

Plas Menai Health Centre

Penmaenmawr Road
LLANFAIRFECHAN
Conwy
LL33 0PE

Tel: 01248 680021
Fax: 01248 681711

Website: www.plasmenaihealthcentre.co.uk

Our Reference:
PMHC/SURVEY/ACCESS/01
Your Reference:
Nil
Date:
17 November 2020

 Canolfan Iechyd

Plas Menai

Health Centre

Dear patients,

ACCESS Survey – November/December 2020

Responses to your Comments, Suggestions and Compliments

The Plas Menai Health Centre is very appreciate of the time in which our patients have taken to complete the only ACCESS Survey for this period [November/December 2020]. Subsequently we are keen to have the ability to place with our patient cohort, the comments made along with the practices responses.

Again, thank you!

COMMENT 1: *'I don't wish to share the reason why I need a doctor's appointment with the receptionist and then they make the decision if I need a dr.'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. This is fully understood and you do indeed have a choice and if your choice is specifically to see a doctor then naturally we will place you in such an appointment. However, in order to receive the best outcome to your health need, there may be other individuals more suited in the practice to provide you with a better and quicker outcome. This is the reason we ask our care navigators to ask the questions they do, to help our patients. Many of our patients have gained value through this approach and it has then released the GP to deal with matters which are more specific and complex and which require their absolute attention.

COMMENT 2: *'Better phone lines, shorten length of waiting'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. Better access into the practice is not necessarily resultant on the quality of phone lines but our ability to manage the calls in addition to the demand. We employ care navigators to operate the phones throughout the day. Our challenge throughout COVID is dealing with the demand. It has been significant and unprecedented on occasions and we have tried our best to react accordingly. We review our abilities weekly and cause changes where we believe they will be of value. Can I propose you look at using eConsult to help accessing our service? We have seen a great uptake in this – the more using this the easier it will be to connect by phone. For more details visit our website at www.plasmenaihealthcentre.co.uk

COMMENT 3: *'Compliments to Dr Anna. My husband had a phone consultation with her then Dr Nefyn last week and now has an x-ray appt at YG this Thursday.'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. Dr Anna has been a great addition to the team and I will ensure to pass on your comments to her. Sadly, she will be leaving us in a couple of weeks to focus on further development.

COMMENT 4: *'Its been tough during lockdown getting through to get appointments, I have had to wait over 2 weeks to get appointment for b12 injection. More people answering the calls would make it easier or even set up*

all the patients, you already have their details on their medical records on the online booking system so they have that as a backup if needed'

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. We are sorry to hear of your challenges arranging an appointment. Sadly the suggestions you make would not be possible for a number of reasons. I would be happy to discuss them further if you wish to place a call with me at the surgery. In summary however, during COVID we have maintained service throughout and have been very mindful of our ability and risks to do so. We have answered more calls than ever before, have introduced new systems of work to keep patients and staff safe and have where possible supported change in the community with the launch of our 'In Community Flu Campaign'. We apologise if you feel our efforts have fallen short of your expectations.

COMMENT 5: *'Can I start by saying I think you do a great job and we ARE VERY lucky to have such a great team looking after us 😊 But, please can you respect linguistic choices of Welsh speakers more? I'm afraid this is not accommodated or respected in my experience. Please look up Welsh government policy The Active Offer, it shows how to promote what is a legal obligation for health providers in Wales. I also find the telephone system VERY annoying, particularly when I'm unwell! I mainly just want to contact you to book an appointment. The VERY long messages just waste time after a long wait to get through sometimes - just essential information would be appreciated! Option one should be speak to someone about an appointment - we are offered a home visit option before an appointment!!!'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. I totally concur with the points you raise and personally as a Welsh speaker I wish we could do more to fall within our **obligations**. We do our best but the reactive nature of dealing with the COVID risks and releasing key messages has caused some of the bilingual policy obligations to slide I am sad to say. We will endeavour to get back on track. I appreciate the comments you provide regarding the phone system. Sadly, I would like more time to explain why we do what we do in the way we do it – I would be happy to discuss the points you raise if you wish to place a call with me [Richard]. eConsult has been a particular success over the last few months – I would fully recommend considering it as an alternative way of accessing our service.

COMMENT 6: *'Excellent service and everyone at the Surgery from Doctors, Nurses, HCA, Practice Manager, administrative staff (to name but a few) have all gone above and beyond the call of duty during these uncertain times. The way in which the Flu Vaccination programme was arranged was excellent. Thank you.'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. You're very kind and supportive words will be well received by the team who have been working hard to manage matters over the last few months. I agree, the Flu Campaign has been excellent and I really do want to thank the community for their support and involvement.

COMMENT 7: *'Despite your greatly appreciated best efforts, it's very difficult to get an appointment. Very difficult especially for parents who are getting kids ready for school at the same time as phone lines open. Also difficult for those working due to not being able to book in advance- phoning on the day does not guarantee an appointment but you still have to book half a day off work in anticipation. Advance appointments for chronic health conditions and follow-ups would be amazing. Also very little continuity between doctors. You might see the doctor for something then go for a follow-up appointment some time later but discover it's a different doctor (because you can't choose which doctor you see- it's a lottery) and they have little idea what the previous doctor's line of thinking was or why they ordered certain tests and not others. Being able to follow up the same issue with the same doctor would make much more sense and also allow for better rapport and understanding. Appreciate that all the above is very difficult given resources and staffing levels though'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. The points you raise are absolutely appreciated and understood. We have had to scale back booking in advance for a number of reasons all to do with risk, safety and capacity. I do agree that this has been a challenge to maintaining continuity. We are on a constant review to see how best we can improve this area of work and I am sure once some resemblance of normality

returns, we will force through some changes to improve this area.

COMMENT 8: *'The process of trying to obtain an appointment by phone is very stressful. I do not have a particular problem with anxiety, but the process makes me anxious, how it affects people who are already anxious I hate to think. The recorded messages played on the telephone answering service are a wasted opportunity. I phoned to make an appointment for a flu jab and followed the instructions which guided me through the options to the flu jab appointment option. I waited 14 minutes in total and listened to a number of pre-recorded messages; when the phone was eventually picked up, I was told all the appointments had gone and that I should phone back in a week. That information could have been provided at the start via a recorded message on first connection to the dedicated flu jab line. I hope this is taken as constructive criticism, once I am able to speak to your doctors, I have only praise for the service you provide, particularly in these trying times. Stay safe.'*

PMHC Response: Thank you for your comment. I can only apologise for the length of wait you seem to have experienced. I do think that we have to recognise however the demand that has been placed on the service over the last couple of months particularly since the introduction of the Flu Campaign. In addition to our normal service, close on 1500 patients will have called to have secured their flu vaccination appointment and I have no doubt that many will have done so during a time where the service would have been under significant strain with calls, ie in the morning. The threat or suggestion of local lockdown during the same period caused a significant additional demand in respect of medication also. I sense all of this thrown into the mix may have hampered your ability to connect more efficiently. We do apologise for that.

We very much look forward to receiving further submissions from our patient and I will ensure that they are all brought to the attention of the Patient Engagement Group in due course.

Yours sincerely;

Richard

Richard Marriott - Business Manager