

PCT REPORT

KINGSWINFORD MEDICAL PRACTICE and HIGH OAK SURGERY

Purpose of this questionnaire:

'To Determine Fair Access to Clinicians and to Establish Whether Medication needs are Understood and Met'

Aims

It is now more important than ever to get the opinions of patients to help us to formulate our plans for the future and to ensure equality in service provision. The many changes to the NHS and in particular to Primary care need a strong patient voice to ensure that all groups, particularly the vulnerable and those more hard to reach are included.

In view of this our Patient Participation Group has decided to look at trying to find ways of helping patients suffering with memory problems and other long term health conditions and also helping their carers. Patients with long term conditions often need frequent access to clinicians and it is our aim to try and make this process easier and fairer for them.

This cohort of patients also tend to have many items of medication on regular repeat prescriptions. This amount of medication can be very confusing and we are trying to find out the level of patient compliance and concordance with prescribed medication.

Process

The PPG helped to design a questionnaire to give out to patients and carers at both surgeries. This initial questionnaire was slightly adapted to hand out specifically to carers.

This would also help us to keep our carers list up to date and to ensure that they had all the necessary support from the Practice and other organisations.

We have recently become aware that a number of patients from both surgeries but particularly from High Oak did not fully understand their long term condition or the reason for some of their medication. This was more apparent in newly-diagnosed patients who can suddenly find themselves with several new items of medication and can easily become confused.

By including a question specifically around the understanding of medication we hope to improve patient compliance by inviting anyone requiring assistance to see our practice pharmacist for a medication review.

What we did next and the results

Basic Questionnaire

Over the course of three weeks in September we gave out 200 questionnaires at KMP and 100 at High Oak. We wrote out separately to known carers attaching our carers' questionnaire.

We had a particularly good response from High Oak of 63% and a response rate of 46.5% from KMP.

The response from High Oak stated that 48 patients had carers and from KMP that was 62 patients.

The results of this questionnaire also highlighted that patients from both surgeries also needed some help in understanding their own medication.

Carers' Questionnaire

We sent our 38 questionnaires to known carers at High Oak and received a response back from 31 of these.

We sent out 45 questionnaires to known carers at KMP and received a response back from 41.

This illustrated that there were more carers looking after patients from both surgeries than we were aware of. Interestingly there were a number of carers who had difficulty understanding the medication they were giving to those they cared for and why some of it was necessary.

We have used this information to update our records and to ensure that these carers get the support from both the surgery and other outside organisations.

Conclusions

Our questionnaires have shown that there are carers looking after our patients in both surgeries that we did not have registered as carers. Consequently there were not receiving the help and support they needed from outside agencies. There was also the possibility that they were waiting longer than they should to get an appointment to see a doctor or nurse at the surgery either for themselves or for the person they cared for.

To help rectify this we have updated our carer's register and informed Dudley Carers Network with any carers who asked for help and support. We have also added major alert messages to the screen so all staff will realise that the person is a carer.

Any person who requested help understanding medication will be offered an appointment with either our Practice Pharmacist or one of our specialist nurses to have this fully explained.

Finally we established that overall patients were very satisfied with the surgery access and with our overall performance. The satisfaction level was higher at High Oak than KMP but this may have been influenced by of the size of the surgery and the extra doctor cover that has been available recently with Registrars holding extra sessions.

Sandra Jones
Practice Manager