**GPAQ (General Practice Assessment Questionnaire) Patients Survey Undertaken in 2011/2012**

We distributed in surgery during clinic time randomly a minimum of 50 questionnaires per doctor. We also posted the questionnaire online for patients to submit electronically.

The survey was conducted in the practice during 2011/2012.

After receiving all the questionnaires back, the survey was reported on automatically by the provider of the GPAQ (National Primary Care Research and Development Centre, University of Manchester and Safran/ NEMCH. The results were discussed by the doctors, practice manager and the Patient Participation Group.

We looked at each section of the survey and the following points were raised.

 **Accessibility**

Looking at the survey, we see that the results have improved year after year.

Comparing with the last few surveys, the satisfaction with the opening hours has jumped from 83.5% and 94% to 97% which means that the majority of patients are very happy with the opening hours. Only 3% submissions were not satisfied with the opening hours.

The regular opening hours are still 8.00am till 18.30pm non-stop. Clinicians (Doctors and Nurses) hold clinics throughout the day from early in the morning, sometimes 8am till 6.30pm which seems to satisfy the majority of our patients.

We run 2 evening clinics each week between 6.30pm and 8.30pm for patients who find it difficult to get to the surgery during the day.

We have advertised it on our electronic message board and on our website and on the patients repeat prescription requests. The evening clinics are very popular.

With regards to additional hours requested. 35% of patients are happy the way it is, 18% would like to access the practice in the evening. 5.4% of patients would like the practice to be opened in the morning, presumably earlier than 8am. 2% of patients would like the practice opened at lunch time. 38.5% would like the practice to be opened at weekends.

Comparing the data, it shows that the access seems adequate as by adding the ones who are happy the way it is plus the evening and lunch time requests which we already offer counts for 56% of the patients against 38.5% wanted weekends.

**Action Plan**

We need to advertise the opening hours more prominently so everyone is aware of the existing large range of opening hours, patients are able to collect their prescriptions throughout the day, make an appointment with a doctor or a nurse throughout the day plus the evening for the doctors.

We would like to please everyone but we achieved what is expected if we please the majority of our patients. With regards to opening at weekends, although 38.5% is a fair figure, we don’t feel that we need to provide more than we already generously offer. Each practice pay to have an excellent deputising Out Of Hours Services to cover nights and weekends, there is also a local Walk-In Centre placed at St Luke which provides emergency appointments during weekends and bank holidays.

**Availability**

With regards to the availability of a **particular doctor**, 72% of patients said they could see a particularly doctor within 4 days and 28% of patients said that it took 5 or more days to see a particularly doctor.

With regards to the availability of **any doctor**, 94% of patients shown that they can book an appointment within 4 days, and 6% of patients said that it took 5 or more days to see any doctor.

**Action Plan**

This survey shows that the majority of patients can book an appointment within 4 working days especially to see any doctor. We have tried our utmost to deal with the changes of staff in the last couple of years, After Dr Hutter retired in 2010 we employed a new full time salaried doctor but she unfortunately left after one year to live abroad, we have since employed 2 new salaried doctors each on a part time basis, another doctor is leaving us at the end of this month so we are looking for a replacement. Considering the changes our figures are looking quite good and we are hoping that it will improve as our new doctors settle amongst the practice team and our patients get to know them better.

Patients are still able to book appointments up to one month ahead. We also open appointments each morning. Each patient who feels that they condition cannot wait and needs to be seen urgently will be fitted in on the day either after morning clinics or before and after the duty doctor’s late afternoon clinic. The survey showed that when patients were asked ‘If you need to see a GP urgently, can you normally get seen on the same day?’ out of the yes or no answers, 77% said yes but 22% of patients answered ‘Don’t know/never needed to’ which is ambiguous as we are not sure if they answered because they didn’t know they could or because they didn’t need to. We will re-iterate with the receptionists to inform the patients that they can be fitted in it they cannot wait for a next routine appointment.

**Telephone access to reception**

The survey shows that 92% of our patients have scored between fair and excellent on commenting about phoning through to the practice.

**Action Plan**

When it is very busy we have 3 receptionists answering the phones, 2 at the front and 1 in the back office. They all do their very best to answer as quickly as possible. The new telephone system allows 4 patients to get through to the surgery so there will be time when they have to wait few minutes but hopefully we deal with the large volume of calls a pick time with diligence.

**Telephone access to clinicians**

The survey shows that 72% of the patients who have tried to contact through to a doctor for advice were satisfied but, we have noticed that many patients answered that they did not know or never tried to phone through to speak to a doctor.

**Action Plan**

It seems that patients are not always aware that they can phone through to speak to a [Clinician](https://www.gpfusion.co.uk/auth/2ca8e5cf-10fa-43c5-a58f-c5804d894beb/pages/Patient-Survey) for example with regards to a consultation they had few days before and have a query about it. Usually the doctor will tell the patient that they can phone if any queries. We have put a message on the electronic message board in the waiting room, we will re-iterate with receptionists to offer this service but it is not always easy to inform the patients without praying on what they want exactly.

**Clinical technical competence:**

Some questions of the survey were designed to show the doctors' knowledge and skills and appreciate how effective the doctors' treatments were. First 94% of patients rated positively the continuity of care, with 78% rating very highly. 95% of the patients were happy with the doctors' questioning and listening skills with 83% rating it between good and excellent, 43% rated it excellent.

**Communication skills:**

The survey shows that the majority of patients are satisfied with the way doctors conduct the consultations and how they put the patients at ease (94%) and involve them (96%) in sharing the decisions.

**Inter-personal attributes:**

Here again the patients responded positively with the question about satisfaction with the doctors' explanations - 97% rated it fair to excellent with most being excellent (45%).

On the question about the doctors' caring and concern skills, 95% of patients are satisfied with the way the doctors appear caring and concerned during their consultations.

The survey shows that the majority of patients 75% are able to understand their problem after visiting the doctor and 73% are able to cope with their problem after their visits. A total of 73% of patients are able to keep much more and little more healthy afterwards; 38% much more, 35% little more, 26% same or less than before.

Looking at the answers about clinical technical competence, the survey shows that patients rated all questions with the highest score of 'excellent' which is rewarding for the doctors who are doing their very best to provide the upmost quality of care even if they see each an average of 30 patients per day.

**Action Plan**

The doctors train constantly to update their clinical skills, they spend an average of 50 hours per year attending clinical training seminars as well as having in-house regular [Clinical Governance](https://www.gpfusion.co.uk/auth/2ca8e5cf-10fa-43c5-a58f-c5804d894beb/pages/Patient-Survey) meetings. They also attend communication skills updates; the partners have recently attended leadership communication skills.

The practice team regularly identifies significant events and learn from them. We review the incidents to ensure that the practice team offers the best possible care to our patients.

 **Overall satisfaction with practice.**

This year the survey was about access to the practice and doctors consultations skills. It was carried out on 5 doctors, Dr Irlam, Dr Alwan, Dr Harter, Dr Omosini and Dr Korsten. The majority of patients have expressed their satisfaction with the practice but we mustn't be complacent, there is always room for improvement. Conducting a regular survey gives the practice an idea on how patients feel and allow us to look into the areas where we do well and where we need to improve. The clinicians and administration staff do their utmost to offer our patients the best possible care.

**Action Plan for the next year**

Once we have analysed the survey results we discuss them with our Patient Participation group with whom we meet regularly at the practice but we have realised that many patients have busy lives and don't have much spare time to spend attending our Patient Group's meetings so this year for the first time we have created a Virtual Patient Group to work along our face to face Patients Group. The response has been tremendous and we have collected many emails to start communicating and be even more pro-active.

As in previous years, we publish our survey results in our newsletter which is posted on our practice website and distributed to patients in the waiting room.

We also have a suggestion box placed in the lobby and we welcome all feedbacks and suggestions to develop our services.

By involving our patients in our practice decisions making, it helps us to continually improve our services. We hope that in the next few months our Virtual Patients Group will grow to have few hundreds patients.

**Christine Lloyd
Practice Manager**