

Thaxted Surgery PPG Report and Survey Results 2014

Introduction

Thaxted Surgery's Patient Participation Group (PPG) was established in 2011. The group is open to all patients, and membership is promoted via website, posters in the building, quarterly newsletter and local parish magazines. The current spread of members is included in Appendix 1.

Each year, the PPG performs a patient survey with the practice. The PPG and the surgery jointly agree the topics and questions to be covered, and discuss the results and action plans together.

Actions since Last Years' Survey

Last years' survey focused on our customers' priorities for our improvement. Some of the theme that emerged were:

- Promoting on-line appointments,
- Reducing requests to patients to call back,
- Adding and adjusting GP, HCA and nurse time to match the most preferred appointment times of patients (mornings).

It also showed a clear picture of dissatisfaction about the physical rearrangement of dispensary and reception, including issues of:

- Confidentiality
- Physical discomfort - poor seating, a heavy front door, a draughty entrance hall
- Misunderstanding of what receptionists are able do on matters relating to medication
- Insufficient manpower to deal with the queue and the phones at peak times

The surgery has made major changes in response to this. We have:

- Enlarged and refurbished our waiting room, with more comfortable seating
- Introduced two new physical telephone lines
- Recruited and trained 3 new reception/dispensary staff members, increasing our skills at customer service and increasing our reception staffing level
- Installed a running message board in the waiting room to call patients when medication is ready to reduce queuing around the reception area and hence increase confidentiality
- Introduced an extra GP surgery 3 mornings per week
- Adjusted our appointments system to increase the proportion of appointments that can be booked in advance.
- Introduced regular patient newsletters and surgery flyers about matters such as Test Results, Medication Reviews, and what receptionists can do with respect to medication queries.

Our PPG has supported us hugely in thinking through and making these changes. The changes we made also received a strong endorsement at our CQC inspection in Autumn. We plan to repeat a similar survey in 2015, but for this year, our CCG felt

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we needed to give the changes time to really bed in, and chose to focus instead, on transport this year.

Patient Survey 2014

After correspondence by e-mail among the wider PPG group, the PPG, at its meeting on October 23rd 2013 (see minutes on website), agreed that this year's annual patient survey should be on the topic Patient Transport.

The rationale is that we are a rural community, with poor public transport, far from a hospital. We would like to understand the issues that our patients encounter with respect to transport, so that we can work with the local nhs and voluntary groups to support patients better.

A survey was developed by the group (Appendix 2), and promoted using the following methods:

- Mail shot to over 85s and a selection of other patients from targeted groups (e.g. Carver Barracks young mums)
- Available to download from our website
- Available in the surgery
- Promoted on our sign-in screen
- GPs and Nurses gave copies to individual patients whenever they thought the patient might have transport issues.

The survey ran for a 6 week period, from January 24th 2014 to March 5th 2014.

Response

In all, we gave out around 200 surveys. 37 were returned (18.5%). At the PPG meeting on March 5th (minutes on website) it was agreed that, given the targeted nature of the survey (patients with issues re transport), this constituted a viable response rate and a valid survey.

Most of the returns reflected the over 85 age group. However, other groups were represented, implying that the survey did reach widely, and patients who wanted to respond had the opportunity to do so.

All patients completing the survey were either able to walk to a bus stop, and/or get into a car without assistance. Hence, they would not be eligible for CCG transport.

Conclusions

Appendix 3 shows the anonymous results numerically. These results were discussed by the PPG on March 5th 2014 (minutes available on web-site). The key conclusions made were:

- **We have a lot of elderly people who are still driving, but appear to be doing so only because it remains a lifeline.** They display a lack of confidence and

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insecurity in doing so. *E.g. "I only drive locally". "My car is 18 years old." "I drive myself, but only in daylight."*

- **We have a segment of elderly people who rely on friends/family/partners to drive them, but again, who display a lack of confidence and insecurity in doing so.** *E.g. "If my wife couldn't drive me I don't know what would happen"*
- **Public transport is (perceived as?) rarely available and rarely used. Even though the vast majority of respondents felt they had the mobility to walk to a bus stop and use a bus.**
- **Dial a ride, which is seemingly designed for these patients, is also rarely used.**
 - Expense appears to be a barrier
 - Frequency of use/the idea of membership appears to be a barrier
 - There is also some ignorance/desire for more information.

Feedback is mixed from the few patients who have used the dial a ride service. Some find it useful. Others complain about both cost and service.

- **There are some indications of interest in medication delivery services for some postcodes – CB10, CB11, CM7.** However, the evidence on this survey alone is not strong. More focused research is needed, and possibly some pilots.
- **We had limited response from Carver Barracks families,** despite the fact that we targeted them in our mail shot. Nevertheless, perception remains that there are young wives with families who don't drive and struggle to reach appointments. This demographic may be too busy to complete surveys.

Action Plan

Following this survey, the PPG and surgery have agreed the following actions (see minutes of meeting from March 5th, available via our website).

- Representatives from the PPG and the Surgery will arrange a meeting with Dial a Ride and the NHS Transport Commissioners to discuss these results and look at potential ideas around:
 - surgery membership of dial a ride,
 - reducing costs of dial a ride, e.g. by sharing or by refocusing funding
 - greater promotion of dial a ride.
- We will summarise and publicise information on relevant local bus routes to and from surgery, Saffron Walden Community Hospital, and other local clinic venues

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- PPG members will research into volunteer driving schemes operated in by patients of surgeries in other locations, including Ashdon/Linton, and Finchingfield, as a potential alternative to dial a ride
- The Practice Manager will organise a meeting with the transport needs of Army to discuss the needs of army families and how we support them in more depth. As part of this, we will look into Army Welfare, SAFA (Support for Soldiers' and Families), and SSCN (Service Support Care Network).
- Conduct more detailed research into medication drops in key post codes - CB10, CM7, CB11 – and move towards a pilot, possibly in conjunction with dial a ride.

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1

Membership of the Patient Participation Group is promoted via:

- Our website,
- Our patient leaflet
- Posters in the building,
- A PPG noticeboard and suggestions box in the waiting room.
- Quarterly newsletter which is available in surgery,
- Quarterly surgery news published in local parish magazines.

The current profile of members is set out below.

Age	#members	#patients on list of this age	% representation	#engaged in face to face meetings	#engaged remotely
16-24	0	800	0		
25-34	0	644	0		
35-44	3	830	.003	1	2
45-54	2	1125	.002	1	1
55-64	6	910	.007	2	4
>65	15	900	.017	5	10
ALL	26	7100	.003	9	17

- Female members: 16 (4 meet face to face). Male members: (5 meet face to face)
- All members are White British – which largely reflects the area.
- 4 members are carers.
- 11 members have long term conditions, including diabetes, and hypertension.

PPG members currently feel that young mothers, in particular are under-represented, and are taking steps to reach this group through local schools and pre-schools.

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Appendix 2: The survey

Thaxted Surgery Patient Participation Group has chosen patient transport as the topic for their annual patient survey. We are a rural community, with poor public transport, far from a hospital. We would like to understand the issues that our patients encounter with respect to transport, so that we can work with the local nhs and voluntary groups to support patients better.

If you have issues with transport regarding your health care, please complete this survey. If you are a carer or parent, please feel free complete it on the patient's behalf.

1. In the last year, have you (or a patient for whom you care) experienced transport problems:

Getting to Thaxted surgery to:	Yes	No	N/A	If yes, how frequently?
Attend routine appointments?				
Attend urgent, on the day appointments?				
Collect regular medication?				
Getting to clinic/outpatient appointments at:	Yes	No	N/A	If yes, how frequently?
Saffron Walden Community Hospital?				
Addenbrookes/Rosie?				
Princess Alexandra, Harlow				
Dunmow Clinic				
Broomfield				
Other				
Getting to urgent appointments/A&E at:	Yes	No	N/A	If yes, how frequently?
Saffron Walden Community Hospital?				
Addenbrookes/Rosie?				
Princess Alexandra, Harlow				
Dunmow Clinic				
Broomfield				
Other				

2. Where do you (or the patient concerned) live?

Postcode	
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What is your (or the patient concerned's) age range?

>85	75-84	65-74	55-64	45-54
35-44	25-34	15-24	5-14	<5

3. How do you generally get to your nhs appointments at the following locations?

	N/A	Walk	Drive self	Driven by partner	Driven by friend/family	Taxi	Voluntary transport	Public Transport
Thaxted Surgery								
Saffron Walden Hospital								
Addenbrookes/Rosie								
Princess Alexandra, Harlow								
Dunmow Clinic								
Broomfield								
Other								

Thaxted Surgery is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6.30pm or until the last patient leaves if later. Phones are open from 8am to 6.30pm. Reception is manned throughout the day, and pre-ordered medication can be picked up whenever the surgery is open. The surgery opens 1 Saturday morning each month, under review pending new extended hours contract from NHS England

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4. Which of the following best describes your mobility? (please tick those that apply)

I am able to walk to a local a bus stop and use a bus	
I am able to use a door to door car/taxi service without assistance	
I need assistance to get into/out of cars	
I use a wheelchair	

5. What public transport is available from within a reasonable distance from your home to:

	Hourly Bus	3 hourly bus	Daily bus	Less than daily	None	Don't know?
Thaxted						
Saffron Walden Hospital?						
Addenbrookes/Rosie?						
Princess Alexandra, Harlow						
Dunmow Clinic						
Broomfield						
Other						

6. If we were to offer a medication delivery service to a local pick up point, (e.g. village hall), once every two weeks at a set time/day, would you use it instead of coming to the surgery?

Yes		No	
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Are there any times/days that you would **NOT** use such a service? (please circle)

Mon am	Tues am	Wed am	Thurs am	Fri am
Mon pm	Tues pm	Wed pm	Thurs pm	Fri pm

7. Uttlesford Community Transport ("dial a ride") offer a car service, with volunteer drivers, at a cost of £10 pa membership and 45p per mile. Would you consider using this service to get to your health appointment?

I already use it	
Yes – I would like to know more	
No – I wouldn't use it often enough	
No – it's too expensive.	
No – it's not available where I live.	

8. If you have used Uttlesford community transport ("dial a ride"), please rate it for:

	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Convenience				
Reliability				
Expense				
Ease of booking				
Comfort				

9. So that we can follow-up with you, please could we have your name? (this is voluntary)

Name	
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