

Appendix One

Key objectives

The purpose of the Patient Participation DES is to ensure that patients are involved in decisions about the range and quality of services provided and, over time, commissioned by their practice. It aims to encourage and reward practices for routinely asking for and acting on the views of their patients. This includes patients being involved in decisions that lead to changes to the services their practice provides or commissions, either directly or in its capacity as gatekeeper to other services. The DES aims to promote the proactive engagement of patients through the use of effective Patient Reference Groups (PRGs) and to seek views from practice patients through the use of a local practice survey. The outcomes of the engagement and the views of patients are to be published on the practice website.

One aspect that practices may wish to focus on is excellent access into the practice, and also from the practice to other services in its role as coordinator of care, facilitating access to other health and social care providers.

Access has many dimensions; the relative importance of these will vary according to the specific needs of the registered population. These dimensions include:

- lists being open to all
- hours of opening with the ability to be seen urgently when clinically necessary, as well
- as the ability to book ahead
- continuity of care
- range of skills available – access to different professionals
- a choice of modes of contact which currently includes face-to-face, phone and electronic contact but can be developed further as technology allows
- geographical access, enabling care as close to home as possible.

Access must be flexible enough to meet the varying needs of individuals and requires sufficient capacity to meet the population's needs. Details of access arrangements (including opening hours) should be made widely available to the population to enable patients to exercise choice.

Qualifying practices will establish a Patient Reference Group (PRG). This may be a formal Patient Participation Group (PPG) or a similar group that is representative of the practice population, which would feed in its views alongside the findings from the surveys and agree with the practice the priority areas for possible change. This would result in an action plan to be agreed between the practice and the PRG.

Practices taking part in this DES will also carry out a properly constituted survey of a sample of the practice's patients looking at a broad range of areas which could include convenience of access (opening times, ability to book ahead, ability to be seen quickly, telephone answering), patients' experience of the treatment and service they receive, the physical environment in the surgery and other issues specific to each practice.