

Bridport Medical Centre

Patient Survey 2012 - 13

Telephone Access to Appointments

Follow-up survey to virtual Patient Reference Group (vPRG) – Comments and Suggestions

General Comments:

- I feel we have an excellent medical centre telephone appointments system already, for a small town that covers a wide area and other than spending millions of pounds that we have not got; I cannot make any suggestions for improvement.
- Interesting to see what other people think – but mostly it's great to think you're interested in what your customers want and need. Thank you.
- I think you must accept that you cannot please everybody all of the time. Maybe the call menu system should allow patients to decide if their call is urgent or routine (or non urgent). This would save the receptionist from some confrontations.
- Generally satisfied with present arrangements.
- Considering the number of people you have to deal with you're ok!
- Very comprehensive survey. Interesting to read the comments.
- You ask for ideas re making services better. Once you get to see a doctor the service is excellent. The problem is getting there. It is not always necessary to see one's own doctor. I am sorry that Dr Von Schack has gone who gave me great support during my cancer treatment. Twice I have been unable to get through to anyone on the telephone, up to 45 minutes, and because of my condition at the time my husband decided to take me to A&E. My son, who is a hospital consultant, and other consultants I have spoken to express concern about patients reporting to A&E because of difficulties gaining access to a G.P.
- As a (fortunate) only occasional patient it is not possible to equate my experience with the range of complaints listed. But it would seem the public perceives there are not enough telephonists available at peak times.
- I would strongly oppose further online booking for appointments partly because this must surely result in these users having access to the best appointment slots. It really should be first come first served for same day appointment requests.

- Some patients do perceive Receptionist/Telephonists acting as gate keepers in deciding access to their doctor – and in some cases they probably are. You must have your share of anxious patients who demand access to services with scant justification! In such circumstances a well informed and tactful receptionist must be a god send.
- I have not had a problem with the service. Difficult to make contact first thing in the morning. Do not like the voice and the way the message is delivered when one first has a response to the phone call. Another patient I know feels the same. How is the survey paid for? It seems a lot of paper to hundreds of people and postage.
- Quite a positive feedback overall. Telephone answering is always going to be an issue.
- You all do a very good job. Not very often thanked for this.
- Generally happy with the service provided although response to telephone calls for appointments could be improved.

Suggestions for improvement:

- More menu options – e.g. urgent/non urgent, own Dr or any Dr/nurse practitioner.
- A brighter and more welcoming voice on the automated telephone system.
- If there must be music while we are waiting, rather than low grade pop, quiet, middle of the road solo piano (no vocals). Actually BT now merely has a ringing tone occasionally interested with a short message as to how things are going.
- Require to develop online services does need to improve especially for urgent appointments.
- Yes – need to re-record message on automated system.
- Music quality improvement would be great.
- Not sure whether cancelling appointments by automated system will be helpful. There could be confusion by some elderly people.
- Agree – need to educate the patient of best times to contact the Medical Centre.
- Maybe start surgery earlier.
- If you need an appointment quickly, the same day should be available.
- There is a real need for an updated practice booklet for all patients providing not just usual information but also information about patient's rights.
- The pre-recorded message on the telephone needs changing. At present the voice is tired and gives impression the practice is disinterested in patients. Therefore need far more lively and welcoming voice message.

- Another issue is the future of Bridport Community Hospital and how services can be maintained there. It is an excellent facility. My husband had a hernia procedure there recently (Dr Skellern) and the experience could not be faulted.
- Open switchboard 1 hour before surgery starts – this would help with patients who really need ‘same day’ appointments.
- Would expect big demands on Mondays but Fridays appointments need to be available for those concerned their symptoms could worsen over the weekend and when access to medical advice is difficult. Hence – should routine appointments be restricted to mid week this allowing Mondays and Fridays being kept for medical urgency.
- Ability to book routine blood tests and nurses appointments online.
- Telephone option for cancellations. Also to leave messages for G.P’S without waiting for appointments to answer then being transferred.
- Maybe receptionists should be just that at peak times, with others behind the scenes answering the phones. Then they could deal with patients face to face properly.
- Advertise the online booking system. Lots of people don’t know about it.
- Improve telephone response times.
- I have none as always have received good service

Any other ideas:

- Very interested in improving services and environment for those in Autistic spectrum.
- Excellent service.
- I think the service you have is ok! But let’s have a brighter voice on the intro telephone – non vocal music acceptable to the older patient.
- When I am asked what to do I wish to see the Doctor about – THIS IS A PRIVATE THING. And if in a line of people waiting they would hear what my problem is.