**Patient Group Report for Huntingdon Road and Girton Surgeries**

**2015 to 2016**

The Huntingdon Road Surgery Patient Group is now into its 5th year, and is gradually becoming an integral part of the surgeries decision making processes, representing the patient view. The patient experience is the first item of the proposed Practice Plan this year for discussion on 15th April 2016, considering issues like the telephone system review, appointment system review, waiting room review and website development, and members of the Patient Group Committee will be joining these discussions. The Patient Group is a member of the National Association of Patient Participation.

The Patient Group is made up of about 80 members, who receive regular information from the Patient Group Committee, attend meetings and express their views. The Committee is currently made up of five people who are elected from the wider group, and they meet every month, organizing the meetings, collating the patient view, and representing these views to the practice. The committee meets regularly with Dr. Connan, the Patient Group Chair David Faulkner has started meeting every quarter with the Practice Manager, and there is an increasing awareness of the Patient Group in the surgery as a whole, recognizing the value of their contribution to supporting patient care. We try to ensure that the Patient Group is representative of all our patient population, but are aware that the student group is under represented. We have found it difficult to engage them and need to continue looking at how we can seek their views and consider issues that may be specific to them. The Patient Group chair has specifically written to the student bodies at the four main colleges who come to the surgery inviting their thoughts and involvement, at the start of the academic year members of the PG Committee came in to meet students at the registration process to help increase awareness of the Patient Group, and the most recent Patient Group meeting was specifically focused on an area we thought would be important to students inviting the Head of the University Counseling Service to come and talk in the hope that students felt this would be valuable. This was widely advertised within the colleges and several of the college nurses and college counselors came, but no students. We do have a significant student population and we do need to continue looking at how we can ensure we provide the service they need.

**Priority Areas identified in past Reports**

The priority areas considered in past Patient Group reports remain important issues and we have continued to make progress in these areas, some more than others

* To continue to promote and increase the awareness of the Huntingdon Road Surgery Website, and to develop the Website as a means of explaining practice polices
* To look at areas to improve the function of the reception area and waiting rooms at Huntingdon Road and Girton Surgeries
* To continue to increase the awareness of the Patient Group and promote its role
* To help signpost patients to the most appropriate service for them to attend for their medical problem
* To continue to help inform people how health services are commissioned

Some of the achievements in these areas are seen looking at the activities of the Patient Group through the year described in this report. We need to continue trying to identify other important areas important in helping enhance the patient experience, with the Patient Group.

**Patient Group Meetings**

The Patient Group Committee have arranged meetings every few months for the whole Patient Group, which have been generally well attended, and well received, covering a range of important and interesting subjects

22/4/15 Huntingdon Road Surgery Website

with Sarah-Jane Cousins, the new Office Manager

Demonstrating the Website, with a chance to use it in small groups

Seeking views as to how it could be improved

15/7/15 Hearing Loss Evening

with Frances Dewhurst, Director of Cambridge Hearing Help

An interactive session

In subsequent meetings we looked at a video demonstrating some of the difficulties people with hearing loss might face attending the surgery, subsequently shown to all our Receptionists

17/9/15 AGM

Chair persons Annual Report

Uniting Care – The Future of local NHS services

with Andrea Grosbois, Head of Communications at UnitingCare

26/11/15 Changes in General Practice over the last 25 years

A day in the Life of a GP

with Peter Connan

2/3/16 Mental Health Issues

with Geraldine Dufour Head of the University Counseling Service

and David Seabright Manager of the North City Community Mental Health Team

The Patient Group Committee does ask for feedback after each meeting and for suggestions regarding future meetings. In June 2016 they are planning a meeting to discuss issues relating to Cancer Care in particular looking at End of Life Care

**Website**

Following on from the meeting reviewing the Website in April 2015, a lot of work has been done to enhance the Website in terms of general friendliness and in the Patient Group section. The Patient Group is keen to encourage staff photographs and have led the way in providing a photograph of the committee, which can be downloaded from the Patient Group page. We plan to make this integral to the page with appropriate technical support. Within the surgery there has been debate regarding staff photographs, but we have agreed to have photographs of the doctors and to consider photographs of the nursing and reception/clerical teams

The question of e-mail contact to the surgery was discussed at the meeting in November 2015, with a strong feeling that patients should be able to use e-mail to contact the surgery about non-urgent non-medical questions. The issues around lack of security, and the surgeries concerns that urgent medical questions may be asked via e-mail and then not receive a timely response were discussed. The Website does now facilitate e-mail contact for non-urgent non-medical questions, explaining these concerns, received by the Office Management team and addressed appropriately, and we have started to receive some contact by this method

We have also been keen to encourage patients to sign up to Online Services to order repeat prescriptions, to book appointments and to be able to look at their blood results. We have reviewed our Information Governance Policy regarding these issues. We hope that this will help ease the burden on telephone access and make things easier for patients

Continuing to develop the Website and enhance its value will remain and important priority

**Leaflets and Posters in the Waiting Rooms**

Following the completion of the new building work and renovation of the reception and waiting rooms at Huntingdon Road Surgery the practice decided to remove magazines and toys from the waiting room. There were a number of reasons for this, particularly the concern that inappropriate material was often left in the waiting rooms, and the infection control risks with toys. The Patient Group was very unhappy with this decision and following discussions they now organize and supervise magazines in the waiting room. This works very well and we are grateful for their help. We have children’s books, but do not have toys as we continue to have concerns regarding infection control. At the same time the practice decided to reduce the number of leaflets in the waiting room, feeling that more targeted patient information relating to an individual person’s condition was more valuable and that this was increasingly via the internet and accredited websites. In December 2015 the Patient Group Committee received a complaint from one of the Patient Group, that they had requested a leaflet detailing a Hearing Group they run, be displayed, but were told we do not display leaflets any more. This prompted a lot of discussion and we raised it as a Significant Event. Clearly we do want to promote local groups of this nature, as well as supporting other national health promotion initiatives, and with the Patient Group we are discussing and agreeing a Policy regarding how we use leaflets and Posters in the surgery.

The Patient Group have also suggested the practice considers using rolling computer screens in the waiting rooms, to help promote local initiatives and other useful health related information. The practice has not taken up this suggestion, due in part to resources and the need to ensure it is fully up to date and relevant to our patients. We would need to provide this in all three waiting rooms. In the future we may review this.

**Newsletters**

The Patient Group has again produced some very professional and valuable Newsletters this year. They allow us to raise important issues as well as helping promote the value and importance of the Patient Group. We have been concerned that our patients take up of certain forms of Cancer Screening has been lower than other areas, and the Autumn Newsletter was one way to help encourage patients to benefit from these available interventions.

**Other areas discussed and considered over the last year**

* The Patient Group Committee reviewed the complaints we have received during the year to March 2015 in anonymous form. We will continue to do this on an annual basis and need to review the complaints to March 2016 with the Committee at the next meeting
* Two volunteers who are members of the Patient Group worked hard to support the Diabetes UK Type 2 Together program of peer support for people with Type 2 Diabetes. We wrote to all our patients with Type 2 Diabetes to invite them to meetings but unfortunately there was not enough interest to sustain ongoing meetings
* Supporting the Pharmacy application at the Girton branch Surgery, recognizing the benefits it could have provided the residents of Girton, and reducing the inequalities of us not being able to dispense to people who live in certain areas
* Changes to the way telephone calls are answered and patients received at reception have been discussed, with agreement to separate these two roles. We now have specific receptionists answering the telephone in a private room behind reception and a receptionist receiving patients at the front desk at both Huntingdon Road Surgery and Girton branch Surgery. We have reviewed this and been concerned that some patients have had difficulty getting through by telephone. This has raised a number of issues relating to our telephone system and we are in the process of considering changing our supplier to ensure we can offer a better service to our patients. It is extremely complex and we are concerned that we address all the issues and get it right.
* The Patient Group continues to be represented at CATCH, our Locality Commissioning Group. While regular attendance is difficult, one member keeps track matters raised in relation to CATCH meetings. The Committee also sends on information to the wider group from the Clinical Commissioning Group. One particular area of concern has been the Older Peoples Program and the collapse of the UnitingCare contract.

**Thanks**

We are lucky to continue to have such a committed and supportive Patient Group Committee and wider Patient Group, helping us look at how we can enhance and improve the service we provide. Reviewing the activities over the last year highlights the value of the Patient Group to the practice and our patients. Thank you.

**Priority planning**

Encouraging feedback is important. We have been trying to promote the use of the Friends and Family questionnaire, and need to review the responses with the Patient Group. In the past we have conducted detailed in house surveys, which we have discussed with the Patient Group, but now need to review the latest National GP Survey responses published in January.

Looking forward we need to review the priorities for the coming year with our Patient Group. This will be an important part of the discussions on 14th April 2016 regarding the Practice Plan. The Patient Experience is at the top of the agenda.

Huntingdon Road and Girton Surgeries March 2016