Report on 2019 Patient Survey

The subject of the survey was the Practice Appointments System. The survey was a repeat of the 2018 one with some minor alterations. We received 267 responses over the 3 days of the survey. That analysis was collated and from the data the following observations were identified.

On a positive note we found and would echo the overall satisfaction expressed on the previous 2018 survey. Many, many patients said they were very happy with the Practice, mentioning the brilliant staff and good service given in sometimes trying circumstances.

1. The number using the telephone to make an appointment had increased by 4%, those using the online option decreased by 9%, those attending in person was up by 2% and the introduction of an App had seen a 2% take up.
2. There was no difference at all in those choosing between a morning or afternoon appointment on the previous year, 74% and 26% respectively.
3. An 8% increase was found in those thinking it had become easier to book an appointment whilst those thinking it was more difficult had reduced by 12%. Those thinking it was no different to the previous year increased by 4%
4. There had been a 1% reduction in those who had been offered an alternative GP if their allocated one was unavailable and a 1% increase in those who had not been offered that option. This may have been due, in part, to the introduction of the App option which did not allow for this choice to be offered.
5. Overall satisfaction had increased by 10%, dissatisfaction had reduced by 10% and those who were neither remained constant at 20%.
6. Data from the general comments suggested that most of the issues from the previous year were still uppermost in the minds of the patients and their concerns, although again we had seen an improvement in the general perception of the service.

Conclusion:

Overall the survey indicated there had been an improvement in the perception by patients of the system, albeit a small one. A 10% improvement in overall satisfaction on the previous year is to be applauded, that is encouraging.

However, from the general remarks it appears that the same issues that were not addressed after the last survey in 2018 are still paramount in the minds of the patients, the inability to book an afternoon appointment in the morning, having to call back every time, the inability to book an appointment when the Doctor wants you to.

It is the lack of one policy used by all staff that frustrates patients the most. The PPG will continue to attempt to address these issues again if and when the opportunity arises.

The partners have agreed to various changes which were implemented based on staffing issues regarding pre-booking and booking on-line. Unfortunately, due to one doctor leaving and the accident that occurred to another, the practice was operating on three and a half doctors instead of six.

It appears that a locum would cost the practice £900 per day. It was also difficult to find doctors in the South East as a whole. NH contracts were provided from a private company and currently the staff employed do not do any paperwork involved with seeing patients and there were also 3000 people whose tests had to be reviewed and notated by the full time GPs.

The surgery is looking for more doctors, they currently have enough nursing staff.

It was stated that patients needed to be educated about the range of services available.

In respect of nurses’ clinics on Saturdays. It was stated that over the last two weeks people have not been turning up. The same happened with the Doctor’s clinic. Nurse DNA’s are higher than Dr’s. It was pointed out that at Polegate they had a system of 3 misses and the person was removed from the list. It is disputed if this was allowed under NHS Guidelines.