



Bankhouse Surgery Newsletter

Bankhouse Surgery awarded maximum score in latest national quality audit.

The government's latest quality audit of GP surgeries (QOF – Quality and Outcomes Framework) has resulted in Bankhouse Surgery being awarded the maximum score of 1000 points out of the 1000 possible. This outstanding achievement is despite the standards being dramatically raised, compared to previous years, to avoid high scores being achieved. The audit this year included the assessment of measures to prevent coronary heart disease, the monitoring and treatment of patients with heart failure, strokes and TIA, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, pulmonary disease, epilepsy, thyroid problems, cancer, mental health problems, asthma, depression, dementia, chronic disease, atrial fibrillation, obesity, and learning disabilities, as well as issues

related to management of staff, training etc.

This 100% performance follows on from the previous two year's improving performance, from 99.5% in 2005 and 99.9% in 2006, despite the standards having been raised substantially in 2007.

This performance reflects a great deal of hard work by the whole surgery team including doctors, nurses and administrative staff, and reflects Bankhouse Surgery's determination to offer the highest possible standards of clinical care to its patients.

New care improvement objectives will be introduced by the

BHS HEALTH TIPS- EXCESS WEIGHT

However much we might want to blame our glands and our genes for our weight, weight gain is almost always due to the simple fact that we eat more calories than we use up in our day to day activities.

Excess weight causes diabetes, heart disease, gallbladder disease, various cancers, back pain, knee problems, gout, depression, indigestion and loss of confidence.

Try the following tips:-

Eat more slowly and chew your food.

Eat regularly at a similar time each day.

Cook smaller amounts, use smaller plates.

Try to avoid crisps, biscuits and cakes.

Department of Health in the coming years, and it is Bankhouse Surgery's objective to meet and exceed all the objectives and targets proposed.

Bankhouse Surgery is first surgery in the region to re-open on Saturdays

Bankhouse Surgery was the first GP practice in the region to introduce a Saturday morning surgery. The regular Saturday surgery began on 3rd March. Appointments are from **9.00 am and 11.40 am**. We aim to provide a convenient service for patients who work or study during the week.

Dr Andy Downs, Senior Partner said:

“Our practice continually aims to provide services which are convenient to patients, and we listen carefully to their views and comments.”

“We have an excellent reputation for providing access to appointments during the week. This move is a response to our patients' requests for routine or non-urgent appointments at a time convenient to people who

work during the week, especially those who work away from Hartlepool.

“Depending on what our patients say they need, we may also look at offering routine appointments at other times as well.”

The new Saturday surgery is not a return to the Saturday emergency surgeries which all GP

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Bankhouse Surgery Summer 07

Special points of interest:

- *GPAQ patient survey findings and details of the surgery's responses and plans:-*
- *Results showed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality and accessibility of medical services received as well as with the personal competencies and abilities of our doctors, their interpersonal skills, communications abilities, and their general quality of care.*
- *Their were four main areas of criticism / dissatisfaction:-*
 - *Worries over continuity of care.*
 - *Problems phoning the surgery.*
 - *Excessive waiting times in surgery.*
 - *Shortage of telephone advice.*

These issues are discussed in more detail on page 2.

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Bankhouse Surgery is first surgery in the region to re-open on Saturdays (continued)

practices used to provide. These stopped in 2004 when a new national contract for GPs was introduced.

Initial reaction from patients using the Saturday service has been excellent with many people who work away taking advantage of the new service.

Urgent care, after 6pm and at weekends, will continue to be given to all Hartlepool patients by Primecare, the local out-of-hours provider.

We apologise that our new service is limited to routine pre-booked appointments. Due to Saturday staffing restraints and other issues, the only reception service will relate to the Saturday surgery. Other services, including the making of appointments, ordering or collecting prescriptions, etc., will not be avail-

The move is also supported by Hartlepool PCT. Hartlepool PCT Director of Primary Care and Modernisation Ali Wilson says:

"We fully support the practice in this development. We have worked together with all GPs in Hartlepool during a period in which new contracts have brought about big changes in their practices, and we are now seeing services to patients being delivered in different ways, for the benefit of patients."

"In 2005 feedback from "Your Health, Your Care, Your Say," a public consultation exercise, highlighted availability of convenient GP appointment times as a major need for people. Other feedback from PCT patient surveys and public consultations on service changes and developments also supports this".

able at the surgery, though these services are available on-line at bankhousesurgery.co.uk. Patients in need of medical assistance on

Saturdays should telephone NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or Primecare on 0845 603 3131.

GPAQ Patient Survey 2006/2007

GPAQ patient survey findings and details of the surgery's responses and plans:-

Results showed a high degree of satisfaction with the quality and accessibility of medical services received, as well as with the personal competencies and abilities of our doctors, their interpersonal skills, communications abilities, and their general quality of care.

Their were four main areas of criticism / dissatisfaction which were highlighted by the survey findings:-

- Worries over continuity of care.
- Problems phoning the surgery.
- Excessive waiting times in surgery.
- Lack of access to telephone advice.

1) Continuity of Care.

The fact that Bankhouse Surgery is a leading training practice ensures that many more doctors' appointments are available than would be typical of other practices of the same size, making it possible to offer same day appointments which most local practices cannot. Training also allows the practice to train its own future partners. Where other practices have difficulty recruiting, and rely on locums, we can choose the best available, and do not need locum doctors. The criticisms are a) that many of the doctors leave just as they are becoming popular and familiar with your case (they can stay for between

GP training activities have a positive impact on patient service, however, it is recognised that the amount of training undertaken since August 2006 has been too great and has now been reduced by a third to improve access to senior doctors.

4 months and a year), and b) that the senior doctors spend more time with training than is ideal, causing a shortage of appointments for them. It has now been decided that training will be reduced by a third relative to recent levels, and new doctors will no longer be accepted unless they can stay at least six months and preferably a year.

2) Problems Phoning the Surgery

We fully appreciate the difficulties patients face here and we are taking action to improve the situation. We have recruited additional receptionists (see page 4 staff news). Two additional clinical computer workstations and an additional printer have also been installed, and the telephone system has been upgraded with two extra telephones. Together with a realignment of staff roles, we believe these actions will substantially improve the recent situation..

We encourage patients to use the facility available to book appointments and pre-

scriptions via the internet rather than phoning the surgery.

3) Excessive Waiting Times.

The complaints of excessive waiting times mainly relate to the 12.00 surgery which absorbs demand over the forecast need. Most surgeries simply deny access once the appointments are full. Whilst by no means ideal, it seems better to have some waiting

We fully appreciate the difficulties patients face trying to telephone the surgery and we are taking numerous actions to improve this over the next two to three months.

for this service than to deny access until another day. Nevertheless, we are looking carefully at a variety of possible measures to alleviate this problem.

4) Lack of access to telephone advice.

Whilst it would be ideal to offer the facility to phone up and speak to a doctor or nurse at any time, such a facility would be detrimental to the quality of care and experience of those seeing the doctor when phone calls are made, who would be interrupted. The current system allows messages to be left for a doctor or nurse who will respond as appropriate. No better alternative system has yet been found though several have been tried.

Bankhouse Surgery's Website allows 24 hour 7 day Access To Appointments and Prescriptions plus lots of Information!

The Bankhouse Surgery website offers access at all times of the days and night without queuing or waiting at the end of a telephone.

It is simple to sign up for the on-line service, just bring a piece of photographic identification into the surgery (like a driving licence or a passport) and we will give you your password. And off you go!

You can then view, book and cancel your own appointments, as well as ordering repeat medications. You can also access new appointments in advance of the surgery opening in the mornings.

Whether you are at home or at work, you can quickly log on to view, book and cancel appointments via the internet.

www.bankhousesurgery.co.uk

By using the internet, you not only save yourself time and trouble but you also help your fellow patients who are unable to access the internet, by reducing the pressure on our reception and telephone services and allowing them to get through more easily at peak times.

We have now reached a total of 500 users and have a target of 1,000 by the end of 2007.

The system is very easy to use and many of our elderly patients who are less experienced with computers have now become keen users.

If you have a modem with internet connection, come into the surgery with photographic ID and sign up straight away - you'll wonder why you used the phone for so long!

See you at -

www.bankhousesurgery.co.uk

Premises - Bankhouse Surgery - Present and Future

Negotiations are now well advanced on the new town centre health centre off Park Road.

It is expected that Bankhouse Surgery will move its main site to this new centre when complete in about two years. This centre will house GP's which together will cater for between 40% and 50% of the town's population, together with a wide variety of other community health services, including podiatry, audiology, and a variety of surgical and other Primary Care Trust activities.

Initial designs for the building are very impressive and this facility will be a major step forward in patient services and facilities. The

building will be open for longer hours than currently is normal in health centres, and will have an impressive central atrium with natural lighting (similar to the most modern shopping centres).

It is further proposed that Bankhouse Surgery will open an additional satellite surgery in another part of the town, though these discussions are still at an early stage. This will allow greater choice to our patients who will be able to attend surgeries at either site and take advantage of integrated computer and telephone systems. Bankhouse Surgery continues its growth in patients numbers,

"Initial designs for the building are very impressive and this facility will be a major step forward in patient services and facilities."

attracting patients dissatisfied by their current practices, a number of which are in long term decline.

We have recently redecorated the surgery and fitted new carpets. We would like to do much more to improve the patient experience but we are constrained by the age of the building and the fact that we are due to leave the present building in two years.

Minor Surgery Changes

In contrast with many surgeries, Bankhouse Surgery undertakes a wide variety of minor surgery. This work is mainly undertaken by Dr Heggs who was already a very experienced and fully qualified surgeon before entering general practice.

In an era when the public is increasingly concerned about the level of hospital acquired infection, Bankhouse Surgery has been able to undertake many minor procedures, very safely, and in a much more convenient location. As a response to public

One of the outcomes of recent public consultation "your health, your care, your say" was that the public overwhelmingly wanted more services to be provided in a primary care setting, closer to home.

concern, the NHS is introducing new sterilisation rules which make it more difficult for GP surgeries to undertake sterilisation, re-

quiring dedicated sterilizing rooms for which over-crowded GP surgeries do not have space.

In order to continue to offer minor surgery services to its patients, whilst maintaining the highest possible levels of hygiene and safety, Bankhouse Surgery has now, at considerable cost, moved over to using only single use instruments for all its surgery.

Patients can rest easy in the knowledge that all equipment is not only totally sterile but that it has never been used before!

Drs Downs, Smith, Heggs, Ramchander & Schock. Telephones: 01429 - 274800
Bankhouse Surgery, 01429 - 867535
Hartlepool Health Centre, 01429 - 266368
Victoria Road, Emergencies: 01429 - 274386
Hartlepool, Fax: 01429 - 860811
TS26 8DB.

We're on the internet!

www.bankhousesurgery.co.uk

CHANGES WITHIN THE BANKHOUSE TEAM

We welcome the following members of the Bankhouse team, who have joined us recently:-

- Dr Raina Shah has now joined the practice as a staff GP having previously trained with the practice as Dr Downs' registrar.*
- Dr Lumburu and Dr Sen will both be working in the practice (under the supervision of senior GP's) until the end of July before returning to posts in local hospitals.*
- Nurse Melissa Waites has recently joined the practice as a full-time practice nurse. Nurse Waites is a Registered General Nurse who joins us from the acute admissions unit at Hartlepool Hospital, where she worked as a staff nurse.*
- Claire Reynolds and Louise Rowbotham have recently joined reception. Andrea Ramshaw and Kim Graham also joined the reception team during the last year and are already very well established full-time members of a growing reception and administration team.*

We wish the following leavers all our best wishes:-

- Sister Downs who has decided to move on after 13 years in the practice. We send her our best wishes in her future career.*
- Dr Boyle has left the practice to progress her career elsewhere. She may still occasionally be available on a sessional basis until starting her new post, providing holiday cover etc. We send her our best wishes for the future.*

Improvements to Phlebotomy Services (blood sample taking).

Following a shortage of capacity which has led to patients having to wait too long for appointments to take blood samples, the practice now has a phlebotomy service with three qualified phlebotomists. These phlebotomists also work in reception and administration and are thus available at short notice if required for urgent blood samples.

Our phlebotomy team is Vivienne Barr, Andrea Ramshaw and Louise Rowbotham.

Ambulance Booking Changes - GP surgeries no longer involved

Until the end of March, patients were able to notify the surgery of their ambulance requirements and the surgery passed these requests on to the ambulance service.

As from the beginning of April, the ambulance service, in conjunction with all the Tees Primary Care Trusts decided to remove GP surgeries from the booking process.

Patients who believe they require an ambulance now need to telephone a dedicated ambulance booking office at Middlesbrough Primary Care Trust. This office will then decide whether the request meets the relevant criteria and will then pass on the request to the ambulance service longer involved.

Please ask for a copy of the leaflet which explains the new system with details of the number to call.