

Patient Participation Group

Harford Health Centre Attendees:

Afsana Latif (AL)
Farhin Siddeka (FS)
Shamina Khatun (SKI)
Susannah Solaiman (SS)

Patient Representative Attendees:

Emma Hawkey (EH)
Naeem Ahmad (NA)
Dr Mohammed Amin (MA)

Icebreaker/Introduction

All participants have introduced themselves and information about the current practice situation has been shared.

There is a new management team in place at Harford.

Roles within practice: Physio, MH Practitioner

SKI introduced roles within the practice. Harford now has a first contact physio to help the current appointment system. Harford also has a Mental Health Practitioner who has been able to help with reviews and patient care in the practice.

Patients have been made aware of the current shortages in the practice due to the current pandemic and difficulty recruiting GP's in the surgery. The practice is still searching for a GP.

Patient participants have expressed their concern in trying to make an appointment at the surgery; SS and SKI have explained that it has been quite difficult due to shortages, there has been a process put in place in regards to prioritising appointments, they are all usually triaged on the day to help manage the flow of appointments. Patients have also been made aware that there are other ways to make appointments via online patient access/NHS App/ Econsult.

New telephone system and appointments

SKI discussed new phone lines with patients. Telephone system has been changed in December to meet patients' needs effectively.

EH expressed concerns for elderly population trying to get an appointment as they are unable to complete an online econsult or access the patient online portal. SKI and FS have explained for elderly and child population Harford have measures put in place to help them get the support they need on the day.

NA raised concerns regarding the advertising of the econsult. It is not being advertised properly to patients to help them understand what the tool is. SKI assured NA that this message will be relayed to the team and proper methods of education will need to be put in place to help patients understand what an EConsult is and the benefits and how to use it.

NA also raised issues regarding acknowledgement of the econsult. Patients are spending time completing the econsult as advised by the team at Harford but are not receiving acknowledgement of their econsult and sometimes having their econsult being missed out. This then causes further problems for both patients and the surgery as there is a lack of communication. Patients who have this problems are less reluctant to do an econsult. AL asked the patient if he received a separate text message of acknowledgement for his econsult, patient responded that he did not receive anything apart from the email. AL ensured that this is a fault on Harford side and we will put measures in place to ensure that it does not happen again.

FS has explained that anything GP related usually takes up to 48hrs to help triaging patients that need urgent assistance. Emergency appointments are directed to emergency services such as 111 as the GP does not operate on an emergency appointment system.

Patients have been made aware of the changes to our econsult opening hours 7-11am this is due to short of clinicians and being able to handle appointments on the day.

All patients have expressed concerns regarding communication at Harford. Patients are being told different things which has caused a lot of problems for them. SKI has assured patients that a process is being put in place to help the communication at Harford to allow clear communication between all staff. Patients have also asked if things are documented e.g. when a call is made out to them and the reason, this will help them understand why a call has been made when they were unreachable and reduces the stress of having to wait for another call back. SKI informed patients that the team will be advised to start documenting all conversations to help the communication within the practice.

Some patients expressed they find it uncomfortable when giving reasons to the receptionist about why they need an appointment. FS has assured patients that it was for their own safety netting to help our clinicians understand what the issue may be to help patients effectively, she has also explained that if patients do not want to give this type of information they can complete an econsult or if urgent we can accommodate the needs of the patients.

AOB

SKI has asked patients if they can elect a patient advocate for Harford to help with PPG and patient involvement in the practice

Actions

- Harford to create a clear communication process for all staff to relay same message to patients to avoid any confusions
- SKI to ask all staff in practice to document any encounters with patients for effective communication across practice
- Harford staff to be trained on advertising econsult more effectively and provide education of econsult to patients
- Patient participants to elect an advocate for the PPG