

NORTON MEDICAL CENTRE

PATIENT SURVEY OF NEW APPOINTMENT SYSTEM

SUMMARY

Responses were from both male and female patients from across the age spectrum. NB: Not all patients responded to the demographic questions.

1. 81% of respondents were satisfied with the outcome of the consultation and the way in which it was conducted.
2. 81% of respondents were aware that the appointment system had changed before contacting the practice.
3. 85% of respondents like the idea of being able to speak to a doctor without needing to attend the surgery
4. 76% of respondents reported finding it easy to get through to the practice by telephone.
5. 4% of respondents didn't understand why they were being asked questions about their problem
6. 88% of respondents were satisfied with the type of consultation offered.
7. A minority of patients advised that they were unable to receive phone calls during the working day, or that it was inconvenient for them to do so.
8. 99% of respondents felt that their problem had been taken seriously
9. 10% of respondents felt that the doctor or nurse was unable to offer reassurance over the phone.
10. 70% of respondents said that the telephone consultation was more convenient than a traditional appointment.
11. The majority of patients reported they were given a face to face appointment on the day of their choice.
12. The majority of patients reported that they usually saw the doctor or nurse that they spoke to on the phone and found the earlier telephone conversation useful.

The full survey results are available on the Practice website;
www.nortonmedicalcentre.nhs.uk or by request from Reception.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

Please note where comments are similar they have been listed in one column.

YOU SAID	WE SAY
...only worry is that some physical signs may be missed by the doctor by patients who are reticent to talk over the phone or have mental problems.....	Any mental health issues should be recorded in the patient's notes and will be taken into consideration by the doctor taking the call. Any patient who does not wish to talk over the telephone should let the doctor know this and a face to face appointment will be made.
1. I am very satisfied with the new system and hope it continues..... 2. Everything worked extremely well for me	Good to hear. Thank you all for taking the time to make positive comments.

<p>most impressed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. My experience using the new system has been quicker and easier... 4. I am impressed with how well this is working. Well done all the staff for being so efficient through the changes 5. A great idea especially for those who work full time.....Reception staff have always been helpful and sensitive. 6. Very impressed so far. 7. Satisfied – glad we moved on from old system. 8. The system is a vast improvement on previous system..... 9. I think it was fine 10. Would need more time to assess.... First impression is encouraging 11. All of my comments are in yes so quite happy 12. In my case nothing can be improved. Thank you. 13. The new system has been more convenient for my needs and has worked for me. 14. Pleased with the new system thank you. 15. Much better system for me. 16. I've used the system twice with excellent results. Very impressive and very effective. 17. Nothing can be improved 18. A less wasteful system than before.....advice is all that is required. 	
<p>Older patients are not confident of the system or able to communicate over the telephone as they would wish to ensure the true picture is portrayed.</p>	<p>Anyone who feels they are not able to communicate effectively over the telephone can ask their doctor for a face to face appointment. The patient's wishes are taken into consideration.</p> <p>25% or respondents were over the age of 65 and the system still recorded an overall 81% satisfaction rate.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The problem with the ring back service is it takes no account of patient privacy..... 2. Not always able to speak to doctor in private when call back due to work commitments 3. Make appointment system sympathetic towards those who work and who cannot wait idly for a telephone consultation and who cannot attend the surgery for a face to face at the drop of a hat. Specific appointments should be available very early in mornings and late night. Also it would help to call for an 	<p>The Practice completely understands that some patients may encounter difficulty in receiving a confidential call. If you have any such problems please let the receptionist know and they can offer a range of solutions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a call back at a specific time; • an immediate transfer to the doctor (if the doctor is available) or; • hold the line until the doctor finishes the call they are on. <p>When you speak to your doctor he/she will be happy to book an appointment for you if you are</p>

<p>appointment for attendance on another day. This would help with the work life balance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. I think this will be hard when working – need to be near a phone. 5. Surgery does not offer appointments appropriate to full time working hours (8:30 – 5). Also unable to make future appointments. Encourages time off work to be taken. Would be convenient if surgery offered one “late night” and if appointments could be made online – again only in working hours. 6. Only problem I have is if I needed to make an appointment for my husband who works he has not notice to tell work for e.g. He needs to leave early to see the doctor etc. 	<p>unable to discuss your problem over the telephone.</p> <p>Because you are speaking to the doctor any appointment can be made on a day and at a time convenient to you (within opening hours) The doctor is also in a position to offer more flexibility on the time of the appointment than a receptionist would.</p> <p>The current NHS contract to provide extended opening hours is not felt to be viable for our Practice so there are no current plans for late nights or weekend opening. Should a new contract be offered we will give it due consideration.</p> <p>Future appointments can be booked in discussion with the GP to enable planned time away from work where necessary. However, we hope that if the problem can be resolved over the telephone this may reduce the need for time away from work rather than increase it.</p>
<p>I prefer the old appointment system never had a problem with it</p>	<p>Unfortunately, the old system was unsustainable. We were struggling to meet the demand for appointments and our 5pm sit and wait surgeries were ever expanding.</p>
<p>...advise how long it would take for the GP to call me back as I thought it was going to be immediately.</p>	<p>Patients should be given an estimated time for their call back. This can change depending on the length of other calls and any urgent home visits but apologies that you weren't given a rough timescale.</p>
<p>There is a significant time delay before being spoken to.</p>	<p>Sorry to hear the wait was excessive. This can sometimes happen depending on the length of other calls. However, it is important that the doctors do not rush through calls and give each patient the time that they need.</p>
<p>I think if you are passing the surgery you should still be able to call in to make an appointment, not told you are supposed to do it by phone.</p>	<p>One of the reasons that the system was introduced was because the doctors were seeing an increasing number of patients in consultation for things that could have been dealt with equally, effectively and more efficiently over the telephone. Rather than the receptionist booking the appointment following a protocol, the GP is now in charge of booking appointments on the basis of clinical need. Any patient who calls at the surgery to book an appointment should be offered the choice of leaving their contact details for a call back or sitting and waiting. The wait may be lengthy as that patient will be seen at the time of their call-back slot.</p>

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It takes 15 minutes to answer the phone call initially then I received 2 calls from 2 doctors and eventually a doctor made the appointment which seems like a bit of a waste of doctors time. 2. It was a little difficult to get through on the telephone to speak to the receptionist... 3. Took nearly an hour to get through the automated telephone service to speak to a receptionist (it kept cutting me off because of high volume of calls) 4. Although the system is OK I do prefer face to face appointment system. 5. More telephone lines. Separate extension number of telephone advice. 6. Just dissatisfied with the phone process, otherwise good. 	<p>A 15 minute wait for a call to be answered is understandably frustrating. However, under the new system the receptionists do not take as long answering a call as all they do is log brief details of the problem. Under the old system it took much longer to locate the next available appointment.</p> <p>If you take one call in isolation the new system may not seem to save the doctor's time, but statistics suggest only one in every three calls result in a face to face appointment, so overall the doctor is able to help far more people.</p> <p>More lines would only be of benefit if there were more staff to answer them and like any other business that can go bankrupt we have to work within our budget. With this system there is no need to ring first thing on a morning; calls can be made later in the day when lines are less busy.</p>
<p>Talking about an ailment at a time is useless, sometimes different ailments are linked, going over the same thing to the receptionist on the phone when all you want is a follow up appointment I don't want to be kept on hold listening to music for 8-10 minutes</p>	<p>The receptionist only asks for a brief idea of the problem to help the doctor. Just explain that it is a follow up call about the main issue and keep the detail for a conversation with the doctor. Unfortunately, if you are on hold for 8-10 minutes it is because the receptionists are speaking to other patients. An advantage of this new system is that you do not need to ring first thing on a morning to receive help and if your problem is not urgent you may like to ring later when the lines are less busy.</p>
<p>I feel the questions in this survey have been made in favour of the surgery. I don't think a receptionist should be asking what is wrong then making a decision as to a nurse should decide what medication a patient should have. I do think we should be able to see a doctor.</p>	<p>The Surgery did not develop the survey or collate the results. Plus the open-ended question about what can be improved gives everyone an opportunity to voice their opinion and many patients used that to give positive feedback.</p> <p>The receptionists do not make any decision about who should be seen by the GP. The receptionist's role in this system is to record a brief description of the nature of the call so enable the doctor to call patients back according to the urgency of their condition.</p> <p>Any patient who does not wish to share even the briefest of details about their complaint with the receptionist should just say so. It is entirely understandable and your wishes will be respected.</p>

	Our nurse practitioner is fully skilled to treat a range of minor ailments and able to prescribe anything that your doctor can, but if you wish to see a particular GP just ask and if he/she is available you will be added to their call-back list.
I feel that concerns/problems that I want to see the doctor about may be a bit rushed over the phone and not go as in depth if I was to see the doctor in person....	Any patient who does not feel reassured or satisfied with the outcome of their telephone consultation is encouraged to let the doctor know and they will be offered a face to face consultation. Even if you end the call and wish you had asked another question or decide you would still like to see a doctor in person please ring back. This is not a problem and your doctor will make an appointment with you.
Sometimes need more time for face to face consultations	One of the benefits of this system is that the doctor books the appointment with the individual and their problem in mind. They have absolute flexibility to book appointments at the best time of day and for the duration required, all tailored to the needs of a particular patient.
The phoning back process only works for people with mobile phones; my elderly mother does not own a mobile and has to wait in all day to avoid missing the doctor's call.	In normal circumstances no one should have to wait all day for a call back. We understand that patients may need to go out so if they let the receptionist know, a note can be added to request a call around a particular time.
It needs to go back to how it was I don't like talking to other people about my problems that's why you see a doctor confidential	All of our staff, including Receptionists, are contractually bound to respect patient confidentiality. Receptionists only ask for details of the call in order to help the doctor to call patients in order of clinical priority. You do not have to talk to anyone else about your problems if you choose not to. Please just tell the receptionist that you do now wish to give brief details of your medical problem and your wishes will be respected.
Could not fault the attention by nurses but feel a visit by the doctor after leaving hospital would have put my mind at rest a little more.	Any patient who would like a visit is welcome to ring and request one. Unfortunately, with a list size of 17,135 patients the doctors are not able to visit all patients who are discharged from hospital as a matter of course.
Cost of ringing the practice? 01642?? Is fine local charge. 0845?? Very expensive if on hold for a while (but do appreciate it is an easy way of bringing in funds for the centre, if it does this the call costs per minute need to be realistic (15p min max)	A little puzzled by this comment. The Practice transferred telephone provider in November 2012 and returned to a local 01642 number. This was well ahead of introducing the new appointment system in April 2013. Calls to reception should be brief and call backs are at the cost of the Practice and not the patient.
Different doctors who don't know you issuing a	This is very disappointing to hear. Patients can

<p>call back to make an appointment makes me feel passed from pillar to post. Have had 1 x appointment with my own doctor in about the last 4 months which never run to time so I can't see how the service has improved. I think it has got worse!!! It stresses me out when I already feel unwell</p>	<p>ask to speak to their preferred GP and unless they are absent they should be the one to call the patient back. Not all GPs work full-time and all have annual leave and study leave entitlement but under this new system it should be easier to speak to your doctor of choice not harder.</p> <p>Similarly, appointments should run more to time now because the doctor is actually booking them having spoken to the patient or a time and duration suitable for that individual.</p> <p>If this patient would like to contact the Practice Manager she will be happy to review their notes and try to understand why the system has not worked.</p>
<p>I suggest that all staff in the medical practice speak clearly to help the hard of hearing.</p>	<p>Absolutely. Staff are well aware that some of our patients have hearing difficulties and anyone experiencing particular problems is asked to let the Reception Manager know.</p>
<p>No reply from No. 4 (general enquiries) and No 1 (house calls) is confusing.</p>	<p>At busy periods when all of the lines into the Practice are in use patients may receive a message asking them to call back later as all 30 of the incoming lines are busy. Our busiest times are on a Monday and Tuesday morning from 8:30am when the general enquiry line opens. Patients who are ringing for an urgent call or to request a home visit (option 1) are able to ring from 8am and any calls on this line will be given a priority. Patients who ring on this line for routine enquiries or appointments are asked to ring back and select option 4 to prevent queue jumping.</p> <p>With this new appointment system there is no longer a pressure on patients to ring as soon as the general line opens at 8:30 to try and secure an appointment on the day. Calls can now be staggered throughout the day and anyone who rings will be spoken to that day (or early the next day if too late to be seen within opening hours).</p> <p>It is hoped that as this new system beds in, patients will feel more confident to avoid the 8:30 rush and this will become less of an issue.</p>