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**BIRCHWOOD MEDICAL PRACTICE**  
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### **Practice Profile**

Birchwood Medical Practice is a 4 partner practice with 4 salaried doctors. We are also a training practice. We have a team of 6 nurses and a Practice Manager, Assistant Practice Manager and 10 administrative staff.

Birchwood Medical Practice has 14240 patients and is located in Horley Town approximately 2 miles from Gatwick airport. We have 100 more females than males. We have 2466 over 65s and 1215 over 75s. We have a wide diversity of patients from different ethnic backgrounds. There are two large homes for the elderly in Horley which are looked after by Birchwood Medical Practice. There are also many specialist units for the under 60s in Horley for patients who need to be looked after in a residential setting. There is a large quota of Bed and Breakfast residences and homeless residences in Horley. Due to the proximity of Gatwick Airport we experience a 10-12% patient turnover which is outside the norm of most local practices.

Birchwood Medical Practice is open from 8.30am to 6.30pm. It is open late on Monday evening until 8.00pm and Saturday morning (8.00am to 11.00am) to enable patients (particularly workers/students) to access appointments outside of our core hours.



## **Birchwood Support Group**

In September 2010 it was agreed by the Birchwood Medical Practice Partnership to resurrect the Patient Support Group which had unfortunately disbanded several years previously.

To start this process the doctors decided to personally invite some patients. We also wrote to a cross section of the Practice population. We advertised in the surgery by poster. Birchwood particularly wanted to encourage patients from a wide diversity of the patient population which included ethnic background/disabled/physically challenged, the elderly and teenagers. We have recently contacted young patients with special clinical needs and invited them to join the Birchwood Support Group which they have agreed to do. We feel we have a Group which represents some of the diversity we need but the Group are aware how important it is to have a wide and a diverse group as we can, to encourage involvement from the whole of the patient population in Horley. The group at the present time has approximately 25 members which consist of patients from different ages, sexes, and ethnicities. There are also members that have disabilities. The practice also collects the email addresses of patients when they attend the educational group/educational meetings. The minutes/newsletters/posters are communicated to them via this email which is [birchwoodsupportgroup@gmail.com](mailto:birchwoodsupportgroup@gmail.com)

## **Priorities**

The first meeting of the Support Group was held in April 2011.

At this meeting it was agreed to have Terms of Reference/Grounds Rules and a Priorities List for the Group. These were agreed by the group after discussion. It was also agreed that we needed a Chair and Vice Chair which have now been appointed. The Support Group worked with the practice to develop vision and mission statements which are on our website.

From the Priority List we now have regular education events held in the evening. The first event was held on 12 September 2011 on Hypertension given by Dr. Mann, the second on 23 January 2012 on Men's Health given by Dr. Baur. To tie in with the Olympic Games we had an educational event on Healthy Living given by Dr. Nelstrop. Due to demand we held a meeting on Diabetes Care in the local church hall. The first educational meeting of 2013 was on Women's Health.

The Group asked us to look at appointments and telephone system. We have now amended the appointment system to allow more pre booking and more availability of telephone appointments.

The Group agreed that they would like a Newsletter and this will be published quarterly. To date four Newsletters have been issued and next is being prepared.

Minutes are taken at every meeting and are now published on the Support Group



section of the Birchwood Medical Practice Website along with the latest newsletter.

We have opened a gmail account which is advertised in the newsletter to encourage patients to contact the support group with their views. [birchwoodpatientgroup@gmail.com](mailto:birchwoodpatientgroup@gmail.com)

We now feel that our Group is very well organised and enthusiastic.

### **OUR VISION**

**To be recognised as a Centre of Excellence that provides the highest quality of NHS care, which is equitable family orientated and evidence based.**

### **OUR MISSION**

**We will consistently strive comprehensive health care that fully reflects and addresses the needs of the community we serve. Key to this will be evidence based patient centred care. Respect and courtesy towards our patients and their carers will be a hallmark of our efforts. We will at all times respond adequately and appropriately to the needs of our patients, within the scope of the NHS. We will continue to provide the highest standards in teaching and training to future generations of health care professionals.**

### **Patient Survey**

During the initial meeting with the group the priorities were the appointment system and telephone appointments.

The patient group and the practice had several priorities that needed to be focussed; it was left too late to do a survey. So it was decided to source a national survey.

Following the successful survey last year it was felt to be beneficial to have a validated external survey. GPAQ version 3 survey is a nationally validated survey that would suit the needs. This was then proposed to the support group. Initially there were some concerns whether this was the right survey to carry out as it was lengthy (40 questions) and was felt by the group to be non-specific. It was also perceived as non-user friendly. However, after discussion as it was externally validated it was agreed.

The survey was carried out in February 2013 and it was targeted over 10 days to maximum a cross section of patients.

The total number of patients who participated in the survey was 160. The validated report is attached.



### **Meeting with Patient Group representatives to discuss survey results**

The Chair and Vice Chair and CCG representative of the Patient Support Group were invited along with another member of the group to discuss the results of the survey. The results of the survey were distributed to the Invitees. The meeting was held with the following present:

*Mr Jack Costelloe* – Chair of Patient Group

*Mr Richard Willcox* – Patient group rep on the Patient reference group for the NHS East Surrey.

*Mr David Beattie* – Patient Group Member

*Mrs Christine Earwaker* – Practice Manager

*Mrs Stella Price* – Asst. Practice Manager

*Dr Elango Vijaykumar* – Senior Partner

The Group felt and agreed that although the survey was external it was generic and not very focussed. It was also lengthy and some questions were not straightforward. We discussed the results of the survey and its meaningful interpretation. The general consensus was although it was good, not all of the results could be accepted as fact. Some people have marked as either ‘don’t know’ or ‘haven’t tried’ which could be interpreted either way.

However everyone agreed the results of the survey were very good and the patient group was pleased that the practice was providing a high quality service and was delighted to see that the practices’ score was way above the bench mark in all but 3 of the 24 areas rated in the survey.

Areas where an improvement could be made:

- Q2. How easy is it to get through to someone at your GP practice on the phone?
- Q3. How easy is it to speak to a doctor or nurse on the phone at your GP practice?
- Q6. How easy is it to book ahead in your practice?

After further discussion it was agreed that the practice had already done a lot of work in this area and some of the members of the Patient Group were not even aware of the telephone appointments. We all agreed that the practice has worked with the Patient Group regarding the Pre-bookable appointments and there is a wide range of pre bookable appointments currently being offered.

#### **So the following were the agreed action plans:**

- Survey to be distributed widely and posted on the practice web
- Further patient surveys will be considered, led by the patient group with a user friendly questionnaire – Mr Willcox and Mr Beattie will be the monitor
- Newsletter to focus on the results of the survey and to have explanations



particularly regarding the telephony.

- Newsletter to have a focus on the pre-bookable and telephone appointments that are available.
- Practice will regularly look to improve these key areas and report back to the patient group regularly.
- 20% of the Patient Participation Direct Enhanced Service money will be ring fenced to be used for patient / service development needs and will only be used by the practice after agreement by the group.

### **Comments from the survey**

- Very helpful, friendly and caring
- An excellent medical centre with pleasant staff
- Convenient to have blood checks at the surgery
- Very clean
- Good friendly service
- Receptionists could be more tactful
- I am happy with everything
- Very helpful and friendly
- Very helpful, friendly and caring
- an excellent medical centre
- Good receptionists and a very good medical centre
- Weekend
- All staff are kind and caring - excellent job
- Good all the time
- Always willing to listen
- Well run and the practice has improved
- Don't like the phone number
- Always been happy with the practice
- Too expensive to call surgery
- An excellent practice
- Very satisfied
- Sometimes I need to speak about more than one issue
- Need more time with the doctor
- Want to pre-book appointments
- Excellent overall - been coming here for 40 years
- Very hard to see the doctor you prefer
- Like the extended opening hours - useful as I work

