urgent on the day appointment, we suggest you call as near to 08.00 am as possible. Pre-booked appointments are available for non-urgent issues. The team are trained in Care Navigation and are trained to ask you questions regarding the reason for your call. If you feel this is not the case, please feel free to contact the management team and we will investigate this matter for you.**

**YOU SAID:** Not a criticism.... I've always found that I get the help I need when I've needed it. Friendly voice from receptionist and a quick response from nurse or doctors. Glad that I'm with this practice, after listening to some horror stories about other practices.

**OUR REPLY: Thank you for your kind comments. The team work very hard to try and ensure patient satisfaction and patient feedback is very important to us. We don’t always get it right but we are happy to look into any issues if they are raised.**

**YOU SAID:** Stop expecting patients to stand outside shouting through a window! You should now be able to walk into the centre and speak via the glass partition which still avoids any contact with the receptionist! Things need to return to normal. It’s diabolical that you still have to stand outside in all types of weather before being allowed into the practice. It’s also wrong you have to have a telephone consultation before it’s decided whether a face-to-face appointment can be made, not everyone can answer their phones due to the jobs they do so therefore unable to make appointments.

**OUR REPLY: This is no longer happening and was something we put in place during the pandemic to try and protect all our patients and team. I have discussed your comment regarding the telephone consultation prior to the face-to-face appointment with the Partners of the practice and they wish to continue to follow guidance from the NHS regarding triage. Should you wish to have a face-to-face appointment please express this on your initial phone call with the clinician or ask for a face to face appointment when calling in to the practice. Employers need to provide you time for NHS appointments if you are unable to arrange on your day / weekend off.**

**YOU SAID:** Have to ring several times to get through to order a prescription for my mother which cannot be done online this is really difficult when you are working full time. Also when you are working full time you often struggle to get through in time for a same day appointment as you are unable to keep ringing back.

**OUR REPLY: We are presuming that you are trying to order either a controlled drug or an acute item when you state that you are unable to do it online. If you have access to the online service there is a comment box which enables you to request the item which will go to the Clinical team for review. We can only suggest that you continue to hold as all stations are manned and we have increased our line numbers coming in to the practice. Unfortunately I think this is the same situation for most organisations, banks, building societies, hospital departments, etc.**

**YOU SAID:** A better system for me to make an appointment. I called 34 times this morning and still haven't got through!

**OUR REPLY: We can only apologise but this is due to the sheer volume of calls that we now receive at the practice. Please note also that during the pandemic we had our own staff sickness that we had to manage along with the increased calls and workload but answering telephones is the priority before all other tasks our team do. Routine GP and Nurse appointments are all available online to book. It is only urgent appointments that require seeing on the day that need to call early.**

**YOU SAID:** Planned appointment

**OUR REPLY: There are a number of pre-bookable / planned appointments available, please ask one of the team if you require this as the “on the day” service is unsuitable.**

**YOU SAID:** Only one making appointments. I can never make an appointment. Please answer the phone or at least make appointment available online.

**OUR REPLY: We are unsure if we have misunderstood your comment but we have at least 6 members of staff making appointments daily. The volume of calls we are taking has significantly increased to between 20,000 and 27,000 per month with a practice population of 13,500 patients. Please note that there are routine GP and nurse appointments available to book online.**

**YOU SAID:** This practice doesn’t care about vulnerable patients! The receptionist on the phone are more than rude!

**OUR REPLY: This is not our view and we do a regular audit on our telephone calls for learning and development purposes. If there is a particular incident you are referring to, please contact the management team and we would be happy to investigate and listen to the call.**

**YOU SAID:** The worst practice I have ever been to - not fit for service .

**OUR REPLY: If there is a particular incident or issue you are referring to, please contact the management team and we would be happy to listen to your concerns and investigate the matter. We have a duty of candour to investigate any matters of dissatisfaction or complaints.**

**YOU SAID:** Mental health service leaflets/posters

**OUR REPLY: We do have Big White wall, Social prescribing, Rays of Sunlight community support befriending service, Lets keep talking and volunteer responders. We have noted the services that you state should be available and have requested some resources for this.**

**YOU SAID:** Possibly text reminders of appointments to minimise people missing appointments.

**OUR REPLY: We do currently offer a text reminder service for all pre-booked appointments (excluding on the day appointments) if you have not received a text reminder please contact the surgery where we would be happy to investigate this for you. It may be the case that your telephone numbers require updating.**

**YOU SAID:** I would prefer to be seen by the same Doctor who had seen me previously, this will help to follow my diagnosis and treatment rather than starting all over again with a new Doctor.

**OUR REPLY: We do give the option to book in with any GP of your choice, this may mean waiting a little longer for the appointment, but if your appointment reason is of a more urgent nature then it is advisable to see any GP that has availability.**

**YOU SAID:** Noted on sign upstairs that oxygen and defibrillator are located downstairs – what is a patient has a heart attack upstairs

**OUR REPLY: We have a policy and procedure in place to attend to all emergencies in the practice in a safe and efficient manner and we have an emergency bag on both levels that includes oxygen. The surgery only owns one Defibrillator and in the event of this being needed in an emergency it is kept in a place that is of equal distance from both floors.**

**YOU SAID:** Not sure how the services are being communicated or the various platforms i.e. facebook but would be good to have more information.

**OUR REPLY: We share as much information as possible via our practice website, facebook and Instagram If there is anything in particular that you feel we should be sharing on these platforms then contact the surgery and we would be happy to discuss this.**

**YOU SAID:** There should be consequences for people who fail to attend appointments.

**OUR REPLY: We do currently have a non-attendance process in place where any patients that fail to attend appointments are written to requesting that any future appointments that cannot be attended are cancelled in advance. If a further appointment within 12 months is not attended a warning letter is sent that advises if they fail to attend a further appointment, they will be removed from the practice list. If a third appointment is not attended in a 12-month period, the patient is removed from the practice list for non-attendance.**

**YOU SAID:** The music played when on hold is annoying. I prefer no music. Also make it easy to have call-back and make your information message short.

**OUR REPLY: We are in the process of changing our telephone provider with an estimate installation date of 20/03/2024. Our new telephone system has the call back facility which will enable patients to continue with their day until their turn in the queue when the telephone system will then automatically call the patient back.**

**We have made attempts to address the telephone queues by providing other means of contact for patients who have query items that do not require a conversation with a member of the team i.e. sick notes which in turn should decrease the telephone queues.**

**Our greeting message will be changed up installation of the new system. We added music when on hold as we previously had no music or sound and then received feedback from many patients that we needed music or a intermittent sound as they were unsure if they were still connected to the practice.**

**YOU SAID:** The service you provide varies greatly depending on which receptionist answers your call. Some are extremely helpful and kind, at least one goes out of her way to be unpleasant.

**OUR REPLY: We are sorry to hear that you feel that not all our reception team provide you with a high standard of customer service. We ensure that all our reception staff are trained in customer service, handling difficult telephone calls and telephone signposting. Our reception staff are trained to provide a high standard of customer service and care. If you feel that the care in which you have received from our reception team falls below this standard, then please contact the Office Manager who will be happy to discuss this with you in more detail. We have the facility to listen to the call and provide feedback to the team member.**

**YOU SAID:** Should be able to see a doctor at any point, getting an appointment is becoming a headache

**OUR REPLY: We provide both routine pre-bookable GP appointments along with on the day appointments for more urgent matters. We also operate telephone signposting so that patients can be directed to the most appropriate clinician to ensure that the GP’s have capacity to see the most complex patients. We have Saturday appointments available locally and the practice is open late on a Tuesday evening. Morning and afternoon appointments are available with GP’s Monday to Friday and we feel that we have a good choice and range of appointments available to book both via telephone and online.**