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Local Patient Participation Report 2015/16

WE ARE KEEN TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

**You can have huge influence on the way services are provided so please consider joining us.
Send us an email, ask at reception, drop us a line or ring us if you would like to know more**

Background

In 2011 the Practice invited all patients to become a member of the Patient Participation Group/patient Reference Group (PRG). We aimed to make the group as broad based as possible to encompass a wide range of opinions and interests.

The key objective was to ensure that patients are involved in decisions about the range of services and the quality of the provision and how the practice acts as coordinator of care through access to other providers. We do this by agreeing the priority issues; surveying the wider patient population and feeding back the findings to agree an action plan setting out proposals and priorities.

Initial patient survey work helped to inform future developments and greater use of social media helped to bring the work and achievements to the attention of a much wider audience.

Since then the commissioning landscape has changed significantly with the formation of Kernow CCG. The Practice has been closely involved in this process and has worked with partners to fulfil the aims and objectives of the Group.

With effect from next month the PRG will have a new chairman and secretary. The elections have yet to be ratified and more information will be available on our web site and in the Practice as soon as the appointments have been confirmed.

Practice profile

Falmouth has a local population of about 27,000 and a further 12,000 in the adjacent town of Penryn and surrounding villages. This can increase significantly in the summer without overwhelming the local population as happens in some smaller seaside towns in Cornwall. The Practice area includes Falmouth, Penryn and a number of surrounding villages.

Thanks to the influence of the National Maritime Museum, the University, the Tate in St Ives and the Eden Project, Falmouth is enjoying a renaissance and is one of the most sought after locations in the county. The Peninsula Medical School based in Truro has further enhanced the research and educational facilities available locally.

Falmouth is ten miles from the county town of Truro which is also the location for the district general hospital (Royal Cornwall Hospital, Treliske), the base for nearly all our local consultants and the main referral centre for Cornwall. We are part of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Primary Care Trust (NHS Kernow).

We are a six Partner practice working from the Health Centre in Falmouth with a list size of 8750. The surgery building is an NHS Property Services owned health centre and we benefit from on-site District Nursing, Health Visiting, Midwifery, Chiropody and Mental Health Teams. We are adjacent to Falmouth Community Hospital which has consultant led Eldercare inpatient beds with an Eldercare Day Hospital

and inpatient and outpatient physiotherapy.

Our Partners are Dr Richard James, Dr Nick Rogers, Dr Victoria Hartnell, Dr Paul Davoren and Dr Denise Lasbury and Dr Rachael Wilson. Our experienced Nursing team includes a Nurse Practitioner and the Practice management team consists of a Practice Manager, Geoff Dennis; a Patient Services Manager, Caroline Cable; and an experienced and committed team of reception, administrative and secretarial staff most of whom work part time.

The Practice operates a flexible appointment and telephone appointment system which allows patients to pre book face to face and telephone consultations and ensures that patients are dealt with quickly and reduces the pressure on emergency appointments. We also offer on line consultations via eConsult. This service is currently being trialled by our CCG but we hope that it will be commissioned as a permanent service.

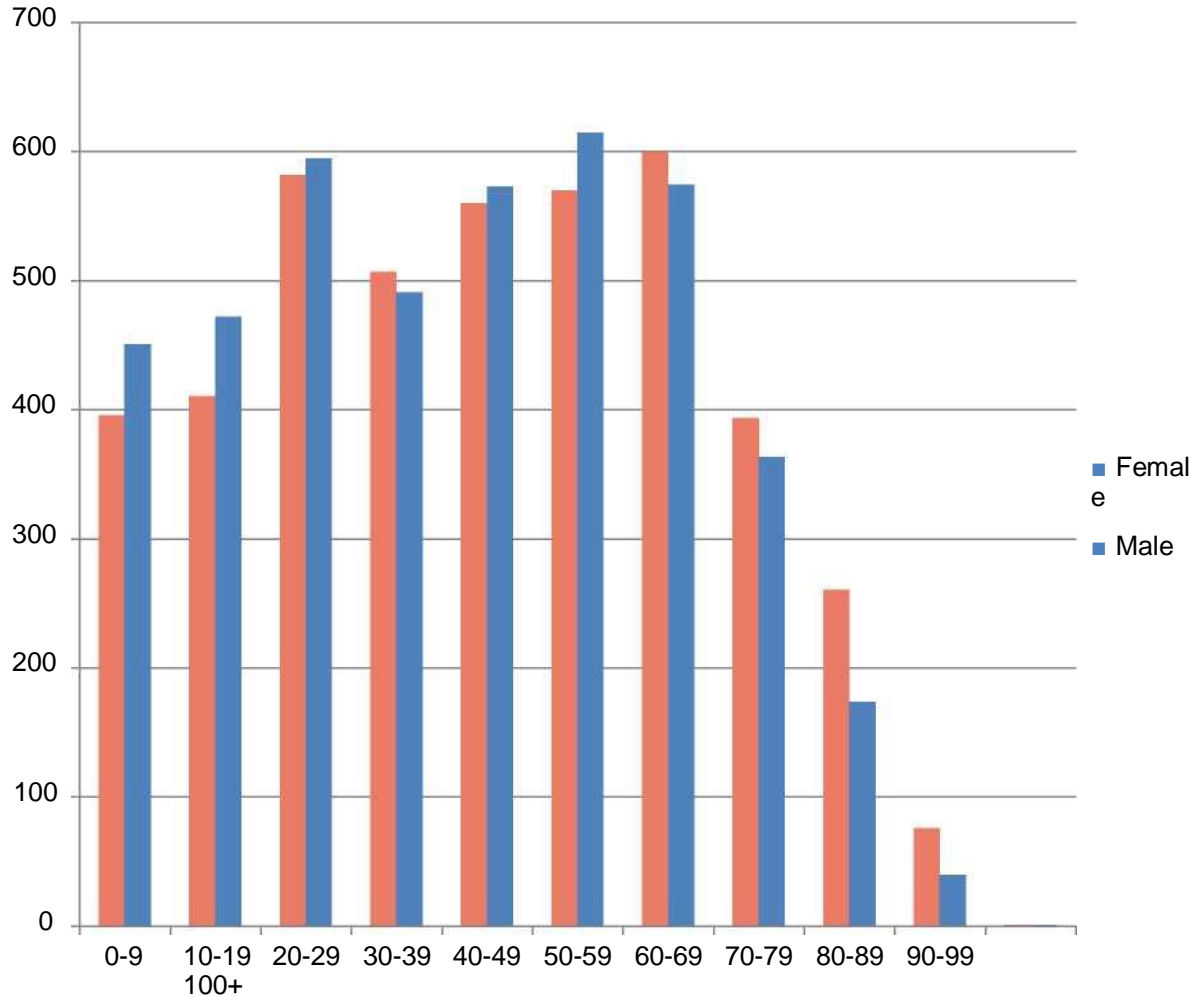
We offer a wide range of in-house services including Practice Nurse diabetic and asthma clinics, cardiac rehabilitation, phlebotomy, psychology and alcohol counselling, and have facilities for a wide range of extended diagnostic and therapeutic services including, spirometry, audiometry, ambulatory blood pressure monitoring, cardiac event monitoring, minor surgery and rigid sigmoidoscopy.

We are adjacent to Falmouth Community Hospital which has Eldercare inpatient beds and physiotherapy. A recent much welcomed enhancement has been the opening of a pharmacy within the health centre building.

The table shows the practice population broken down by age and sex. Our population is evenly split between male and female patients and we have tried to reflect this by having the same number of male and female GPs.

Practice survey

Previous local surveys agreed with the PRG have focused on practice performance and the results are



reflected in national surveys. Following feedback from 2012/13 survey it was agreed that work done on the priority issues of telephone access, on line services and prescriptions had achieved the desired results. Essential service provision exceeds the satisfaction levels we agreed with a very significant majority of respondents scoring the practice highly. A few examples from 2015:

- 95% of our patients rated their GP very good or good
- 94% of our patients would recommend their GP
- 89% of our patients find our opening times convenient 92% of our patients find our reception staff to be helpful or very helpful

Our worst score was on getting through by phone but even then the satisfaction figure stood at 85% and has continued to improve year on year as we offer more ways to contact the practice.

In previous years we have surveyed on the basis of performance and achievement but for the 2015/16 survey it was agreed that the local and national surveys gave an accurate representation of the practice in clinical and performance terms and we have shared this widely with our patients and others via the web site and our Facebook page and with a display in the waiting room. It was agreed that we should produce a survey that would invite broader comments and opinions rather than asking for simple scoring. As an experiment this year in addition to paper survey forms we included Facebook and invited comments from a wider audience. To ensure anonymity we posted a link to an on line survey rather than asking participants to comment directly on the page. This has proved to be well received and will be repeated.

The comments and opinions are collated by the practice for submission for review to look at areas of change and improvement and to agree any changes in provision.

The GP Patient Survey for The Falmouth Health Centre Practice is appended at the end of this report.

The issues can be broken down into three main areas.

- **Premises**
- **Communications/Technology**
- **Prescriptions**

Premises

Patients are generally happy with our premises but felt that some improvements could be made at minimal cost.

- Disabled parking - there are no designated disabled parking bays
- Disabled and push chair friendly access - the footpath from the car park is steep and difficult to negotiate in a wheel chair. Even though most of the outside doors in the Health Centre are automatic the doors to the surgery are not. It is difficult to negotiate the front door for wheel chair users and parents with pushchairs
- Bicycle parking - there is no secure bicycle parking. Some patients bring their bicycles into the foyer causing a hazard to other patients.
- Patient drop off - there is nowhere for patients to be dropped off without blocking the car park entrance.
- Play area - the children's play house has been removed.

Action Plan

Most of these issues are historical and well known. The issues of disabled parking and access were discussed at the very first PRG meeting.

The building and grounds owned by NHS Property Services Ltd. As tenants The Falmouth Health Centre Practice has previously made representations to the PCT, the CCG and later NHS Property Services Ltd and action was agreed but not implemented by any of these organisations. We continue to raise these issues with NHS Property Services Ltd and we are awaiting action. Wherever possible we have encouraged patients to lobby NHS Property Services Ltd. Most recently a patient with

disabilities kindly contacted NHS Property Services Ltd to give a detailed account of the problems that he faces accessing the building and facilities. Approved but not actioned work at the Health Centre includes correcting the footway levels, providing disabled parking and drop off points and replacing the front doors with automatic doors and the improvement of disabled toilet facilities.

Communications/Technology

Satisfaction in communications with the practice has improved dramatically but the increased use of mobile technology has driven demand from patients.

- On line appointment booking – some availability
- Reminders - dentists and even garages send out reminder texts
- Phones - still busy early in the morning
- On line consultations

Action Plan

We have always prided ourselves on being at the forefront of new technology but only when it is of real benefit to patients, Doctors and nurses. A major step forward was moving to EMIS Web as our clinical system. This is a hosted system (date is held in a secure server off site and uses the NHS N3 data network for added security and resilience). EMIS Web allows us to offer more and better communications services for patients and our agreed objective is to increase awareness and availability.

We now offer on line bookable appointments and a wide range of on line services via EMIS Patient Facing Services and while it was feared that this would disadvantage patients who did not have access to appropriate technology this has not proved to be the case. In fact the greater use of technology has made it easier for non-users to contact us by traditional means. There was also a concern expressed that some patients might abuse the system and book more appointments. This has not proved to be the case. Patients also appreciate that they are able to book an appropriate length of appointment. It was agreed that we would continue the service and extend it to make all pre bookable GP appointments available on line. We were asked to look at making nurses appointments available on line. This is more of a challenge as nurse appointments vary depending on the service being provided.

Following the comments about reminders we looked at a number of options. It is impractical to phone most patients with an appointment reminder but the practice trialed a text service that also allowed us to send information texts to patients. It was felt that this may be considered intrusive and that patients may see these as 'junk' texts. Patients who are enrolled in our on line booking service have the option to manage and review their appointments on line. We have now implemented a simple text reminder service that confirms when a patient books an appointment and sends a second reminder before the appointment time. As well as benefiting patients this has been a benefit for the practice in reducing our already low DNA rate and notifying us if a phone number is incorrect so that we can take steps to update patient's records.

Some patients mentioned problems phoning early in the day. It is true that we still have a number of patients who think that they have to book 'on the day' even though we have offered a wide range of options for pre booking. Pressure has eased since we increased the availability of on line appointment booking but it was agreed that we do more work on patient education. The web site, Facebook page and the practice brochure have been significantly reviewed and updated to ensure that information is readily available.

On line consultations via eConsult have proved immensely popular and since adopting the system

some 500 patients have chosen to consult with us 'on line'

It was noted that on NHS Choices that The Falmouth Health Centre Practice is the only practice locally to achieve 4 green traffic lights.

<http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/GP/tr11-2LH/Results/4/-5.0860071182251/50.1564064025879/4/0?distance=25>