**Local Patient Participation Report 2013/14**

**A profile of the members of the PRG**

The Patient Representation Group for Masham & Kirkby Malzeard Surgeries has been running for over 10 years albeit previously known as the Patient Group or Patient Participation Group. It is an enthusiastic and friendly group who show great commitment to improving the service the surgery provides.

There is a fairly even 2:3 mix of male and female members of the PRG however it has been noted over the past few years that certain age groups are under-represented. Currently the spread shows 6% <55yrs, 38% 56-65yrs, 44% 66-75yrs and 12% 76-85yrs.

**Under-representation of the under-55s**

There appears to be a heavy waiting to the over 55yrs age group with very few members below that age. In an effort to broaden membership and ensure younger patients are represented several steps were taken between the 2012 and 2013 surveys. These included; a heartfelt plea for new members at the public meeting in the Town Hall attended by 100 patients, posters in surgeries and surrounding villages, invitations to join sent to randomly selected patients within the under-represented age groups, and word of mouth.

Despite the publicity and great efforts of all involved there still remains a significant under-representation of under-55s. We plan to revisit this issue in the coming year and wonder whether we may benefit from highlighting what a rewarding and valuable experience membership of the PRG offers to younger people. Many people may already have experience of similar roles within their School, Work-place, Students Unions, Young Farmers Union etc. and they could be a great asset to the PRG providing a voice for their demographic.

We have also taken note of the low percentage of 18 to 25yr olds and >85yr olds that completed the patient survey in 2013. We are currently looking at multiple ways of improving access to the survey for the 2014/15 survey. This may involve the use of social media, online survey, distribution and collection to the housebound. We hope to canvas the PRG for their views and inspiration but the aim is to ensure that the survey really does represent the views of the whole patient population.

**Focus of 2014 survey**

It had been noted in the Town Hall meeting of 2012 that online access to appointments and repeat prescriptions were areas of patient interest. These were confirmed by the 2013 survey results. Unfortunately the computer system was not in place at the time to implement the changes that were proposed in last year’s Action Plan. A new technological era has now dawned at Masham & Kirkby Malzeard Surgeries with the switch over of computer systems to EMISWeb and we now have the tools to make the previously proposed changes. We were however acutely aware that to make such changes would have an impact on the day to day running of the practice and as a result a potential impact on the patient experience. For example we would have to make decisions regarding the percentage of appointments to be set aside for online booking versus those to be booked by traditional methods. This required an understanding of the current demand for such a service. We therefore sought to establish with the PRG whether the interest was still there for such a change in service. The PRG indicated in meetings that these were still key areas of interest and we therefore sought to explore the interest of the wider practice population by way of the survey before proceeding with changes. We felt this would make the change to service more reflective of current patient mood.

The PRG is an invaluable way of identifying the issues that are important and those that should be explored in the annual survey. We also place great importance on patient feedback of other types including; complaints, face to face feedback, feedback via staff and via associated healthcare professionals such as district nurses. It is our firm belief that to improve we first have to learn. By reflecting on a complaint & other feedback from patients we identified mode of communication and time taken to answer telephone calls as issues of priority that we felt also justified inclusion in this year’s survey. The same feedback and reflective cycle justified the inclusion of a question relating to open surgery

**Methodology**

Having identified the issues to be included within the survey a questionnaire was designed by the Practice Manager and Partners. Copies were left in the reception areas of the Masham and Kirkby Malzeard surgeries. It was hoped that this method of delivery would provide valid data from a wide demographic. We compiled the results after receiving 100 completed questionnaires and the data produced is described as follows.

**Data Anaylsis**

Question 1

How do you normally book your appointments at the surgery?

a) In person 38%

b) by telephone 70%

Question 2

Which of the following methods would you prefer to use to book appointments at the practice?

a) In person 23%

b) by phone 53%

c) on line 40%

Question 3

Which of the following methods would you prefer to use to order your repeat medication?

a) In person 31%

b) by phone 34%

c) on line 42%

Question 4

When you telephone the surgery how long did you have to wait before your call is answered?

a) less than a minute 41%

b) more than 1 minute but less than 5 minutes 49%

c) more than 5 minutes 2%

Question 5

Do you consider that we have the right mix of open and appointment surgeries.?

YES 72%

NO 20%

Question 6

How long did you have to wait to see a GP at an open surgery?

a) less than 5 minutes 1%

b) 10 – 15 minutes 6%

c) 15-30 minutes 21%

d) more than 30 minutes 63%

Question 7

Do you consider the time you have to wait in an open surgery is acceptable?

a) YES 57%

b) NO 30%

**Summary**

The survey shows that a high percentage (70%) of patients use the telephone as their main first point of contact with the surgery. In seeking preferences for the future there is clear support for all three methods of contact.

When making contact by telephone the survey shows that only 2% of patients have had to wait longer than 5 minutes to get through to a receptionist.

On the type of surgeries the practice provides, 72% of patients consider that there is the correct mix of open and appointment surgeries.

The open surgeries have always been a contentious issue and although a high percentage of patients 63% have had to wait more than 30 minutes to see a GP it is still felt by 57% that it is acceptable to incur this length of waiting time.

**Proposed Action Plan**

The results of the survey were discussed in the first available Partner’s meeting following the survey and the Partners looked at how best services may be altered to reflect patient preference.

The results of question 1 suggest that 70% of appointments are booked by phone. We feel our receptionists do a fantastic job and that the result of question 3 is testament to this. We do however feel that by embracing technology and utilising our new EMISWeb computer system we can now make appointment booking available online and so streamline the process even further. We hope this will reduce burden on telephone lines reducing the need for patients to redial. Calls should be answered more quickly. This should improve the service for those still wishing to book in person or online. A major advantage for those booking online will be that they are able to do so at any time of day or night at their convenience. This should satisfy the 40% who would prefer to book their appointments in this way.

Our plan regarding online booking is to make this available within the next 1 to 2 months. It will be publicised within the surgery, on our website and we would be grateful if the Patient Group were able to announce it in their next newsletter. Access will require registering to do so with the surgery and being given passwords/instructions to login on the website.

In light of the supporting evidence from question 3 we have begun the final workup to an online repeat prescription service. By way of returnable forms available in surgery and also distributed with repeat prescriptions we have begun registering those who are interested. We will be issuing passwords and instructions this week. Again as part of our proposed plan we would be grateful for publication of this in the next newsletter alongside our aim to more widely publicise it within the surgery.

We feel the results regarding open surgeries appear to support their availability in relation to appointment only surgeries. The partners are keen to explore the reasons for long waiting times in open surgeries to ascertain whether there is any more time efficient way of providing the same service. We propose to feed our thoughts back to the Patient Group at a later date following reflection. We shall then be able to discuss the pros and cons of any possible changes through further discussion with the group +/- further survey.

The proposed action plan was distributed by email to members of the PRG for perusal and feedback in addition to discussion at the next PRG meeting.

**Action to be initiated following discussion with the PRG**

With both online booking and repeat prescriptions having been identified in the previous year’s surveys as well as the most recent one we are delighted to report that the patient feedback has informed change.

The mechanism for online repeat prescription ordering is now in place and with passwords and instructions having been dispatched to those that have expressed their interest we look forward to seeing it work efficiently.

With regard to online appointment booking we hope to have a proportion of all bookable appointments available for online booking only. This should be available in 6 to 8 weeks as the new GP sessions are entered onto our computer system. We have used the valuable information gained from this cycle of patient participation to help inform the proportion of appointments that should be bookable in this way. In order to prevent wasted appointments the “online only” appointments will be released for booking by any method the day before each appointment.

**Opening hours of practice premises**

Masham Surgery is open from 8:30am to 12:30pm and 2:00pm to 6:00pm Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri and 8:30am to 1:00pm on Thursday. Phone lines are manned from 8am to 8:30am daily for emergencies and from 8:30am to 6:00pm daily for routine calls of any type.

Kirkby Malzeard Surgery is open from 8:00am to 1:00pm Mon to Friday. 5pm to 7pm Monday. 2pm to 7pm Thursday and 2pm to 5pm Friday.

A surgery is also open from 8:30am to 10am every Saturday morning with the exception of Bank Holiday weekends. The location of the Saturday morning surgery alternates approximately on a weekly basis between the Masham and Kirkby Malzeard with the location each week displayed at both sites.

Details of individual GP session times can be found on the practice website at <http://www.kirkbyandmashamsurgeries.co.uk/times.asp>