

# Nethergreen Surgery Patient Survey Results

## August 2007



Earlier in the year , some of our patients were asked to complete a questionnaire about the service and care they received from staff and Doctors here at Nethergreen Surgery

These questions varied from how easy it was to obtain appointments, contact us by telephone, how they were treated by the Reception team, and so on, culminating in the patient's experience with the Doctor and their overall views about the Surgery,

Our patient expectations are, quite rightly, high, and the survey results go some way to showing that we are making the best of efforts to meet these demands.

The questionnaire focussed on the 8 Doctors working at the Practice, and a minimum of 40 questionnaires per Doctor were required. In all, 353 patients completed the survey; we have 9300 patients registered with this practice and therefore the survey results represent the views of just under 4% of the total Practice population.

Of those 353 completed questionnaires, 150 had comments attached to them, and a breakdown of the numbers of these comments, and the subjects commented upon, is given below:

Problems with telephone access	24
Problems with appointments	27
Issues with waiting times once in Surgery	11
Issues with opening hours	24
Issues with obtaining Repeat Prescriptions	9
Confidentiality issues at Reception desk	6
Staff attitudes to patients	6
Increase in Internet facilities	6
Other issues	18
(car park , waiting room, toys for children in waiting room, piped music, information leaflets, other services)	
<b>Happy with services provided, attitudes etc</b>	<b>26</b>

It is pleasing to see that so many of you are happy with what we provide, and one comment that sums this up is

"People are friendly and professional at this Practice, and no improvements are necessary. My Doctor is totally committed and very professional. No improvements needed here either"

The concerns raised are not surprising, and I would add a few comments overleaf on these areas.

**Telephone Access:** Our current telephone system has been installed for some 6-7 years, and technology has moved on since that time. The major issue from comments is the difficulty patients face in getting through to us at the beginning of the day, and I am currently looking at alternative systems, or upgrades to the current system, that may ease this problem. I will consult you by way of a questionnaire when I have evaluated the options, as obviously, any changes will need to be paid for by the Practice, and I need to be sure that both staff and patients will be happy with an alternative system before committing to an ongoing expense.

**Appointments/Opening hours:** Interestingly, some patients commented that on the day appointments were difficult to obtain, but booking in advance was easy. Others commented that booking in advance was difficult, but on the day booking was easy! It just proves that whatever system we operate, we will never please all patients all of the time! To clarify the position, you can ring up/call in and obtain an on the day appointment, an appointment in 24/48 hours, or an appointment up to 8 weeks in advance. We also offer an Internet booking facility.

However, we have to allocate the availability of these appointments to ensure all three options are available; consequently, you may find that if all available pre-bookable appointments have been taken for a day/time/Doctor that you want, then you will have to accept this and be prepared to accept a different appointment.

Notices are posted in the Surgery advising of these alternatives, and we are continually looking at ways to improve this, but we can only offer a service within our current resources.

With regard to our opening hours, these are the hours set out in our Contract with the PCT. We offer appointments from 8.00 am to 6.00 pm, and those of you wanting longer opening hours, or a return to Saturday morning opening, need to contact your local MP to lobby for a change in the national contract.

**Waiting times:** Appointments are timed at 10 minute intervals. Obviously, on occasions, a Doctor may need to spend a longer time with a patient. If it were you in the Consulting Room, then would you want the Doctor to stop after 10 minutes if the problem needed a longer time? The Doctors do try to run on time, but delays are unavoidable.

**Repeat prescriptions:** We have not had a telephone option for over 4 years, on the grounds of safety and clinical governance. We are however, looking at different alternatives, such as internet ordering & a facility within the phone system alternatives. At present, you can post or drop a request in, or fax it, and any further facilities will be advised to you.

**Staff/confidentiality issues:** I apologise if any of you feel patient confidentiality is compromised due to the layout of the Reception area. We have installed a plastic screen which does deaden some sound, and we will take steps to ensure that discussions between staff are held away from the desk.

One problem I have noticed is that patients queue at the desk almost on top of each other; perhaps you could all respect each other's privacy by maintaining a reasonable distance between a patient at the desk and you in the queue.

We are constrained by space, but if the problem persists, we may need to consider privacy screens at the Reception desk.

With regards to how staff treat you, we do try to be totally professional and courteous at all times. If this fails at times, then again I apologise, and should it happen to you, then please talk to either Sue Dilks (Asst Manager) or I.

**Internet facilities:** This is something we are actively considering, and any innovations will be passed on to you as they occur.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the questionnaire, and it has been helpful in reinforcing the message that the care we provide is generally appreciated and thought to be of a high standard, and we will continue to focus our efforts on this in the future. If you want to discuss any comments you have made, or the survey in general, in more detail, I am always happy to see you.

**Finally—** a comment from a new patient: " I moved into the area a short time ago, and am exceptionally impressed with the Practice. Ease of appointments and friendliness of the staff really sets the Practice apart. My Doctor could not be better and no improvements are necessary".

Richard West, Manager, August 2007