

GP Access – Task and Finish Group

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Update – The foundations have been laid for improved care

- Enhanced Access is starting on 1st October 2022
- Enhanced Access survey had over 9000 responses
- 9 new prescribing clinicians have been recruited to the PCN
- It is vital that we request patients register for online access
- It is incredibly important for us to persuade patients to use the online systems, recognise the benefits of this technology and accept that in a modern General Practice this type of system is needed
- The PCN Practices need to optimise communication and improvements through effective Patient Participation Groups and through liaison with HealthWatch

Accessing Primary Care

The balance between choice and efficiency

Patients going online is more efficient for the surgeries

In order to maximise the use of our resources we need our patients to play their part in helping access healthcare and this includes online submissions.

Access for vulnerable patients, would be easier if other patients who could use online forms, chose to do this as it would reduce the length of the phonenumber and increases availability of receptionists.

Accessing Primary Care

The balance between choice and efficiency

Becoming digital is necessary for most patients

- Providing your email address
- Having a mobile phone or tablet device

Effect for patient and surgery

- Doctor can send you a text message or email that you can respond to and it goes back into your medical records. The GP can create a text message at a prescheduled time during the consultation

“Could you let me know whether your indigestion has cleared up with the tablets I gave you?”

- Doctor can send a text message or email with a link that allows you to book directly into a clinic for a blood test without having to wait on the phone for the receptionist.

Accessing Primary Care

The balance between choice and efficiency

Improved websites with the support of PPGs and HealthWatch

- Access for vulnerable patients would be better if other patients who could use online forms chose to do this
- Receptionists should be reserved for processes that cannot be easily automated
- Our PPG groups should be used as the conduit to ask patients about their needs, it strengthens the PPGs and increases local involvement with practices.

Accessing Primary Care

Moving forward we should work together to:

- Ensure able patients use the online forms of communication wherever possible
- Ensure the online experience is optimised by working with stakeholders (Patients, Rutland County Council and the Integrated Care Board)
- Ensure that vulnerable patients and those who are truly without on-line access have their telephone calls answered by non time pressured receptionists

Communication with the Practices

Negative comments make things worse for everyone

- GP practices want to have good relationships with patients.
- Negative comments have an impact on the staff.
- If the morale of Practices reduces, it is harder to keep staff, making service levels drop and we enter a vicious circle of cause and effect.

High effort + Low thanks = People leave

- Practices are now having trouble recruiting non-clinical staff, leaving the remaining staff under increased pressure.
- The problems of the NHS will not be solved by negative comments to a receptionist, but a positive comment helps that person feel valued and more likely to stay in post

Communication with the Practices

Improving systems comes through feedback in a structured manner

- We need to help patients to understand the changes to GP Practices, this starts with the Health and Wellbeing Board presentation later in this meeting.
- Webinars to explain the system can help, but we also need to work with the PPGs to improve the online portals and experience before we launch.

Going forwards

- PPGs should be the focus of how we engage and ask for help
- Surveys give us feedback on whether our plans are correct (9000 responses to Enhanced Access survey)

Physical restraints and staffing problems

Physical and staff restraints

- The new Enhanced Access gives greater access for patients.
- This will commence on 1st October 2022.
- The ARRS roles increase the number of clinicians available in the working week
- The ARRS roles have no space to work so are being forced to work from home one day a week
- The physical constraints of the buildings in Rutland remain a limiting factor in patient contact methods.
- Work is underway to review the estates strategy in primary care to tackle this.

Judging success by surveying patients

Survey of patients

- The PCN agrees that surveying patients is important
- We need to ensure that the wording of the survey should reflect the strategic plans for improved access
- If we simply ask, “How easy is it for you see your GP?” the answer is likely to be “not easily”
- If we ask, “How easy was it for you to discuss your cholesterol result with a Clinical Pharmacist?” the answer should be “very easy”

Rutland population or Rutland Practices?

- It would be appropriate to include all the practices serving Rutland patients, Lakeside Corby, Lakeside Stamford, Wansford and Billesdon.

We are starting to deliver an improved Primary Care

Communications with patients, workforce and Enhanced Access

- PCN has worked with the Chairs of the 4 PPGs and Health Watch to improve the wording and the language (less NHS speak) used in the Enhanced Access survey
- Enhanced Access survey was launched with an explanation of how the funding for PCNs is shaping workforce development and how we have been able to recruit Clinical Pharmacists to work in the surgeries.
- Enhanced Access survey was disseminated and received over 9000 replies within 4 weeks of launching
- Feedback from the survey has altered the Enhanced Access survey (Friday Nights) and allowed us to demonstrate that the service was in line with patient desires
- Over the course of September, October and November 7 new Clinical Pharmacists are joining the PCN. In December and January 2023 we have an Advanced Clinical Practitioner and another Clinical Pharmacist joining the PCN. This is 9 new clinicians when some PCNs are struggling to recruit 1 or 2.

Take home messages

For GP Practices to deliver great care to you:

- Ensure the practice have an up to date email address and mobile phone number
- Access the online portals rather than phoning the practice
- Help improve the morale of the staff by saying thank you
- Help improve the systems by joining the PPG or responding to surveys
- Help the GP see the right patients by accepting care will be delivered by members of a Multi-Disciplinary Team such as a Clinical Pharmacist
- Future surveys help us to help you and should be linked to these themes