

# Annual Online Patient Survey 2019

## Warmdene Surgery Patient Participation Group (WSPPG) Report

### Approved February 2020

## Introduction

The Warmdene annual patient survey, constructed using Survey Monkey and consisting of 9 questions, was available to all patients for online feedback via a link on the surgery website. Hardcopies were also readily available in the reception area. The survey was open for responses for a period of 2 months, between 30<sup>th</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019. All registered patients with a mobile telephone number on their clinical records were sent a text with a link to the survey. A second text reminder was sent 1 month after the survey opened.

After the survey closed, the unedited results report was provided to the Warmdene Surgery Patient Participation Group (WSPPG) for detailed review, analysis and feedback at the patient group meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020. This report summarises the outcome of the WSPPG analysis, and where concerns were expressed consistently, recommendations for improvements have been made.

## Number of survey respondents and age profile

From a registered patient list of approximately 9300 patients, 660 anonymous surveys were completed by patients either online or by hand. This is 7.1% of the patient register. A breakdown of the respondents by age and frequency of attendance is as follows:

*Figure 1 : Age and attendance profile of all respondents*

Age range	4 or more attendances in past 12 months	3 or less attendances in past 12 months	Total respondents (% of total)
Under 17	6	18	24 (3.7%)
17 to 24	6	12	18 (2.7%)
25 to 34	20	28	48 (7.3%)
35 to 44	37	59	96 (14.5%)
45 to 54	47	101	148 (22.4%)
55 to 64	45	89	134 (20.3%)
65 to 74	81	69	150 (22.7%)
75 and over	24	18	42 (6.4%)
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>660 (100%)</b>

The WSPPG noted that the true statistical validity of the results could be challenged as only 7.1% of all registered patients across all age groups responded. However, national MORI poll surveys of GP practices are usually based on far smaller response rates and are less likely to cover the breadth of ages above, so these results are still considered very worthy of attention, providing a very strong indicator of patient perceptions of the overall quality and breadth of services offered.

It is also important to recognise that many respondents may not have attended or used the services immediately prior to completing the survey and they may not be aware of future plans or changes that were already in progress. Ongoing actions and changes, related to the recommendations in this report, will be documented in the next WSPPG newsletter.

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#### Summary of feedback

Overall the respondents rated the surgery as a very positive **“4 stars”** (out of a possible 5 stars) when asked the question **“Do you find the staff at Warmdene and Deneway helpful, professional and approachable”**. This rating is based on 519 responses (78.6%) categorising the surgery as either **“always”** or **“exceedingly”** in response to the above question. The WSPPG concluded that in general the surgery provides an **excellent clinical service** noting that the GP’s are highly skilled and caring for their patients. Similarly the **nurses are the most complimented staff** at the surgery with regard to their approach and medical care.

The first impression of the practice is provided by the **receptionists and, although there were many positives, there were some criticisms especially in regard to attitude and behaviour**. The WSPPG believes this aspect of the service requires some attention on the basis that patients are attending in a state of anxiety due to illness and worry and therefore they should be consistently greeted with courtesy and care.

When asked the question **“In the past 12 months how easy have you found the following: Access via telephone, getting results, requesting repeat prescriptions and speaking to a nurse or doctor”** it was apparent that **difficulties were often experienced with the use of the telephone** for enquiries, appointments and speaking to a receptionist, doctors or nurse. Delays with answering calls, excessive time taken with calls, and the content and nature of reception responses when answering the telephone are highlighted by many patients. Some respondents were disappointed that GP telephone appointments are no longer available for pre-booking. However the surgery was praised for the use of online services for requesting repeat prescriptions and booking appointments.

The WSPG analysis for the question **“in the past 12 months have you been able to access a GP in a reasonable amount of time to meet your healthcare needs?”** **showed an overall positive response with 84% of respondents saying either “yes” or “mostly”**. Concerns were again raised about ease of telephone access. It was also noted that in some cases if a patient is seen by a GP for the first time, it can be a long wait for a follow up appointment.

The patients response to the question **“If you saw a doctor or nurse within the last 12 months, how good were they at giving you enough time; listening; explaining tests and results; involving you in decisions”** indicated that **clinical staff at the surgery are very highly regarded**. Overall, approximately 85% of respondents rated the surgery good or very good in this respect, and only 2.7% poor or very poor. Patients were sometimes frustrated if they could not easily see their own GP, and the repeat prescription process was considered something that had potential for improvement. The WSPPG expect the new Prescription Ordering Direct service (which goes live on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020) will help to improve this.

The response to the question **“How good are receptionists at each of the following; understanding your requests, treating you with dignity and respect, explaining the services or options available, and ensuring your confidentiality is respected”** showed that overall there was a positive response, although a small number of respondents (11%) **stated that receptionists were sometimes rude and**

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**unhelpful.** When discussed in the WSPPG it is was felt that **often patients may not appreciate the challenges and pressures faced by receptionists** although they must endeavour to set the highest possible standard. 24% raised **concerns about confidentiality in the waiting area**; when a WSPPG member tested this recently, no significant concerns were highlighted and it could be concluded that confidentiality issues may be dependent on circumstances rather than, or solely because of, structural or physical limitations.

The question regarding “*continuity of care*” suggests that **34% of people prefer to see the same GP** although 42% further added that it depends on the reason for their appointment. More patients wanted to be informed when their GP changes. Some people do not seem to like the “sit-and-wait” clinic, primarily because the length of wait is not predictable (although not excessive given the nature of such clinics and comparison with wait times in A&E services) and also because the clinician seeing them is not advised to the patient in advance. However this service provides the surgery with additional clinical capacity to meet on-the-day demands and improve overall resilience.

When respondents were asked about the condition and suitability of the premises and environment at both Warmdene and Deneway, **patients were very complementary** with 85.3% giving a positive response overall (though the WSPPG expressed concern about potential bias in the survey question). There were some common threads in patients’ suggestions for improvement, most notably the seating arrangements in the waiting area and car parking. The waiting room seats, although thick foam based, are considered uncomfortable and not designed for the patient to relax. Car parking availability worsens at school opening and closure times, suggesting that some parents are using County Oak Medical Centre spaces instead of parking elsewhere. On numerous occasions the surgery management have contacted the school about parking problems.

### Key recommendations

Based on the analysis above, and supplemented by a large number of free text comments received, there were some consistent themes that support the WSPPG recommendations below:

1. To investigate telephone access problems and introduce improvements in telephone response times to patients making it easier to book appointments over the telephone.
  - a. This might include implementing an announcement about the relative position in the queue or approximate waiting times.
2. To encourage patients to use online services more often.
3. To train reception staff in customer awareness and to greet patients positively.
4. To consider signposting direct to nurse appointments where GP involvement is not necessary.
5. To alleviate concerns about the ability to book suitable follow up appointments with a GP, a 4 week appointment system should be considered.
6. Although recognised as physically difficult to achieve, to consider possible improvements to confidentiality when patients come to the front reception desk.
7. To improve parking availability during peak school times

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- a. Possible additional roadside signage making it clear that parking is for County Oak Medical Centre attendees only.
8. To consider possible improvements to the waiting area especially the quality and layout of the seating.
  - a. The introduction of indoor plants and options for children should also be reviewed.
  - b. Improvements to support enhanced patient confidentiality at front reception desk need to be part of any re-design of the waiting area.
9. For future surveys the WSPPG will consider all options to boost response rates.

### **Actions arising**

The WSPPG will now work closely with Warmdene surgery management and partners to ensure that the best possible progress is made on the recommendations above. Consideration will be given to financial and resource constraints. The WSPPG are already aware that considerable efforts are being made to investigate and improve telephone access, and that staff recruitment is underway to provide more consistent and responsive reception and clinical services.

### **Report review and approval**

The chairperson of the WSPPG, approved this report on behalf of all WSPPG members at the meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

The chairperson wishes to thank all survey respondents for their time and effort in providing excellent and insightful feedback which will help to support future discussions and changes with the practice.