

Patients in Partnership (PiP)
Thursday 9th July 2009
Questions and Answers – all presentations / panel members

No	Questions	Response
Booking Office presentation – Summary of discussion		
1.	<p>What is the Referral Management Centre (RMC)? How did my GP letter get to Southampton? Why do patients receive a letter from Southampton? How long does a patient referral take to reach the hospital from the RMC? Why is the RMC located in Southampton? Is the top of the tree the PCT or is someone telling the PCT what to do (related to RMC)?</p>	<p>All issues relating to the RMC should be directed to the PCT.</p> <p>The Trust will invite the PCT to attend a future PiP meeting to respond to the questions raised.</p>
2.	<p>Is there competition between the PCT and NHS Trust consultants in terms of who should be caring for the patient?</p>	<p>The RMC was set up to manage demand and monitor appropriateness of referral. The Department of Health introduced private providers to stimulate competition and drive down prices.</p>
3.	<p>Problems of patients receiving a letter from the hospital asking a patient to ring a telephone number and then not being able to speak to the Booking Centre. How many phone lines do you have?</p>	<p>There are three extension lines and twelve phones in the Booking Centre. Approximately half the telephones are used for receiving calls and the remainder are used for ringing patients and departments. The Trust has not yet introduced email and text facility for making appointments.</p>
4.	<p>Could the hospital use an answer-phone for recording appointment requests?</p>	<p>The Trust tried using an answer-phone but patients did not always leave messages that could be understood and followed up.</p>
5.	<p>Orthopaedic department has its own telephone number but patients cannot get through to make a follow up appointment.</p>	<p>Booking office only deals with new appointments. The Trust will look into this issue.</p>
6.	<p>Wording in the Booking Centre letter is draconian and unfriendly.</p>	<p>Booking centre letter is being revised and will be more patient friendly. Focus group will help trust with wording of new letter.</p>
7.	<p>Letter received from RMC on 26.6.09 but dated 4.6.09. How does this affect the 18 week target?</p>	<p>The 18 week clock starts on either the date when the RMC receives the referral letter or when the trust receives the referral letter.</p>
8.	<p>Are there rules about who should have follow up appointments and how many?</p>	<p>Whether or not a patient has a follow-up appointment depends on the condition and individual.</p>
9.	<p>When will the booking centre be given better accommodation and enable more telephone lines installed?</p>	<p>Both clinical and office accommodation are continually under review. No timescale for moving the Booking Centre.</p>
10.	<p>How do you measure successes in the Booking Centre?</p>	<p>Given some of the issues raised we are not in a good position to measure success. The Trust is keen to listen to patients, identify the issues and start a focus group to make improvements.</p>

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11.	Will the call queuing system have a free phone number?	Cannot say at this point in time.
12.	If the Trust changes a patient appointment it would be nice to know why it has been changed.	There is a need to explore these options.
13.	How do you monitor telephone calls you are not receiving?	We cannot monitor these calls. It is hoped that a call queuing system in the future will enable the Trust to monitor all calls.
14.	What is the time commitment required for attending the Booking Centre focus group?	One hour, once a month starting in September 2009.
PALS Presentation		
15.	A suggestion was made relating to the distribution of PALS leaflets to the libraries within the London Borough of Hillingdon.	Hillingdon PCT has previously distributed their leaflet to the libraries which includes the contact number for the Hospital PALS office. New PCT leaflets are being developed and will be distributed to libraries in due course.
16.	Could patients have a simplified message of the role of PALS?	A new PALS leaflet and poster is currently being distributed to all wards and departments.
17.	What percentage of households knows about PALS? You could put an advert in the local paper.	Information is available on the Trust website and within the hospital.
18.	Could you have a leaflet to hand out to relatives and carers?	There are leaflets on wards and departments and posters titled "We're here to help".
19.	A PiP member thanked Sally Taylor, PALS Manager, for her help and support for which he was very pleased.	
Other questions		
20.	With the appointment of Mike Robinson (previously PCT Chair) as Interim Chairman for the NHS Trust, what is the likelihood of the relationship between the PCT and NHS Trust improving?	The Interim Chair has only been in post for one week. However over the last six months the relationship between the PCT and NHS Trust has strengthened.
21.	How long will it take until the Trust has a permanent chair?	It's not very clear at the moment - possibly 3 or 6 months.
22.	Will Mike Robinson return to the PCT after his secondment?	A secondment may go either way although Mike Robinson has a right to return
23.	There is a delay between assessing a patient and information typed by secretaries. Could the Trust encourage consultants to use a voice activated system.	
24.	Clinical Assessment Treatment and Support Schemes (CATS) – A PiP member asked whether the Trust knew anything about the PCT project relating to developing clinical pathways for ophthalmology patients.	For further information please write or telephone PALS at the Hillingdon PCT on: 01895 452088 / 01895 452089.