

Results of PPG Survey 2017

Many thanks to the thousand or so patients (some on line and some on paper) who took time to respond to our recent survey about the **new appointment system** introduced in the spring of 2017.

Why did the surgery reorganise the appointment system?

- To reduce time patients had to spend on the phone trying to make appointments
- To help patients see appropriate medical practitioners more quickly
- To identify need for urgent appointments

Telephoning for an appointment

It was clear from the survey that many patients, especially in Glossop, were still waiting too long on the telephone to make an appointment or having to make repeat telephone calls to contact the surgery. **In order to remedy this situation**

- **two more full time receptionists have already been appointed**
- **patients are being encouraged to use on line services**

Reducing waiting times to see an appropriate medical practitioner

A key strategy to reduce waiting times for an appointment is for receptionists to enquire about the reasons patients need an appointment. A majority of patients both at Hadfield and Glossop are happy with this situation and there were many positive comments praising thoughtful and understanding receptionists. But a minority of patients, particularly in Glossop, are not. The surgery understands why some patients feel this way and respects the absolute need for confidentiality. **To improve the situation further training of receptionists is being carried out.**

Waiting times to see a doctor of your choice

A majority of patients in Hadfield can make an appointment with a doctor or nurse of their choice within a reasonable time limit. It is more difficult in Glossop. The surgery recognises that it is often better for patients to see the same doctor for ongoing problems but this is difficult when some doctors work part time. Compared to the national picture we are doing well: the average waiting time to get a routine problem dealt with nationally is 2-3 weeks; 86% patients in Hadfield and 69% in Glossop were able to make an appointment within four days.

The understanding of 'Urgent appointments'

Survey results highlighted how difficult it can be to ascertain what makes an appointment 'urgent'. What is urgent to one person may not be to another and this can lead to confusion. However, discussion with the receptionist should help clarify the situation particularly when there is a very high demand for appointments. **For more useful information about minor ailments and how they can be dealt with effectively consult NHS Choices Minor Ailment Scheme.**

We are frequently being told that the National Health Service is in crisis, that the whole system is underfunded and that there is a serious shortage of medical staff in post and in training. The surgery is aware of patients' frustrations highlighted in the survey and is doing its best to improve the situation but like other surgeries both nationally and in Tameside and Glossop Manor House is sometimes under great pressure to provide the service it would like all patients to receive. We are lucky to have a full complement of excellent doctors and nurses and the many positive comments in the survey were proof of this.