

## Identifying GP Website Essentials

In 2015 Healthwatch Barnet volunteers undertook a number of GP Practice website reviews at the request of practice managers. Through those reviews, the volunteer group registered the fact that many GP Practices could, and should, promote these under-used but very important facilities to a much greater extent.

The review group felt that practice websites can be effective as signposting guides to both the practice and other NHS services. The websites, as information portals, should also be used to communicate with patients about the practice and its facilities, lessening the need for patients to ring the surgery. **But patients need to know they exist and what they can find there.**



We asked 65 Barnet Residents for their opinions on what they felt would be most useful to have on their GP practice websites and their choices were:

- Range of services offered by the surgery;
- The names of GPs and practice staff, whether male or female, their specialisms and availability;
- Online access to appointments and repeat prescriptions;
- Surgery opening hours;
- Explanation of how to make appointments;
- An easy access point for information about complaints, comments and compliments;
- Current health warnings/information;
- An easy access point for the surgery Patient Participation Group;
- Access to healthcare options other than GPs, including out of hours contacts;
- Signposting to information on Health Conditions.

They also felt that websites need to be clear and easy to navigate.

We asked 30 people if they booked appointments online and 21 did not, the majority citing the reason for not doing this, that they didn't know they could! This confirms our thoughts that there is a need to promote websites much more.



We hope this list will be helpful in checking that your website is meeting the patient's needs and would encourage you to ensure you are promoting the resource at all available opportunities.

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