

Hello to you all.

I would once again like to thank you all for allowing me to contact you in order to get your thoughts and ideas on our service and where we could improve or add new services.

Our survey as in other years has brought out similar results all within 1% of last years achievements.

We have looked at creating a Health Zone which we had hoped to build by extending the entrance to the Surgery in Tavistock.

Unfortunately, there are no funds/grants available to help us realise this so we need to look at other solutions.

We originally moved the automated blood pressure machine and height measurements to a side room. A number of patients requested that we do this opposed to having it in the waiting room. However, it has been used less since we moved it!!

Patients have requested that it be moved back to the waiting room in a similar manner as it is in Bere Alston.

We would like to do this as well as supplying relevant health information leaflets for patients to take away and read.

We would need we think to create some kind of low wall to create the area and would like to know what you think about this?

Is it a good idea?

What would you like to see in it?

Plus any other thoughts you might have around this idea?

I would also appreciate any thoughts you might have on.....

What we could do better?

What services you would like to see at our Surgeries?

What community services you think we should have and/or should be improved in our area?

Lastly, our NHS Contract will go through it's annual change with items added and items taken away in which the Government wish us to concentrate on.

One of the things they are suggesting to change from 01 April 2014 is the Patient Questionnaire.

The suggested guidelines say that it will be based around the same one used in major hospitals.

We will have to ask if you would recommend us to your friends and family.....and then.....we have to ask a second question.

I would like to ask you as a group as to what you think that second question might be?

Thank you very much for taking the time and trouble to read this e-mail and I really look forward to receiving your responses.

Hi Darren,

Yes move the blood pressure testing machine back to the waiting room, why a low wall would this not put some people off I.e. No privacy?

Also consider putting some sort of weighing machine in this area.

Some sort of BMI calculator, with the emphasis on weight,obesity, etc any information would help.

Large wall posters showing systems of diabetes, weight , high blood pressure ,etc. I am thinking along the lines that Derriford in the joint replacement area have posters showing what happens when you have a replacement knee, or hip etc.

Hi, thanks for the email. Regarding the automated blood pressure machine, both myself and my husband use it fairly regularly in the side room and we both prefer that it is not in the main waiting room area but that is just our opinion. We wondered whether the fact that fewer people have used it since it is out of sight could partly be down to lack of notices in the waiting room to that effect? Just a thought. Maybe it wouldn't be as relaxing having to do your blood pressure in a busy waiting room? I have thought that it would be good to have dietary leaflets and that type of information readily available in the waiting room and I would think it would need to be a partitioned off area.

We are very happy with all the services the surgery provides so cannot really come up with any new ideas.

With regard to the patient questionnaire - what about a second question on the lines of, say, six topics to be graded from very good to poor - for example how quick you were able to see a doctor - were you happy with the way you were treated and the outcome of your appointment?

Dear Darren,

That has given us something to think about!

What form was the Health Zone going to take – Could it be inside the partitioned off area for weighing and measuring?

We think that the building of some sort of low partition that gives those weighing themselves some amount of privacy might be a good idea – certainly weighing and measuring as well as the BP machine should all be in the waiting room as it will encourage people to use them. Relevant leaflets could be in there extolling the virtues of losing weight and as well as to look after blood pressure issues. Perhaps stopping smoking literature too.

An issue we would like to draw attention to is that quite often the front desk is not 'manned.' Of course the receptionists have to get information for patients etc but if we are to 'log in' on time,

there needs to be receptionists there to log us in on time! There is no way to draw attention to ourselves as patients (i.e. no bell), so other than jumping up and down and hoping, we are temporarily helpless.

We feel that Abbey Surgery offers us a pretty good service, especially as it has become inevitably more business managed and bigger. It would be wonderful if we felt more confident in the out of hours service but it has improved a little.

Lastly, if the 1st question is 'Would we recommend you to our family and friends' (which incidentally we do!), surely the second question should be 'If not, why not?'

Kind regards from us to you and all the doctors and staff,

I have used the automated pressure machine in both venues. I preferred its location in the waiting room. It was easier to see whether it was already in use, and it wasn't necessary to queue to ask if it was available. I think a simple screen is adequate, after all you only have to roll up your sleeve. I think a simple leaflet showing high, low and satisfactory blood pressure is all that is necessary.

I wonder if the Health Zone is intended to be a Well Persons clinic. I would like to know as a 64 year old whether I should have my cholesterol level checked and if there are any other routine checks which I would be advised to have. There are so many conflicting ideas in the media that it would be useful to know what the advice/entitlements are from an NHS point of view.

From a personal point of view I think you cover all my needs at the moment.

A second question for the Questionnaire might explore parking issues at peak times.

Hi Darren

I am sure having the blood pressure machine in the main area, or at least somewhere very close to it would be better. When I used it I had to ask at Reception and as they were busy had to wait so that the Receptionist could show me where to go and how to use it, which obviously takes up their precious time.

Re the health Zone:- just across the road is the library which has a meeting room and might be able to liaise on what you want to achieve by this zone. They already provide 'books on prescription' and are keen to build partnerships in the community.

Suggestion for second question:- something to do with availability of appointments perhaps.

Hi Darren

Apologies for slow reply.

If this response is not too late – my answers are as follows:-

1. I totally agree that the Blood Pressure machine should be bought back out into the main waiting area. When its there, its an easy prompt to check your blood pressure.

I agree it should be screened off in some way for an element of privacy, but would caution against a low wall – as sooner or later someone is likely to fall over it! Fixed 6 foot screening panels around it – maybe with the instructions for the machine in a nice clear large print and the good reasons for keeping an eye on your blood pressure could be printed onto these panels.

Not sure about putting much more in there with the machine/s, as there is a risk of information overload and causing confusion.

Each machine should be in a private area of its own and include some basic facilities where patients can hang their coats and cardigans etc and put their bags down securely. Need to also make sure that should someone collapse in this area, that the area isn't so hidden that no-one would know.

2. What we could do better:-

- Please answer the phones on Saturday mornings.
- Have a separate waiting area for children with more toys etc for them – so that adult patients who are feeling poorly and not up for the noise of small children and/or anyone who has recently lost a child are not all left sitting together in the same waiting area.
- More comfy chairs and/or a separate quiet waiting room for anyone who is feeling particularly poorly
- More evening and weekend appointments – with all of these appointments actually shown on the on-line booking form
- Put more/all available appointments onto the on-line booking system – have sometimes tried to book on line and not found what I required, but if phone up more appointments are actually available.
- Enable patients to book their own appointments on-line for nurses, physio, blood tests, cervical smears etc
- Patient access to their test results and GP records on-line
- More use of technology re Skype, Email and telephone consultations etc
- Turn off the radio behind the reception desk – when waiting area is not that full, it can become a very irritating background noise whilst trying to focus on what want to discuss with GP/Nurse
- If funds permit please make the car park more user friendly, the slope into the car park especially when its very busy is very difficult for new or nervous drivers and anyone with neck/shoulder problems. An extra vehicle exit/entrance out onto the Plymouth Road could perhaps make things easier.

3. Other services at practice:-

Any services that are at the practice need to be fully integrated with the practice in terms of booking appointments and sharing relevant information into patient notes.

- A practice pharmacist on site on a regular basis – once a week or month, who patients can chat too – if they have any concerns or simply want to double check how they should be taking their medications or want to better understand how their medicines actually work.
- More diagnostic services on-site to save trips to Tavistock or Derriford Hospital which can be difficult for anyone with mobility problems, who doesn't drive or who has family pressures on their time to travel into Derriford and back.
- Podiatry service – even just a simple nail cutting service and foot check.
- Mole & Skin Lesions Clinic
- Liaise with Derriford, so that at least some pre-op assessment clinics can be run at Abbey Surgery/Tavistock Hospital – taking the pressure off Derriford and making life significantly easier for patients. It may not be suitable for all ops – but it might be possible for some ops such as endoscopies.
- Group “Clinics” to help small groups of patients with common conditions such as osteoporosis keep well – these could be group sessions covering medication questions and advice, diet essentials, things to look out for and practice some exercises that will help. Also specific clinics for individual patients re more sensitive issues such as menopause and weight loss.
- Monthly talks and practical events to help patients spot things that do need attention, understand their bodies better and better self manage their own conditions wherever possible and when to call/not to call 999 and who else to contact when.
- Also talks and events – where patients can meet other key healthcare professionals who might influence their care such as Commissioners re how things are funded or not, Public Health Professionals re vaccine decisions, Pharmacist re medication issues, Hospital staff, Hospice Staff, Social Services etc
- More easy information for patients on the Nurse Clinics – what is available, what they are for and who should attend. Plus book on-line apt.
- Is there some scope for patients to help other patients with the same/similar condition as them in terms of GP practice based self help groups?

4. A second question for the FF questionnaire could be along the lines of what one thing would help improve the GP Service for you (max 25 words) – this would give some rich data, but of course it would be free text so the downside is the analysis that would be required to interpret the findings.