

Are You Being Overheard At The Reception Counter In Our Waiting Room?

The 2013-2014 GPAQ questionnaire gave us some concern that compared with other practices, patients felt they could be overheard talking to the receptionist in the waiting room. Our in-context questionnaire found that 11 patients out of 53 could overhear conversations, but none of the overhearing on that occasion seemed medically sensitive. When asked about speaking today, 45 out of 53 did not feel uncomfortable about the possibility of being overheard, 2 felt inhibited from saying all they wanted to say, 1 felt that they had something to say which could be overheard, and they were bothered by this, and 5 felt they could be overheard but were not too worried about that.

As a group, we decided that there was no indication that electronic means of communicating as discussed before were indicated. However, a sign on the counter indicating that the patient could speak to the receptionist in a separate side room if more privacy was needed would be very helpful on occasions for any patient.

Is It Still Acceptable To Wait to See The Doctor in 2014?

Some patients in the GPAQ were waiting 'far too long'. 53 consecutive patients were given an in-context questionnaire in March 2014 when they arrived to see the doctor to find out whether we should modify further our open access service to see the doctor in morning surgeries.

48 said the wait was reasonable in the circumstances, 5 said it was too long and 2 said it was far too long.

A higher proportion of patients felt the wait was reasonable than in the GPAQ survey and after discussion with our PPG we will not be altering our open access system.

3 of those 6 who objected to the wait would prefer to be asked to come back if their problem would take a longer time, 4 would rather wait longer but expect to have all their problems attended to when they eventually got in to see me. (1 person added this observation though had not found the wait unreasonable in the circumstances).

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