

Poundbury Doctor's Surgery — Patient Participation Group



NEWSLETTER issue no 1 spring 2019

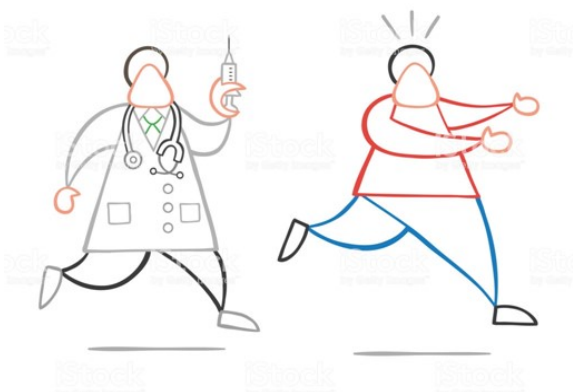
Each GP practice in England should have a patient participation group (PPG). At our surgery we have a group that meets 4-6 times a year and discusses some topics online. Our job is to represent the views of patients and the local community. The things we do include

- ◆ Helping to produce GP practice information leaflets
- ◆ Carrying out patient surveys and finding out what patients think about certain services
- ◆ Feeding back ideas and concerns to help shape services and improve patient experiences
- ◆ Help to organise health promotion events.

This is the first edition of the PPG newsletter.

We believe that a regular update from the PPG would help develop patient participation in the work of the surgery. We intend to use the newsletter to:-

- ◆ help bring patients attention to new developments at the surgery and in promoting good health generally
- ◆ provide information about voluntary services and self-help and other groups that may benefit patients and support you and your family.
- ◆ Help with surveys of patient views on the work of the surgery and other relevant healthcare matters that affect us.



What is important to you..?
What would you like to see included in this newsletter, please let us have your feedback and suggestions at...

ppgpoundbury@nhs.net

Using the surgery website

Remember you can

- ◆ Book appointments online
- ◆ See test results
- ◆ Access your health record and more



www.poundburydoctors.co.uk

.....

Are you a senior citizen and would like to learn more about computers?

Help is available at...

AGE UK DORCHESTER

One-to-one personalised lessons in your home or at Age UK Dorchester. At your own pace learning what you want to learn.

Suitable for all levels, £15 per hour, £25 for iPad setup

Please remember

Regular reviews of any chronic disease such as asthma diabetes coronary heart disease are really useful for both the patient and health professional. It gives the doctor nurse and patient a chance to discuss symptoms medication and any concerns ,and alter any treatment or combination of treatments for something that may be more effective .

Remember there are new treatments becoming available all the time.

NHS websites you may find useful



STAYWELL in DORSET provides information on general wellbeing, seasonal issues such as winter 'flu and summer festivals.

<http://staywelldorset.nhs.uk>

ONEYOU Gives a range of health advice. Why not download the app, or take the free quiz and get your own health score?

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou>

.....

Signing up for this newsletter

We would like to contact patients and carers occasionally by text to ask them questions and offer surveys about the Poundbury surgery. This may be in the form of short questionnaires. Your contact details will be kept safely and securely and will only be used for the purpose of the PPG and not shared with anybody else. The practice Doctors will only see general feedback from surveys.

Signing up for PPG newsletters is entirely voluntary and you may let us know at any time if you no longer wish to receive further messages or information.

If you have any comments about the newsletter please email us at ppgpoundbury@nhs.net

A 'DAY IN THE LIFE' of the DOCTOR'S RECEPTIONIST

In this first edition of the newsletter we are grateful to Martin Ellison, who gives this insight into the vital role of the receptionists

The doctor's receptionist, well of course all we do is answer the phone and make appointments – right? wrong.

Obviously there are some things that everyone knows that a doctor's receptionist does – we check patients in for their appointments, we make patients new appointments and of course we answer the phone. Then, there is everything else. The things that aren't so obvious to everyone.....

Every day, one member of the reception team comes in at 7.45 am. This person is responsible for setting up reception, switching on the computers in the reception area and logging them on ready to be used, taking all the patient related items (the prescription box, the black file with letters in to be collected by patients, the internal post bag) where they are locked away in the back office overnight, and putting them back into reception ready to be used for the day.

Then we are responsible for unlocking the nurses' treatment room upstairs, which holds the emergency oxygen and defibrillator, and setting up any rooms for locum GPs that we might have in that day.

Then we put the kettle on!

Generally, at 08.00 am another receptionist arrives, the front doors are unlocked and the phones are switched on. The day now begins.

Between 08.00 am and 10.30 am we take phone calls for the GP to triage. This involves dealing with urgent matters that cannot wait to be booked into the next available appointment slot. The GPs like us to find out a little more information as to why the patient needs a phone call. This helps the GP to be prepared when calling the patient back. The GP calls the patient and provides a phone consultation which either results in the patient coming in for an appointment later that morning, a home visit, medication being issued or simply putting the patient's mind at ease.



The receptionist in the back office is primarily responsible for answering the phone, ideally within 3 rings. This means the 3 rings that we hear, and we are aware that patients do become frustrated at our phone system, and the fact they think the phone is simply not being answered. When we are on the telephone dealing with other patients, our system is unable to let the patient that is waiting on the line know they are in a queue and that the receptionist is busy with another patient on the phone.

The back office receptionist is also responsible for the fax machine and actioning any faxes that come through. In the morning this would include faxes from Care Homes that request visits, or medication for that day or within the next week.

During this time, the receptionist on the front desk is predominately responsible for the face to face contact with patients and visitors to the practice. This involves checking patients in and directing them to the correct waiting area. We make patients new appointments, hand out medication from the Dispensary, and paper prescriptions for patients to take to a pharmacy. We also take repeat prescription requests from patients and pharmacies. We then put them onto our clinical system, which then generates the prescription, ready to be signed by the GP.

Although the person on the front desk are predominantly there for the face to face contact, they are also responsible for answering the phone when it rings if the person in the back office is already on the phone. Answering the phone has to take priority over the patients/visitors at the front desk. Whatever is on the end of the phone cannot be seen and may be an emergency.

After 10.30 am triage closes, although there is still a duty doctor able to make phone calls to patients. From here-on we are still receiving phone calls and we have to try, if possible, to ascertain if they are urgent and then pass them on to the duty doctor. This enables the GP to call the patient and bring him/her in for emergency appointments in the day.

Throughout the day, the reception team is responsible for continually answering the phone, which could involve :-

- ♦ passing on messages to doctors,
- ♦ giving out test results,
- ♦ chasing referrals,
- ♦ making appointments,
- ♦ checking and ordering prescriptions,
- ♦ registering temporary patients over the phone.
- ♦ regularly fending off salesmen!
- ♦ Sending out the post to both internal and external sources,
- ♦ registering patients for online services, where they can order their repeat prescriptions and book appointments online

We take in urine samples, check dispensary items when necessary, open the post and allocate it to the appropriate pigeon hole or deal with it if it needs immediate action. We also deal with prospective new patients, explaining how the surgery works, and then we register the new patients onto the clinical system.

When the phone is not ringing, and there is no patient or visitor at the desk, we have a whole host of other things to do. This includes making phone calls to pass on results and messages from GPs and nurses, retrieving and filing patients' paper notes from the records room, "tagging" – which means sorting out new patients' paper records that come to us from the patient's previous practice, and putting them into order, so they can be

coded onto the clinical system by the admin team, sending and actioning tasks, deducting patients from the system, which involves printing the patient's record and sending to the Health Authority. We are also trained as chaperones, so if a doctor, nurse or patient requests a chaperone, we



can do this.

Importantly we hand over to the afternoon reception staff when they take over the afternoon shift, where the whole process begins again! It is very important that we all work as a team and that we are familiar with the ways that each other works. This enables the day to go as smoothly as possible.

Later in the afternoon we clean the toys daily, and we load the dishwasher with the used cups and bring clean cups downstairs ready for when we put the kettle on the next morning.

At 18.30 pm we turn the phones off, but that is not necessarily when the day ends. We wait until all the patients have left the building, then we are responsible for shutting all the reception computers down, locking away the patient sensitive paperwork, locking the front doors and putting the board out to let people know we are closed and to call 111 if they require medical assistance. We lock all the keys away, lock the back office and go home.