

SPINNEY PATIENTS ASSOCIATION

PATIENT SURVEY SPRING 2011

Overall the patient survey presented very positive feedback about all aspects of the practice such as the provision of medical care, attention, staff, premises and procedures.

A full report has been reviewed with both the Spinney Patients Association Committee and with the practice staff. This report is available to any patient by accessing our website at www.spinney-surgery.org.uk or on request to debbie.wheatley@nhs.net or by asking one of our reception team who will arrange for this to be provided.

The following has been produced as a quick way of responding to areas where we felt some clarification or response would be helpful.

Question:

What hygiene policies are in place? Hygiene is very important to us and the practice scored well not just in this survey but also by review from other types of organisations who have inspected the practice. The availability of handgel was raised by the SPA questionnaire. Whilst handgel is available it is widely recognised that is not a substitute for soap and water. To promote the importance of good hygiene, we have inspected all toilet facilities and produced laminated “wash your hand” signs. We are in the process of installing a handgel dispensers in each of the patient toilets.

Question:

How long is an appointment with a doctor?

A standard appointment is 10 minutes long. We are aware that sometimes patients have a few issues they wish to discuss and our clinicians will sometimes ask the patient to prioritise the issues they have come to discuss. We feel we succeed in the balance of keeping to time but also providing patients with the time and space they need to receive good medical care. If you feel your concerns will take longer than usual, it's a good idea to book two appointments together so that you and the doctor have time.

Nurse's appointments are calculated by the “condition” being treated, so you will find that these are often long enough for your needs.

Question:

Why does my doctor or nurse look up things on the internet or use a book when we are discussing something?

The clinicians at the surgery are all experienced in healthcare, although sometimes a new treatment or medicine will be available and

we feel its important to ensure latest medical advice is available at all times. Often the sites used are ones that the patient and doctor can view together and discuss or a leaflet printed. An excellent site for patients is www.patient.co.uk

Question:

Why doesn't my doctor ring me with the results of my tests?

To ensure we are able to maintain our Patient Confidentiality obligation and commitment and our awareness of the confidential nature of some of the tests undertaken, we would ask that you phone in personally for your test results.

When the results of your tests are received back at the surgery they are reviewed and commented on by your doctor and appropriate entries are recorded in the computerised medical records. When this has been completed our receptionists are then able to let you know the result of your tests when you ring up. If a test shows something which needs action or discussion by you and your doctor, we try to contact you by phone, and if there is no answer, we drop you a line in the post asking you to contact the surgery.

Our reception staff are only allowed to pass on information as described in the notes by your doctor and are not permitted nor qualified to pass on any opinion of their own.

Unfortunately there is no simple rule as to how long it will take to receive the results of tests back since this varies according to the test. We will normally have the results available to you for most blood tests within 4 working days, although there are some blood tests which take 6 working days and occasionally special blood tests such as hormone levels can take up to 2 weeks. Swabs, urine and stool tests are usually back 5 working days after they are taken. X-rays usually take 10 working days and pregnancy tests usually 2 working days. We hope that you will take this information as a guide when phoning up for the results of your tests. We ask for your understanding as there are often delays which are out of our control.

Question:

What is a care plan and why didn't I get one?

The majority of consultations with a clinician have a care plan. This can be something simple for example:- a patient with an ear infection might receive antibiotics and pain relief, and advice to contact the surgery if it gets no better or worse. A more complicated example would be for a patient with a long standing problem such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – they may have a plan which means they monitor their breathlessness, and add in extra medication as necessary, and a review with the specialist nurse at regular points in the year. The more simple care plans are not printed and given to patients, but some of the more complicated ones are.

Question:**What is the electronic booking machine and why should I use it?**

The booking in machine is in the lobby. It is linked to our computer system, and patients can use it to “check in” for their appointment. Sometimes there can be a queue at the reception desk as patients need a receptionist to deal with their enquiry or make an appointment. The machine books you in on our system, so the clinician knows you are waiting. It is a confidential system, requiring minimal details to identify you. If you are very early or late for an appointment the machine will direct you to the receptionist. Use of the booking in machine by as many patients as possible will reduce congestion at the receptionists counter, and improve confidentiality.

Question:**What can I do on the website to make my life easier?**

You can order your repeat prescription (see below for how to do this), find out about surgery times and the services we offer. You can use the e mail element to contact us with **non medical enquiries**. Click on “contact” on the left hand side of our website and then choose the e mail address you wish. Please remember though that at the moment, you can’t book or cancel an appointment on line. It is something we have reviewed but have decided not to implement at the current time. The main reasons for this are due to structuring of clinics and specialist skills. Lots of the clinicians at the surgery have specialist skills, particularly the nurses with their clinics. It is something we regularly review.

We will be trialling a service where patients can be reminded about appointments by text (if they consent) and maybe even cancellation of appointments. More news about this to follow.

Question:**Why can’t I get an appointment now?**

At the surgery we have a number of ways of helping patients with their problems. These include consultation with a doctor or nurse, a telephone consultation with a doctor or nurse or our receptionists may be able to help you with administrative problems. We are very keen to ensure that patients have a consultation with the most appropriate person when they ask for an appointment. This may mean it is necessary for our receptionists to ask for some more information about the nature of your problem. Our receptionists are highly trained and authorised to do this. We will ask your permission to make further enquiries and then hopefully give you an appointment with the most appropriate person.

We offer a wide range of routine appointments, bookable usually 5 weeks in advance. We try to offer you your usual doctor at a time convenient to you. Patients requesting a same day appointment with a GP will first have their problem assessed by our triage nurses, Gill Avery & Jackie Fryer. Gill & Jackie are very experienced nurses who have undergone training especially for this role and will be working to protocols developed in the practice. They will first assess the urgency of your problem and then offer you a suitable appointment with a GP or other healthcare professional if more appropriate. In some cases they may offer advice alone.

Nurse triage has been found to be an effective way of achieving this and it has been verified by several studies. Previous surveys have shown high satisfaction with our Nurse triage service.

Another reason that it may not always be possible to give you the appointment you wish is the high volume of patients booking appointments and not turning up, without cancelling them. Approximately 150-170 appointments per month are wasted this way. A reduction in this would definitely improve the chances you have for an appointment of your choice.

Question:

Why do I have a problem parking at the surgery?

This is something that is raised regularly by patients and reviewed by the practice, however we are limited by the space we have available for patient parking. We consider ourselves fortunate to be able to offer any parking. We hope that where possible patients and staff who are able to get to the surgery without a car do so, but it is not possible to increase the size of the car park. There are various arguments for white lining spaces and provision of additional spaces for our lesser able patients. We will continue to review this.

Question:

What can be done about other patients overhearing conversations at the reception counter?

We will be reviewing this aspect of reception in coming months. Unfortunately over the years current design standards have gone from small hatches with slatted glass, to open plan and spacious and back to closed in reception desks and sound baffling. We appreciate that patients often want to have a more discrete conversation, but at the same time it's good for our reception team to be able to see the waiting room and to have a spacious area to greet patients. We will review this and update in future newsletters.

Question:

Where can I wait for my appointment?

For patients being seen by doctors, nurses and health care assistants we have the main waiting room for doctors, and the nurses bay for nurse and health care assistant patients. We realise that the nurses bay is smaller, and its fine for those patients to wait in the main waiting room too. Some doctors call patients by the tannoy system (we appreciate that sometimes the quality this is not good, so we are reviewing this). Many of our team walk to the waiting bays and call the patient, so if you are waiting in a different place you need to ensure you are aware of who is being called. We are aware that it is difficult for patients in wheelchairs to wait comfortably in the nurses waiting area. We plan to review general seating and waiting areas as well as other aspects of the front of the surgery.

Question:

How can I get my repeat prescription?

We have lots of ways you can do this.

You can call the surgery and selection option 3 at any time of day or night.

Use the repeat order form and drop this in or post it to us

Use the internet form, by clicking on Prescriptions on the left hand side, then use the form displayed below this prompt.

If you are a non dispensing patient, you can enrol in your pharmacy collection scheme if they have one.

Question:

Who are the Spinney Patients Association (SPA) and what can they do for me?

The SPA has been in existence since 1995, and is essential in ensuring a link between patients and the practice. One of our committee organises the delivery of the Surgery Newsletter twice a year and the committee organise health education evenings twice a year too. Recently an excellent evening on Arthritis was attended by 90 patients. In the survey, though, 93% of patients say they don't attend the education evenings – we would really like to know why. It could be the subjects aren't of interest, or maybe you don't know about the meetings, or it could be that the timings don't work for you. Please do give us your feedback. It's important that the practice has a way of making sure the services offered are line with what patients need and want. There are also new initiatives on their way from Government about patient engagement and we would very much like to hear your views and comments. Please e mail debbie.wheatley@nhs.net and give your feedback.

On a final note

90% of patients are very or fairly satisfied with their care at the Surgery.

97% have trust and confidence in their doctor, 96% say that the care and concern nurses show to them is good or very good.

100% of patients say that they find our reception team very or fairly helpful
And 92% of patients would recommend our surgery to someone moving to the area.

For full survey results, please contact debbie.wheatley@nhs.net or drop us a line.

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