

QuayPoints

Special Edition

November 2013

The Patient Newsletter for East Quay Medical Centre

East Quay Medical Centre has a long standing patient group. Formed ten years ago, the group provides a critical voice and acts as a sounding board for developments in or involving the practice. It meets regularly with key people in the practice to hear about developments in the Practice and the wider NHS, as well as providing feedback on patients' experience, results of surveys, and bringing forward complaints and compliments. The group has also been involved in events such as the diabetes awareness days; the carers support days and the 'flu clinics.

In 2011 the government asked practices to involve their patient group to seek their fellow patients' views on an issue that was important to them. We regularly ask our patients their views on different issues but we welcome the opportunity to do a specific focussed project. Having already undertaken two surveys: in 2011 the group looked at the services patients would like to see locally rather than travelling to Taunton, and last year our group believed that a major issue for patients is their understanding of the medications they are prescribed by the doctor or nurse and the potential medication waste that occurs if a patient doesn't understand or doesn't feel able to discuss their concerns. Out of this came a really useful 'Get the best out of your consultation' leaflet that all local practices now use.

In considering this years' survey we reviewed Public Health data considering screening rates, childhood and flu vaccinations and obesity and smoking levels in Bridgwater. We also discussed the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the benefits that this has brought and we considered our own services: reception, the building as a whole, clinical care and appointment availability. Considering all of these points the group decided on a survey to find out how useful patients find the various tools we use for practice information, as well as establish what they know about the patient group.

So, at East Quay our discussions culminated in the group undertaking a patient survey in August 2013 on how useful patients found the practice information available to them. This included the website, practice leaflets and newsletter. We also wanted to establish what patients knew about the patient group and how they would feel if invited to join the group.



The profile of the members of the PPG

Many members have been with the group since its inception 10 years ago, but in recent years the group has grown and now includes a number of newer members.

The group meet regularly – approximately every 6-8 weeks, alternating evening and lunchtimes. The Deputy Practice Manager, Customer Service Manager, Practice Manager and Lead GP attend. The lead GP rotates in the GP cabinet posts annually.

Following our Survey this year our numbers have now doubled and are more representative of the patient list.

We are still keen to encourage younger members into the group and if anyone aged 16 to 50 would like to join our virtual group please let Sue Hughes, Deputy Practice Manager, know.

How did the Group obtain the views of the patients?

For logistical reasons and to support a high response rate, the group opted to use a one-to-one survey and that it would be conducted by the group in the waiting room. The group then outlined ideas for the survey design. With the direction from the group, the Practice Manager designed the survey paper. This was fully circulated to the group and all feedback incorporated into the final document.

Following the success of our surveys in the previous two years, we decided to aim higher this year and we actually achieved 385 completed surveys.

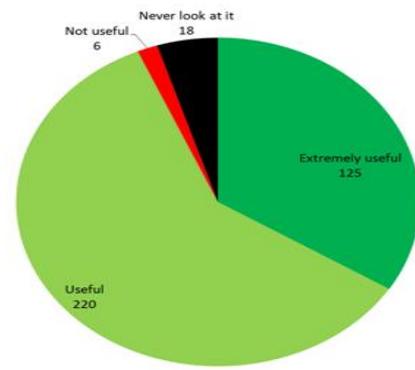
Having agreed the format and target numbers, the patient group ran the survey themselves to all patients in the main waiting room during the first two weeks in August 2013. A timetable of which members would cover the sessions was put together and for safety and support, at least two group members were in the waiting room at one time.

We allocated a separate room for those patients who wanted privacy. All group members had name badges and their photos and an explanation of the survey was displayed in reception the week leading up to the survey and the survey weeks. All patients booked in that period were advised at the time of booking that the survey was taking place.

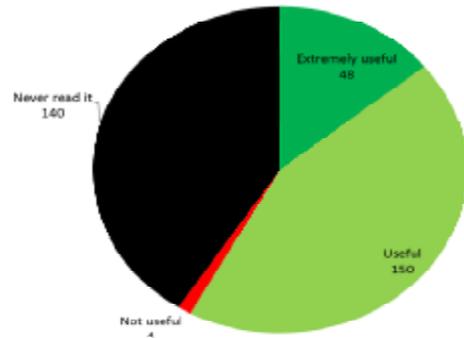
What were the results?

We completed 385 surveys and they were reasonably representative of the practice list.

- There was a strong response to say that patients know we have information available on the plasma screen and the majority find this useful.
- Only a third were aware of our monthly newsletter, but over a half of these found the information useful
- We were delighted to know that the 17 leaflets we produced at the beginning of the year, on various topics ranging from Consent, Repeat Medication and Access to Medical Records to Breast Feeding and a general leaflet in Polish, were known about by 67% of those patients responding to the survey.
- Only half of our patients were aware of the practice website and only 35% of these had actually accessed the site.
- Over half the patients were aware of our patient group and a quarter of these were interested in either finding out more about the group or joining



How useful do you find the information in Quaypoints, the practice newsletter?



The Patient Group Analysis

The Patient Group met at the beginning of October to discuss the results and decide on what, if any, steps need to be taken following the survey.

The action points:

The group decided there were three main areas for action from the results:

- Ø To increase the profile of the practice website
- Ø To increase distribution of the monthly newsletter to more patients
- Ø To encourage all those patients who showed an interest in the patient group to join.

What action will this actually mean?

The patient group decided that there were three main areas of action from the results:

1. We will use the plasma screen to advertise the website and launch the new online prescription service.
www.eastquaymedicalcentre.com
2. To increase patient awareness of the monthly newsletter we will use the plasma screen to advertise the newsletter at the beginning of each month. We will also ensure there are copies available in various locations in the practice.
3. To increase the size of the patient group. This was achieved in mid-October, when we invited all those interested to a social evening to meet the established group members. The evening was a way of informing the new patients of what the group did to help the practice and what they had achieved over the last ten years. It was a really enjoyable evening:
 - Dr Swindall, the current patient group lead opened the event
 - Dr Aird, the previous patient group lead, spoke about the ethos of East Quay.
 - Rachel Stark, Practice Manager, spoke about the group and its past achievements
 - Sue Hughes, Deputy Practice Manager, explained how to join the group and the practical arrangements for the group.

At the end of the evening our existing group of twelve had grown to twenty five.

Further work is now taking place to assess the likely uptake to engage expectant parents or parents with young families in a series of focus groups attached to education, support and drop-in sessions at the practice.

If you would like any details on anything covered in the Special Edition of Quaypoints or would like to join either our patient group or a virtual patient group please contact Sue Hughes at the practice.