

Caterham Valley Medical Practice

New appointment system

The Maths!

Introduction

Every day patients walk in to the surgery from 8.30 onwards. We have to “estimate” the maximum number of patients we might see during Open Surgery so that those who walk in can be seen as quickly as possible and Open Surgery finishes in a timely manner to allow the GPs to complete admin and visits over lunchtime.

If we see the maximum number of patients during open then no appointments are “wasted”. However we rarely would see 60 patients on a Monday morning. Therefore the remainder of the appointments could have been used elsewhere.

For those patients (and staff!) who are interested here is some of the maths to help understand the system change.

For reference, one of the partners or salaried GP would see 15 patients in a normal session i.e. not open surgery. The GP registrars (who are doctors and in their final year of completing their GP qualification) will see up to 9 patients in a session.

On average we see 40 patients in open surgery a day. However often we see many more and often we see slightly fewer making it difficult to plan and prepare. But here are the simplified numbers. Remember this does not include any holiday or training leave. We average at least one GP off per week.

The current system, (please note this is just the mornings):

Example = Monday

On duty

<u>Doctor</u>	<u>Appointments in one normal session</u>
Four partners	$4 \times 15 = 60$
2 GP registrars (trainee GPs)	$2 \times 9 = 18$

Therefore maximum number of patients potentially could be seen in that time:

$4 \times 15 = 60$ patient appointments

+ $2 \times 9 = 18$ patient appointments

Total = 78 potential patient appointments

In order to see the 40 patients who attend open surgery daily, the number of GPs assigned to Open Surgery on a Monday is 4. Normally 3 partners, 1 GP registrar

Therefore actual patients seen with open surgery is:

40 open surgery patients

+ 1 partner (15)

+ 1 registrar (9)

= 64 actual patient appointments

Therefore every Monday morning we are “wasting” 14 potential appointments.

Example = Tuesday

On duty

Doctor	Appointments in one normal session
Four partners	4 x 15 = 60
1 Salaried GP	15
2 GP registrars (trainee GPs)	2 x 9 = 18

Therefore maximum number of patients potentially could be seen in that time:

4 x 15 = 60 patient appointments

+ 1 x 15 = 15 appointments

+ 2 x 9 = 18 patient appointments

Total = 93 potential patient appointments

In order to see the 40 patients who attend open surgery daily, the number of GPs assigned to Open Surgery on a Tuesday is 3. Normally 2 partners, 1 GP registrar

Therefore actual patients seen with open surgery is:

40 open surgery patients

+ 2 partners (30)

+ 1 Salaried GP (15)

+ 1 Registrar (9)

= 94 actual patient appointments

On a Tuesday morning we are about right as long as no one is on holiday, poorly or training.

The rest of the week...

To carry on this calculation:

Day	Potential appointments	Actual appointments
Monday	78	64
Tuesday	93	94
Wednesday	58	53
Thursday	78	79
Friday	78	64
Total	385	354

Therefore each week on average we “waste”, or don’t use approximately 30 potential appointments.

Summary

The change in system is not just about making better use of the full potential of our GPs to see and treat our patients every day. It is also about looking after our GPs. Doing a 15 appointment session will take our GPs from 8.30am – 11.10am. Completing open surgery is currently taking the GPs from 8.30am to after 12pm. Sometimes even 1pm! Safe, compassionate medicine takes time and energy and doing that for four hours is not good for either the patient or the GP. That is why we are changing.

NB: Please note we are also investing in more GP time to ensure we are increasing our average appointments by 50 per week with the new system