

Patient Choice in Healthcare: the Library role

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Patient Choice for Healthcare

- UK government policy NPfit
- “Extended Choice”
- Choose and Book scheme for Secondary Care
- Patients engaged
- “Free Choice”

Public Library use...a few figures

- In 2007, there were 3,494 public libraries in England open for 10 or more hours per week, including mobiles.
- 274 million visits to public libraries were recorded in 2005
- 19 million were made in order to access the internet. Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. *Digest of Statistics*.
<http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//D/digest_of_statistics_2006_10589.pdf

Why use the Public Library for Healthcare choice ?

- Neutral space
- Publicly funded
- Free Internet connection
- Trained Information Professionals
- Inclusive
- Non judgemental

Healthlink Partnership 4 Patients (P4P)

Objectives of the P4P scheme.

Enable public library staff to:

- Support patients in accessing online comparative information about hospitals
- Support a patient who wishes to book online, where the hospital is on the system.

Enable health library staff to:

- Support public library colleagues about technical queries

Healthlink Partnership 4 Patients (P4P)

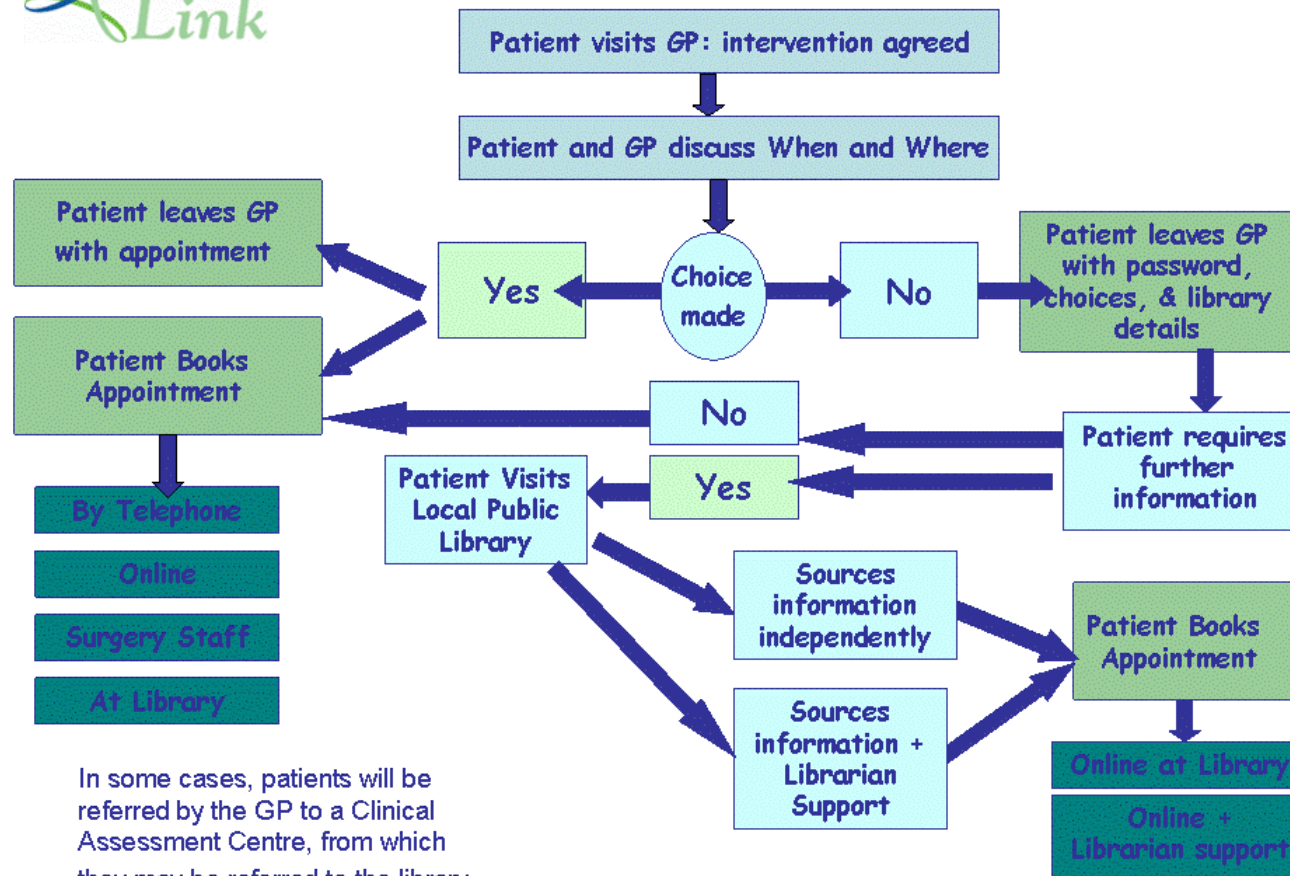
Participating GPs were asked to refer patients to their local public library to:

- access online information,
- compare hospitals
- make their hospital booking online using the designated Department of Health websites:
 - NHS UK: www.nhs.uk
 - Patient Opinion: www.patientopinion.org.uk
 - The Healthcare Commission:
www.healthcarecommission.org.uk

Partnership 4 Patients



Information - The New Health Care: Flow Chart



Evaluation of P4P

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the P4P scheme.
- To assess the feasibility of rolling out the scheme nationwide.
- To assess the benefits to patients of this model
- The operational capacity
- Cost implications for the library service and for General Practitioners (GPs).

Sample Population

- 10 Local authorities in England; urban and rural
- 30 Public Libraries, including mobiles
- Public Librarians
- Health Librarians
- General Public
- General Practitioners

Findings

- Take up extremely low; 52 patient enquiries & 40 General Patient choice enquiries from 22 libraries over a 6 month period.
- This is equivalent to around one in every 2,500 GP referrals .
- One member of library staff noted that it was a 'mystery' why no-one had used the service.

Findings

- 17/20 libraries involved with other health initiatives.
- 11/17 supported the view that Patient Choice is a natural extension of public library health information provision.
- On going training for Public Librarians
- IT support required

Findings

- Some GPs resented the concept of patients remotely booking their appointment because it deprived patients of the GPs' knowledge of local services.
- Some Librarians thought that their local GP practices did not support the scheme.

Conclusions

- P4P National Scheme buy in from NHS, DOH, Defra
- Librarians engaged, encouraged by cross-sector activity
- GPs not fully engaged
- General Public not fully engaged

Thoughts for the future

- P4P does meet inclusion requirements
- Healthcare choice in Public Libraries part of the Patient choice portfolio?
- Public Libraries to receive funding from NHS?
- National roll out?

Questions



Thanks for listening
Any questions?