

PATIENT ENGAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER FOCUS: GETTING IT RIGHT IN GENERAL PRACTICE

The challenges of patient engagement

Engaging patients in the delivery of primary care is important for everyone: for commissioners, for general practice and for patients themselves. Increasingly GPs are being expected to demonstrate that they are patient focussed and that they are not just listening to patients, but actively involving them in decision-making. And being patient focussed is not just a matter of filling in boxes to meet targets and earn some useful extra money but something that affects future success and perhaps even the survival for the practice as a whole.

What does it all mean for GPs and practice staff? How can practices get it right for themselves and for their patients? Is this something that can be left to the practice manager and the reception team? What are the costs in terms of money and time? Where do complaints and practice patient survey fit in and what do they tell us?

Professional and Practice Development – Support from the Specialists

At the Moore Adamson Craig Partnership we have many years' experience of working with primary care providers to help them improve how they engage with patients and service user. We have also worked with patients themselves to help them play a full and useful role in developing health services in their local communities.

We have developed a package of training and support designed to help GP practices meet the challenges of patient engagement and increase their focus on patients. Designed for Practice Based Commissioning clusters or other groups of practices, our support package looks at how legal requirements, commissioners' needs and patient expectations are changing and provides practical guidance for practices on how to meet the challenges they face.



The MAC offer

We can work with you to develop a tailored package of training and support which could include any or all of the following:

1. **Why patient engagement matters: understanding the context** – an introductory session for senior managers at PBC cluster or PCT level to help identify why patient engagement work matters, how to start to bring about change and how to identify what needs to be done
2. **Staff surveys** – individually designed e-surveys to help you find out what is going on in practices and to gauge staff attitudes to patient engagement
3. **Customer Care for frontline practice staff** – a practical participative training workshop for Reception staff giving them the skills to handle patients positively and with confidence
4. **Setting up and supporting a practice-based patient group** – training and practical guidance for Practice Managers and GPs looking at the challenges of setting up and sustaining a patient group – management, promotion and agenda-setting
5. **Complaint handling** – a practical workshop for Practice Managers and GPs on new complaints procedures and how best to deal with complaint and complainants turning patients with a problem into the best advocates for the practice
6. **Making the most of your customer data** – a workshop for Managers and GPs looking at how to digest and make use of patient satisfaction data and other sources of information about your patients.
7. **Putting it all together** – getting a return on your investment by building patient loyalty and reputation through your team delivering on the things that matter most to your users and building your brand
8. **Individual practice support** – we will visit your practice and work with GPs, managers and other staff to assist with the implementation of new approaches to engaging with patients.
9. **Patient Engagement Toolkit** – a reference pack of guidance and materials to help everyone in the practice handle the various aspects of patient and carer engagement including step by step guidance, checklists, helpful hints, presentation materials, sample publicity materials etc



What they say about our training and support

- *I've learnt to think about the way I speak to people and how they may react to me. Has helped me to be more sensitive to people and their situations*
- *The most useful thing I have taken away from today is an understanding of how to deal with difficult situations and deal with them successfully*
- *I have been motivated and encouraged to continue and improve running our patient participation group*
- *I've found out how to prepare for a practice group – it seems it's got to come*
- *Gave me ideas on how to reach a wider audience to improve recruitment; certainly got me thinking*
- *Gave me useful ideas for organising participation groups*

Who we are

The Moore Adamson Craig Partnership is made up of four partners each of whom has many years experience working to improve the involvement and engagement of the users of public services. Our experience in the health sector is wide-ranging including advising central government, Primary Care Trusts, individual GP practices and Practice Based Commissioning Clusters on complaint handling, patient involvement and customer service. We have also supported patient engagement groups including Community Health Councils, Patient Forum and Local Involvement Networks (LINKs). Our team also includes a Practice Manager who is a Partner in a South London practice and has set up an award-winning patient liaison group.

For a full flavour of who we are and what we do, become a subscriber to the MAC public involvement blog at www.publicinvolvement.org.uk