



DRAFT Patient Centred Standards for Access to Primary Care Services

Preamble:

The introduction of Choice will mean that in Primary Care it is important for GPs to know what is important to their patients. This charter is a set of standards that have been developed by the Patients' Parliament to address this.

The introduction of Choice will mean that in Primary Care it is more than ever important for GPs to know what matters to their patients. This charter is a set of standards that have been developed by the Patients' Parliament to address this.

Purpose:

- To ensure that GP Practices supply a patient-centred service

Standards

1. GP Services must be accessible to patients

- **Access (Flexibility of access)**

Standard: Clear policies are in place on how services are offered to patients

Indicator: For example, a clear policy of which types of calls from patients can be put through to a GP directly. (Urgent/not urgent etc)

Indicator: Patients are given viable options when best to make their non-urgent calls to speak to a GP.

Indicator: Copies of the policy are prominently displayed in the surgery

Indicator: A reader of the "Mirror" or "Sun" says he/she can understand the English used

Indicator: If the practice has more than 20 patients who speak a single language and do not speak English, the policy is available in that language.

Standard: A competent triage system is in place

Indicator: Reception staff can and do refer disputes about urgency to a GP or the practice nurse

- **Opening times**

Standard: The hours when the surgery is open and when it can be contacted by phone meet patient requirements

Indicator: Flexible hours are offered in order to cater for people's lifestyles – for example, earlier appointments for people on their way to work or for working parents bringing their children to see their GP



**North West London Strategic Health Authority
Patients' Parliament
DRAFT Patient Centred Standards for Access to Primary Care
Services**

Indicator: Phone lines are open before surgery starts

Indicator: The practice has conducted a survey of patients during the previous three years and a majority of respondents are satisfied with the opening hours provided.

- **Making Appointments**

Standard: Patients can use any reasonable method of making appointments

Indicator: Flexible ways of making an appointment are offered to patients which include the use of email, fax, text, phone and surgery visit

Indicator: The practice replies to requests by fax, text, post or e-mail during the opening hours in which the message is received and using the same method unless the patient indicates otherwise.

Standard: Future appointments are available to patients to match their needs

Standard: Patients can make appointments up to six months in advance

Indicator: Future appointments are offered (as per DH Guidelines) so as to match the needs of patients who have to make arrangements around attending an appointment, such as giving advanced notice to their employer of taking time off work.

Indicator: Except in emergency, GPs' absences from the practice are known to receptionists three months in advance.

Indicator: Receptionists can show an appointment diary for six months ahead.

Standard: Telephone calls are answered quickly

Indicator: The practice has set a maximum time within which calls will be answered and compliance is monitored

Indicator: There is one line for making appointments and obtaining prescriptions and another for telephone consultation with GPs

2. GP Practice Services must be flexible (across range of services, not just GP)

GP Practice Services must be flexible

- **Referral for second opinion**

Standard: It is easy for patients to get a second opinion

Indicator: Patients are offered the option of a second opinion with another GP in the Practice



**North West London Strategic Health Authority
Patients' Parliament
DRAFT Patient Centred Standards for Access to Primary Care
Services**

Indicator: Patient surveys ask whether patients would have liked a second opinion and whether GPs offered it.

- **Prescriptions**

Standard: Patients can obtain their prescription by any reasonable means

Indicator: Patients are able to obtain their prescriptions by email, Fax, Text message or Phone with 24hr availability

Indicator: House bound patients receive a consistently competent delivery service of their prescriptions

Indicator: Housebound patients are regularly surveyed and 75% agree that delivery of prescriptions is competent and consistent

Standard: The safety and effectiveness of long term prescriptions are regularly scrutinised by a GP

Indicator: Long term prescriptions are scrutinised at regular stated intervals

Indicator: A record of such scrutinies is maintained and patients are entitled to view entries concerning themselves on request.

- **Service offered by Practice Nurses and Qualified Staff**

Standard: Patients can obtain an appointment to see a practice nurse within a reasonable time (24hr target)

Indicator: A practice nurse is available to see patients by appointment. Patient satisfaction levels with waiting times are monitored by survey.

3. Staff must be competent and courteous

Standard: Reception staff are fully trained and are welcoming, courteous and efficient in all their dealings with patients

Indicator: Reception staff have successfully completed an appropriate training course

Indicator: Reception staff wear name badges

Indicator: Practice surveys seek feedback on receptionist's performance

Indicator: Reception staff regularly attend appraisal sessions to discuss feedback from patients.

Indicator: The employment of mature/older people on reception is considered by the practice

Indicator: The recruitment process is reviewed regularly



**North West London Strategic Health Authority
Patients' Parliament
DRAFT Patient Centred Standards for Access to Primary Care
Services**

Indicator: *The Practice Manager is accessible to patients*

Indicator: *Retraining of staff takes place if their attitude proves to be unacceptable*

Standard: At busy times enough staff are available to provide a reasonably prompt service.

Indicator: *Adequate numbers of reception staff are on duty at busy times*

Indicator: *Responses to surveys indicate satisfaction with waiting times at reception.*

4. Services must be provided in an equitable manner

Standard: All services are made available to all patients on an equitable basis

Indicator: *Provision is made to provide services to all patients without prejudice and to high standards*

Indicator: *Patient surveys invite patients to report any feeling that they have been discriminated against and, if this is proved, action is taken to prevent a recurrence*

Disabled and House bound patients

Standard: Patients with special needs associated with their disability or illness are given care and support if necessary in co-operation with other agencies to cover their needs over a 24 hour 7 day week period when required, in consultation with the patient and their carer.

Indicator: *Patients who are either disabled, chronically ill, terminally ill or housebound receive a service to match their specific needs.*

Indicator: *Patients with special needs and their carers are regularly surveyed. Any dissatisfaction with the service is investigated and, if proved, addressed.*

Suggested additions

5. Patients are adequately surveyed

Standard: GPs conduct such patient surveys as are needed to indicate successful fulfillment of this set of standards

Indicator: *Patient surveys cover:*

- a) *Attitudes to hours of opening and telephone availability*
- b) *Patients' wish for second opinions and whether GPs offered them*
- c) *Housebound patients' comments on prescription delivery*



**North West London Strategic Health Authority
Patients' Parliament
DRAFT Patient Centred Standards for Access to Primary Care
Services**

- d) *Patients' experience of waiting times for practice nurse appointments and for service from receptionists*
- e) *Patients' experience of receptionists' attitude*
- f) *Patients with special needs' experience of the practice's services*
- g) *Patients' experience of comfort and surroundings in surgery and waiting rooms*
- h) *Patients' experience of cleanliness of toilet facilities and nappy-changing arrangements.*

6. Services must be provided in a confidential manner

Standard

- Confidentiality -Patient health and contact details are kept confidential at all time

Indicator: *Test phone calls do not elicit confidential information.*

7. Patients are provided with clean and adequate facilities

- GP practices should be clean, welcoming, comfortably furnished and adequately heated and ventilated.

Standard: There are clear policies on furnishing and upkeep of premises.

Indicator: *Surveys indicate satisfaction with the condition of rooms and spaces used by patients.*

Standards

Clean, well-appointed toilet and washing facilities are an essential service for patients.

Standard: Clear guidance is in place for these services including baby-changing facilities.

Indicator: *Regular patient surveys indicate satisfaction with these facilities*

Guidelines for implementing this set of standards:

It is understood that the costs of access to GP services must be balanced to the costs of providing such services.