

Spinney Surgery

Nurse Triage Survey

October 2009

Introduction

The Surgery describes the Triage Service at the Spinney on the website as follows:-

At the surgery we have a number of ways of helping patients with their problems. These include consultation with a doctor, nurse or health visitor, a telephone consultation with a doctor, nurse or health visitor, 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.

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.

Over recent years research has been undertaken to investigate the delivery of healthcare in order that minor conditions are identified as such, properly dealt with and that more complex conditions can be prioritised and referred to the doctor in the most appropriate manner.

Nurse triage has been found to be an effective way of achieving this and it has been verified by several studies. The present government has pushed this forward with NHS Direct which uses trained nurses to advise patients by telephone.

Our practice has a highly caring, very experienced and efficient nursing team providing a whole range of services. Patient satisfaction surveys echo this. We hold regular meetings which are used for communication and training. In addition we have a comprehensive computer network

which means that clinical information is available to all relevant healthcare professionals as appropriate. The doctors are readily available to Gill, Jackie and all nurses for advice.

There has been public perception in the past that seeing a nurse is 'second best'. Research does not bear this out. It has been well proven that nurses deal effectively with most minor conditions and that trained nurses are excellent in referring to the doctor in an appropriate manner, thus leaving the doctor more time for complex problems. We are continuing to develop these systems and they remain under constant review. Feedback from our patients is always very valuable and it would be helpful if you could let us know of any problems or good experiences you may have had.

Method

We regularly review the services we offer, and in October we surveyed all patients who had utilised the Nurse Telephone Triage service by sending them a questionnaire (Appendix 1). A freepost envelope or freepost address was included and responses were analysed into an excel spreadsheet. 249 survey forms were sent out with 48 patients returning the form (19%). Of these 15 were male and 33 were female. The average age of respondents was 57. The youngest patient was 31 and the oldest patient was 80 years old.

Results

Q1. 42 (88%) patients said that the receptionist explained the system to them.

Q2. An analysis of reasons for calling is attached at Appendix 2.

Q3. Patients were given a selection of 8 outcomes to describe their call.

One patient was referred straight to an ambulance. Of the others

26 patients (55%) saw the doctor either later that day or at a time convenient to them.

8 patients (18%) received telephone advice from the triage nurse.

4 patients (9%) received a prescription which was arranged by the triage nurse

3 patients (6%) spoke to the doctor on the phone later that day

3 patients (6%) saw the triage nurse later that morning.

3 patients (6%) saw another nurse later that day or at a time convenient to them.

Q4. When asked if they were satisfied with the nurse advice. 100% stated they were happy.

Q5. Of the 47 offered advice, 26 (55%) understood the advice, 21 (45%) didn't answer this question, 1 patient didn't understand the advice.

Q6. The 1 patient, asked for clarification of the advice.

Q7. Of the original 48 patients surveyed, 99% would use the service again. 1% (2 patients) would not. Reasons given were. 1 patient said it was not suitable for their condition – patient requiring ambulance. 1 patient said they didn't like being questioned about why they were calling.

Q8. Appendix 3 shows the comments given in free text.

Conclusion.

The Nurse Telephone Triage service is well received and liked by patients. It works well for receptionists, GPs and nurses alike. It's a service we will continue to provide and monitor.

Appendix 1.

Telephone Triage Questionnaire

Name
(if you do not wish to provide your name that is fine)

Age: Sex: M / F

Telephone Number:

Email Address (if you have one)

1) Did the receptionist explain why you would be called back by the Triage Nurse?

YES NO

2) Could you give a brief description about why you called the surgery on this occasion please.

3) What

I had adv

I saw the Triage Nurse

The Triage Nurse arranged for a prescription

I saw the Doctor

I spoke to the Doctor on the telephone

I saw another Nurse

I spoke to another Nurse on the telephone

Other (please describe)

4) Were you satisfied

YES

4)

5) **If you had advice from the Triage Nurse**

Did you understand the advice?

Were you unsure?

You did not understand the advice

6) **If you were not sure or did not understand the advice from the Triage Nurse –**

Did you ask the Triage Nurse to explain

YES

NO

You did something else, please describe

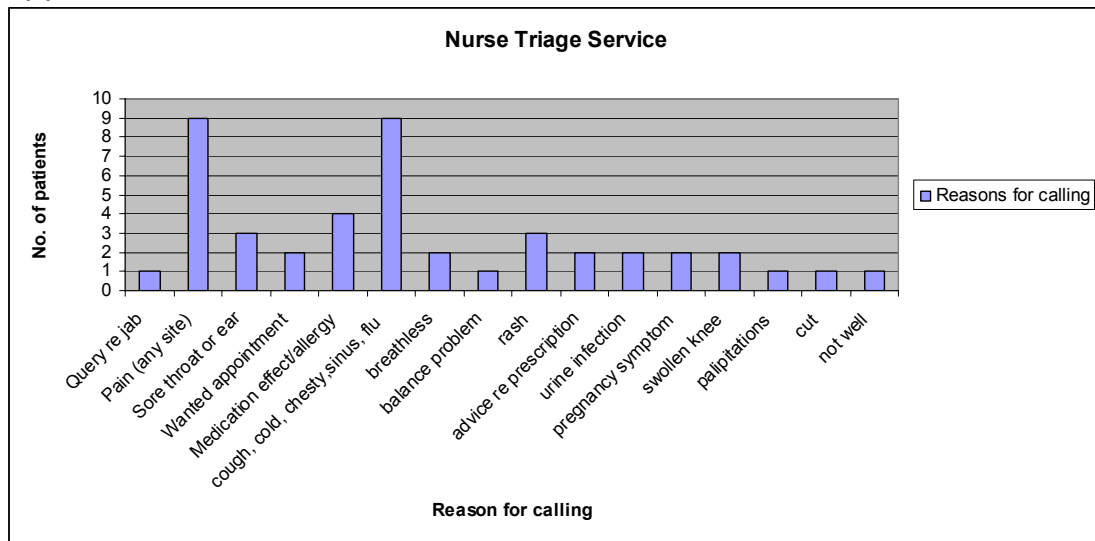
7)

8)

Please return to

Debbie Wheatley
Managing Partner
Freepost Ang 3194
Ramsey Road
St.Ives
Cambs
PE27 3BR

Appendix 2.



Appendix 3.

Free Text Comments from Survey Forms

could be route to identify further treatment or free up doc appointments

good service when unsure whether to bother doctor

all ok. system works

Negative - having to explain to reception/nurse. Positive - appt same day

nurse helpful and saw a doctor that day

contact with triage nurse always very positive

Positive .on this occasion nurse knew (name) and aware of his needs. Negative. on other occasions found to be bit frustrating

satisfied with surgery always had excellent service

to see a doctor the same day so must be good
the system as far as I am concerned works well

nurse very kind, considerate and helpful

satisfied and impressed with such good attention

excellent service

good service , convenient

most efficient can find no fault in surgery or emergency doctorr service

very negative extensive comments .lost confidence didn't want to be questioned
long winded way to order stockings
early diagnosis & treatment pre-empts doctors confirmation
no problems

always had good service from spinney

system good and worked well.

saves doctors time so it is good

very quick as didn't have to wait to see doctor

not suitable for cases like mine which required my having emergency CABG surgery a week later

felt reassured and welcomed being able to talk with a nurse so quickly. Very happy with speed/advice

very helpful

very good service etc

first class service. swift and simple way of only people needing to see doctor fill up surgery

very helpful when not sure if you need to see a doctor and how quickly

found nurse to be helpful and informative/ Very pleased with response and assistance

very quick service was seen in 1 hr

always had good service from spinney

very happy with service

quick to call back and very helpful

Impressed with speed to call

very beneficial to patients. Lots of praise for everyone

I was grateful for attn got being away from home

prioritise appointments and reduces doctorrs work load