

## Patient Newsletter July 2012

### **Welcome to Hall Green Health's first Patient Participation Group Newsletter.**

Hall Green Health has an active Patient Participation Group (PPG) and the views of our patients are really important in helping us to improve communication and future services. However when looking at the results of this year's patient survey, the opinion of the PPG was that whilst access and the range and quality of services provided by HGH were very good, there was a lack of clear, consistent communication of relevant information which has a negative impact on patient's perception of the surgery. The majority of those responding to the survey felt that improved communication would help them to get the best from the surgery.

Therefore it was agreed that improving communication would become a key theme this year and to assist, it proposed that a regular newsletter be created to update patients of changes happening within the practice.

### **Future Developments -- Improving Access to the Surgery**

When the patient survey findings were reported to the PPG earlier this year, the analysis also identified that, in relation to future benefits, the most popular proposals were on-line appointment booking (37%), on-line repeat prescriptions (36%), telephone consultations (32%) and recruitment of more Patient Advisers (26%).

In response to these findings, Hall Green Health will begin to explore the possibility of on-line appointment booking, a new telephone system and recruitment and training of more patient advisers. However, these developments are potentially constrained by competing financial priorities and availability of appropriate technology hence the aim of exploring the possibility of change rather than an undertaking to deliver the change at this present time.

In addition an action plan was also improved to improve communication and this includes

- Additional training for reception staff (to achieve consistency of information)
- Recruitment of more patient advisers (as staff budget permits) to enhance signposting of patients to services and assist in delivery of continuity of clinical care where appropriate.
- Update of the practice website
- Develop power-point presentations on the different services for the plasma screen
- Aim to install a plasma screen in each waiting area.

### **BMA Day of Action – Thank You**

At Hall Green Health the majority of doctors are members of the BMA and took part in the day of action on Thursday 21 June. This is the first time for nearly 40 years doctors had taken part in any industrial action and the decision to take action was not taken lightly. The BMA voted in favour of the action in light of the Government's pension proposals, which impacts on all NHS workers.

Hall Green Health doctors were acting to try to protect the service we offer to patients as, whilst the funding coming into the practice has remained static for a number of years, expenses have increased. Therefore increased pension contributions leave less money available to develop better services for our patients.

We value our patients and the services we provide for them, so wanted to minimise disruption caused. Patient safety remained our priority and care was provided to all patients who urgently needed it. We were delighted by the understanding and support shown to the practice by our patients on the day of action.

## **Workload Pressures**

In the last few months, Hall Green Health has experienced a 20% increase in demand from patients and in light of this we have been considering how best to manage the increasing workload we have been experienced. Whilst we can not work harder, we can change how we work so a number of actions have been agreed to help which include:

- Appointment of an additional partner, with a locum being appointed in the interim to provide additional cover
- Establishment of a triage pilot to look at ways patients requesting to be seen in same day surgery can be assessed to ascertain if their need to see a clinician is urgent for that day or can be safely signposted to alternative appointments/ways of managing their request
- Greater flexible working, with more early morning and evening appointments being made available
- Restructuring of the way the same day surgery works. The same day surgery will continue to operate every morning and afternoon, except on a Wednesday afternoon. It will continue to focus on a single problem only, with appointments being booked every 10 minutes

Further information about each of these changes will be made available as implementation plans are developed.

Feedback is welcomed; please pass on any comments or items you would like included in future newsletters to Kim Harlock, Business Manager.