

January 21, 2019

Dear Client:

(Please share this information with others in your household who receive primary care services with us.)

We have had feedback from you regarding our scheduling system. Some of you have stated that the new process works well and some have said that you are happy to be able to get an appointment quicker but that the process of same day booking is not user friendly.

We are excited to announce that we are now offering you the ability to book appointments for the same day and up to 5 days in advance if needed. For example:

- If you call in on a Monday, you can ask for an appointment for that same day or for any day that week up to and including Friday.
- If you call in on a Wednesday, you can ask for an appointment for that same day or for any day up to and including Tuesday of the following week.

We hope that this change will better meet your needs. To help make this new system work and to help ensure that there are appointments available when needed, we ask that all of our clients come to each appointment that they have and arrive on time. If you are unable to keep a booked appointment, please contact us at least 24 hours ahead of time so we can offer that appointment time to someone else.

To monitor how happy you are with these changes, you will soon be asked to rate your satisfaction with the booking process when you come in for the appointment. Based on feedback received, more changes may be required.

We also hope to soon have a reminder call system up and running. This will be an automated call to your home a few days before any pre-booked appointments.

For those of you who have asked for more details on why changes were made to our booking system and what improvements resulted, we have included that information on the back of this letter.

Regards,

Staff and Management of the Primary Care and Administrative teams.

For those wanting a bit more detail on what we have been doing:

Each fall, we offer clients an opportunity to complete a client satisfaction survey. We also collect internal data from our electronic scheduling system.

In 2014-15 we collected the following information:

- 30% of you were able to get an appointment same day or next day
- 52% of you waited 2-9 days to get an appointment
- 10% waited 10-19 days for an appointment
- 35-65 no shows for appointments monthly (this means each month 35-65 appointments were booked a second time so the client could see the provider – that is 35-65 appointments that could have been available to someone else)
- we averaged 275-300 changes in date/time for pre-booked appointments monthly
- clients shared that they often saw a different physician or nurse practitioner (provider) each time they came in

We are fully funded by the South West LHIN. We do not bill OHIP for any services. We were asked by our funders to take on more clients and be better able to see clients same day or next day. Changes were implemented to address all of these issues.

We were successful in:

- 56-87% of you (depending on day) were able to get an appointment same day or next day
- 25-30 no shows in a month average (still need to get this number down, some of these are no shows for same day appointments. Research shows that the further out in advance that appointments are booked, there is a proportional increase in no shows)
- 80-100 requests for appointment changes each month
- Have taken on approximately 1300 new clients
- Clients are seeing the same provider more consistently

Many of you were happy to get in to see your provider quicker than in the past but stated that the process of booking your appointment first thing in the morning for that day did not work for many of you.

To address your feedback, we have been working on many internal changes that you may not be aware of such as:

- we created triad teams where a nurse, nurse practitioner, physician and admin staff work more closely with groups of clients resulting in more consistency in who you see for your appointments
- nursing staff have taken more training and are providing some services themselves under the direction of the providers opening up more appointments with providers.
- worked with clients who arrive late, cancel last minute or do not show for their appointments to identify what, if any, help they require to get to their appointments as scheduled
- internal work flow changes to make us more efficient

We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the changes we make. Your input is valuable. Please continue to provide us with your feedback.