

PATIENT REFERENCE GROUP – BADDOW VILLAGE SURGERY



Newsletter – Edition 1 May 2012

Introduction

Hello everyone

As the heading declares, this is the first edition of a newsletter from the Patient Reference Group at the Baddow Village Surgery. We plan to use this newsletter to let you know something about the group, what it is doing and how this might benefit the patients in the practice.

I have agreed to take on the editorship and hope you will find this first issue of interest.

You will read here that the group has already been active in assisting the practice in design of a patient survey and helping in decisions about how to take forward recommendations arising from its findings.

Best wishes

Ken Edwards

Who we are – an introduction from our Chairman Maureen Hindle

The Patient Reference Group (PRG) was formed in October 2011. At present we have nine members all of whom are patients of the practice. We are supported by Ami Fordham (Practice Representative) and joined on a rotating basis by one of the practice GP's. I have been elected chair of the group.

Baddow Village surgery decided to set up a PRG early, because of changes within the NHS. These changes will soon see clusters of GP practices commissioning and providing services on a more local level. Alongside this, there is a move for the voice of the patient to be more influential in how such services are commissioned and developed. The PRG aims to provide that patient voice within the Baddow Village Practice.

We meet once a month and discuss ways in which we can make changes which we hope will benefit the patients and the practice. It is a partnership where we believe both patients and the practice can benefit.

This is our first newsletter and it is proposed to publish issues quarterly. If you think it would be of interest to others, please do pass it on.

Maureen Hindle, Chairman

Baddow Village Surgery

Patient Reference Group members

Shannon Abbott, Richard Barrett, Ken Edwards, Maureen Hindle, Patrick Innes, Geoffrey Ireland, Maureen Miller, Barbara Pearson and Vic Smith.

Pictured right - some members at a recent meeting together with Practice Manager, Ami Fordham on the left





Did you know - some information about the practice:

- it has some 11,500 patients,
- there are seven GP's, one nurse practitioner, six practice nurses and one healthcare assistant,
- it is a training/teaching practice so has fully qualified registrars who usually become GP's after 12-18 months.
- it also participates in student nurse training,
- it provides a dispensary service for patients who live more than one mile from a pharmacist.

Patient survey

One of the early things that the PRG became involved in was a survey of patients which the practice planned to undertake. We helped in the design with a view to keeping things short and sharp, concentrating on things we thought would be of most importance to the patients.

The survey was made available in January in electronic form to the 'virtual group' of around 200 people who have agreed to receive Emails about the practice and on the practice website. In paper form it was promoted to those visiting the surgery and in selected local pharmacies.

The practice received some 252 responses, 180 of which were on paper.

Headlines:

There were areas of patient care where there was an overwhelmingly positive response:

- ✓ 96% of patients felt the doctor/nurse they saw listened to them.
- ✓ 96% of patients felt the doctor/nurse responded to them in a way they understood.
- ✓ 95% of patients felt the doctor/nurse involved them in decisions about their health.
- ✓ 94% of patients were able to book appointments at a time that suited them.
- ✓ 94% of patients were satisfied with how they were treated by the receptionist when booking an appointment.

There were also some areas where it was felt things could be improved:

- ❖ Difficulty in getting through to the surgery on the telephone.
- ❖ Surgeries running late allied to a lack of communication about this.
- ❖ The service from the dispensary. 52% said their prescription was ready after 2 working days.

These areas are explored more deeply on the next page.

An interesting point to note is that parking was raised by only a few people as a major concern, perhaps because the scope to improve things here is limited.



What has happened since the survey.

Since the results became available, we have worked with the Practice Manager to explore how things could be made better in the areas for improvement.

1. Difficulty in getting through to the surgery on the telephone.

Only 7.5% of patients are using the 'on line' appointment booking facility. Raising this percentage would free up telephone capacity with everyone benefiting. We felt the low use may be because patients were unaware that they could book appointments in this way.

It was agreed as a first step to promote the on line booking facility more heavily and then review the position. The last page of this newsletter describes the on line booking process. We would encourage everyone who is able to use this to do so. You will be easing your own frustration from engaged telephone lines and better still, freeing up the line for others who may not have computer access. We will all benefit.

2. Surgeries running late allied to a lack of communication about this.

The standard GP appointment time is 10 minutes duration and this is common throughout NHS. This is intended to cover one or at most two issues. In practice some visits are simple and can be concluded in a few minutes, whereas others can require longer than the standard timings. We agreed that the length of any appointment is a clinical decision for the GP based on the patient before them and could not be anticipated.

We believe patients understand the need to remain flexible, but equally that they are entitled to get some idea of how long they might be waiting. It was agreed to try a simple system of a card at reception showing the approximate late running of a GP where this applied. This had apparently been well received.

3. The service from the dispensary.

It was reported that the dispensary had been the subject of adverse comments in the past and that some of the underlying problems around staffing levels had been tackled. It was therefore not clear if the present service levels were in fact satisfactory and the concern in survey related to experiences from the longer past.

In order to check this, the practice had agreed to run an internal audit to check on prescription turn round times. The results so far support the view that the concerns identified from the survey are more historic than current e.g. in March, 99.7% of prescriptions and dispensed medication were ready for collection within 2 days.

The audit will continue and we suggested that the results be posted by the dispensing hatch so that for patients were aware of the positive progress.



On Line booking – how to do it in two easy steps.

- You will need a username and password to book an appointment.

If you have not already been issued with these for repeat prescription ordering purposes then please bring in a form of photo identification to obtain your username and password from reception. Parents/guardians can obtain the username and password for their children under 16 years of age by bringing in a form of their own (the parent/guardian's) identification. You may obtain the username and password for a housebound relative/friend by bringing in a form of that friend/relative's photo identification.

- You can then book appointments that are within the next two weeks.

To book your appointment, log on to www.baddovvillagesurgery.co.uk.

- in the 'Appointments' tab click 'Book Online' and then 'Book Your Appointment Online'.
- you will be redirected to a webpage which will ask for your login details.
- once logged in click 'Book Appointment' and choose your appointment slot.

Other matters

Notice boards

If you are anything like the members of the PRG, you will agree that they had become overloaded and uninviting. Two group members, Geoffrey and Shannon agreed, to do a 'blitz' tidy up and to put back up only those that are current and relevant. This was completed in early April so when you next visit you should notice a difference. We will also be looking at how to keep them tidy in future.

Gardening

The practice is aware that the green areas around the car park and building have started to become untidy. We were asked to look at ideas on how to bring this back under control, ideally using volunteer help. Do you have green fingers and would be willing to provide some assistance? If so please contact the Practice Manager 01245 241216 or baddow.prg@nhs.net.

How to become more involved

If you are interested in keeping in touch with the practice and helping give feedback and providing ideas on how to improve things, why not register to join the 'virtual group'. All you need is to provide your Email address to the Practice Manager by sending an Email to baddow.prg@nhs.net.

This newsletter is edited on behalf of Baddow Village Surgery Patient Reference Group. It is not the mouthpiece of the Baddow Village Surgery which is run by the GP practice partners. Whilst the two groups work in close co-operation and on a mutual agenda of improvement of patient services, the views expressed here are exclusively those of the PRG group and should not be interpreted as those of the practice itself.