

THE PATIENT VOICE

JUNE 2014

DO YOU FEEL FRUSTRATED WHEN YOU CANNOT GET AN APPOINTMENT?

During the first three months of this year a total of 3120 appointments were available at West Barnes surgery, 322 (10%) appointments were wasted because patients failed to keep their appointments.

On average approximately, 107 patients per month Did Not Attend (DNA) their appointment. This currently results in 18 hours of wasted clinical time each month!

A recent survey by Doctor Patient Partnership (DPP) showed an estimated £150m worth of appointment time is lost each year because of the patients in the United Kingdom who fail to keep appointments with their GPs.

The effect of this is:

- An increase in waiting time for appointments
- Frustration for both staff and patients
- A waste of NHS resources
- A potential risk to the health of patients

Non-attendance is a major issue for the NHS, increasing waiting list times and costs. Missed appointments can also increase inappropriate and unnecessary A&E attendances.

It is appreciated there can be many reasons why patients fail to attend appointments (they feel better, they are scared, transport problems or they simply forget) however, the practice

needs to be notified as soon as you are aware that you will not be attending so that the appointment can be given to someone else.

The Practice has a policy to address repeated DNA's:

If a patient fails to attend an appointment on 3 occasions in the last 6 months a warning will be sent to them with the practice's DNA policy. Warning letters are valid for a period of 12 months. If the patient continues to regularly DNA thereafter other measures will be taken in order to reduce DNAs.

The surgery takes the waste of resources, clinical time and obstruction to patient access very seriously.

PAUL BOYNTON — PPG MEMBER



I have been a member of the PPG since its inception in 2012.

I was born and raised on the Isle of Wight, relocating to London through work in 1979. I moved to a property in West Barnes Lane in 1983, and have been registered with the Practice since that time.

I spent my entire working life with Lloyds Bank, starting on the Isle of Wight, then working in West London, and latterly Twickenham, Kingston, and Epsom. In the last 20 years I worked in the Commercial arm of the Bank, mainly as a Business Relationship Manager.

At the end of 2012, following one of many internal reorganisations, I took the opportunity of voluntary early retirement, having been with the Bank for 38 years.

I have a clear understanding of how a large organisa-

tion operates, and coupled with having managed the banking requirements of a varied portfolio of commercial clients, including a number of Doctors Practices (not West Barnes!), I feel this gives me an excellent breadth of view.

On a personal level football is my main interest, being a season ticket holder, and (very small!) part owner of Portsmouth Football Club, the largest community owned football club in the country.

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Join us on the PPG

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BE PREPARED FOR A HEATWAVE

Most of us welcome hot weather, but when it's too hot for too long there are health risks. If a heatwave hits this summer, make sure the hot weather doesn't harm you or anyone you know.

The very young, the elderly and the seriously ill are the groups who are particularly at risk of health problems when the weather is very hot. In particular, very hot weather can make heart and breathing problems worse.

"There is considerable evidence that heatwaves are dangerous and can kill," says Graham Bickler of the Health Protection Agency. In August 2003, temperatures hit 38C (101F) during a nine-day heatwave, the highest recorded in the UK.

"In the 2003 heatwave there were 2,000 to 3,000 excess deaths (more than usual) in England. Across Europe, there were round 30,000 excess deaths."

When heat becomes a problem

An average temperature of 30°C by day and 15°C overnight would trigger a health alert (this figure varies slightly around the UK). These temperatures can have a significant effect on people's health if they last for at least two days and the night in between.

The Meteorological Office has a warning system that issues alerts if a heatwave is likely. Level one is the minimum alert and is in place from June 1 until September 15

(which is the period that heatwave alerts are likely to be raised).

- The minimum alert simply means that people should be aware of what to do if the alert level is raised.
- If a level two alert is issued, there is a high chance that a heatwave will occur within the next few days.
- The level three alert is when a heatwave is happening.
- The level four alert is when a heatwave is severe.

Risk groups

A heatwave can affect anyone, but the most vulnerable people in extreme heat are:

- older people, especially those over 75
- babies and young children
- people with a serious chronic condition, especially heart or breathing problems
- people with mobility problems, for example people with Parkinson's disease or who have had a stroke
- people with serious mental health problems
- people on certain medications, including those that affect sweating and temperature control
- people who misuse alcohol or drugs
- people who are physically active, for example labourers or those doing sports

WHY IS A HEATWAVE A PROBLEM?

The main risks posed by a heatwave are:

- dehydration (not having enough water)
- overheating, which can make symptoms worse for people who already have problems with their heart or breathing
- heat exhaustion
- heatstroke

TIPS FOR COPING IN HOT WEATHER

The following advice applies to everybody when it comes to keeping cool and comfortable and reducing health risks:

- Shut windows and pull down the shades when it is hotter outside. If it's safe, open them for ventilation when it is cooler.
- Avoid the heat: stay out of the sun and don't go out between 11am and 3pm (the hottest part of the day) if you're vulnerable to the effects of heat.
- Keep rooms cool by using shades or reflective material outside the windows. If this isn't possible, use light-coloured curtains and keep them closed (metallic blinds and dark curtains can make the room hotter).
- Have cool baths or showers, and splash yourself with cool water.
- Drink cold drinks regularly, such as water and fruit juice. Avoid tea, coffee and alcohol.
- Stay tuned to the weather forecast on the radio or TV, or at the Met Office Website
- Plan ahead to make sure you have enough supplies, such as food, water and any medications you need.
- Identify the coolest room in the house so you know where to go to keep cool.
- Wear loose, cool clothing, and a hat if you go outdoors.

- Check up on friends, relatives and neighbours who may be less able to look after themselves.

If you're worried about yourself or a vulnerable neighbour, friend or relative, you can contact the local environmental health office at your local authority. Environmental health workers can visit a home to inspect it for hazards to health, including excess heat. Find your local authority on the Directgov website.

ARE YOU AGED
18—45 AND
WANT TO HAVE A
SAY IN HOW
SERVICES ARE
DELIVERED AT
WEST BARNES
SURGERY?

WE NEED YOU
ON THE PPG -
CONTACT SARA

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“TO ENSURE
THAT THE VIEWS
OF PATIENTS
CAN BE HEARD
AT THE
PRACTICE LEVEL
AND WITHIN
THE WIDER
COMMUNITY”

2013/14 PATIENT SURVEY RESULTS

The annual patient survey was distributed to those who attended the surgery during a 6 week period between January and March 2014. 399 patients completed the survey which was also available on the surgery's website. The questionnaire contained 7 key questions about the service received from the surgery along with questions about the respondents' demographic information. The questions had been agreed by the Patient Participation Group and focused on access to appointments and customer service.

Overall the responses showed an improvement on last year's results. 74% of patients had been able to see a doctor on the same day or within the next two weekdays in comparison to 37% last year. Following last year's survey results, all reception staff attended Customer Service training in October 2013 and it is encouraging to see that in the recent survey reception staff were rated very helpful by 64% of patients and fairly helpful by 17% whereas last year only 31% of patients rated them as very helpful. 59% of respondents

were very satisfied with the care received from the surgery and 29% were fairly satisfied. The full results of the survey are available on the Surgery's website.

Although there was a small increase in the number of responses this year, the response rate was disappointing. The PPG have recommended that next year a nominated member of staff is in charge of handing out surveys to patients visiting the surgery and that copies are available in all consulting rooms for distribution at the end of appointments.



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DR ANTHONY HUGHES

I joined West Barnes Surgery in 1996 as a Partner and had just finished my GP training in the Twickenham area.

I grew up in Haverfordwest, West Wales and extended my horizons east as far as Cardiff University, where I qualified in Medicine in 1991. A short detour going North (Wrexham) to do surgery was followed by going south again (Medicine, Newport Gwent).

Like Dick Whittington, I continued my eastern odyssey (along the M4 corridor) terminating in London. Had planned to spend a year or so there, but instead married

my University sweetheart (Helen) and settled down.

Now it is 22 years later. I am 2 stone heavier, 3 children to the good and I do not regret making the decision to be a GP in New Malden.

I enjoy all aspects of my job especially training young doctors to be GP's. Still waiting to be asked to play rugby for Wales though.....

FEBRUARY OPEN EVENING

The PPG in conjunction with West Barnes Lane Practice held its first Open Evening at Holy Cross Church Hall on Thursday February 13th 2014 from 7.00 -9.00 pm.

There were 24 patients attending (not all from WBL surgery) and three of the Partners were also present. The evening was divided into two parts. In the first, Dr Iqbal gave a summary of the changes which were taking place within the NHS and how these changes might affect the practice and in particular its patients . This is a complex issue but Dr Iqbal took the audience through the various stages with the help of some explanatory diagrams.

After some welcome refreshments, Mr Steven Harsum (consultant ophthalmologist at Epsom and St Helier Hospitals) outlined some of the major problems with eyesight including cataracts and macular degeneration. His talk was very comprehensive and informative and illustrated with some well chosen and sometimes graphic slides. At the end of his talk he answered questions on the topic from members of the audience.

It was generally agreed that this had been an excellent evening and those attending indicated that they would welcome more events of this nature.

FUTURE OPEN EVENING FOR PATIENTS OF WEST BARNES SURGERY

FOLLOWING ON FROM THE SUCCESS OF OUR FIRST OPEN EVENING IN FEBRUARY, WE WILL BE HOLDING ANOTHER IN OCTOBER AND WILL ADVERTISE THE DATE AND SUBJECT NEARER THE TIME