Voice Connect offer ‘wonderful customer service’ says Bradshaw Medical Centre

Bradshaw Medical Centre (www.bradshawmedicalcentre.nhs.uk) is located in Orrell, a residential suburb of Wigan, 3 miles west of the town. The practice opened in 2002, but has grown rapidly since then, with a current patient registry of over 9200 residents from across the local area. The practice boundary includes a combination of local authority housing and privately owned accommodation, as well as several nursing homes, resulting in a fairly high proportion of older patients. A training practice, the surgery currently has 5 doctors and 4 members of nursing staff in addition to the 10 strong team of administrative and support personnel.

Extended opening hours and a steadily growing population mean that phone lines at most surgeries across the UK are constantly busy, and prior to installing Patient Partner, Bradshaw Medical Centre was no different. With patient access an ongoing priority at the surgery, the partners at Bradshaw are always looking for ways to improve the patient experience, and so decided to look into using an automated telephone appointment booking system. "We hoped that by introducing an automated phone system, we would relieve pressure on incoming calls to the surgery, enabling us to handle calls more effectively,” explains Bradshaw’s Practice Manager Evelyn Cooper-Lawrenson. “We also felt that this would help us to ease the workload of our reception staff, giving them more time to attend to patient care.”

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Since introducing Patient Partner in 2006, the system has helped to improve many areas of practice life. “Using the Voice Connect system has enabled us to achieve several of our initial objectives,” explains Evelyn. “We have been able to reduce call congestion, particularly at peak call times, which has also helped us to improve overall call handling for enquiries, appointments and general requests. We feel that using the system has also enabled us to use staff time more effectively and reduce pressure on them. We particularly like the fact that patients can call up and make or manage appointments even when the surgery is closed.”
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Patient Partner’s top three features
1. The availability for patients to access appointments 24 hours a day.
2. The reduction of pressure on reception staff.
3. Voice Connect’s great customer service.

Evelyn is pleased that the system has achieved the major objective of much improved accessibility and general call handling. “The Patient Partner system is very useful for the practice; it really does ease the pressure on our phone lines and allows reception staff to use their time much more efficiently. The system also offers patients increased flexibility to manage their appointments at any time, day or night, basically making the surgery accessible 24 hours a day.”

“I would advise any practice that was having similar problems to us to try Patient Partner and see what they think”

Evelyn reports a good uptake of the service with many patients using the system around the clock, although Patient Partner also allows the option for people to speak to a receptionist should they prefer. “Unsurprisingly a few of our older patients are reluctant to change but this isn’t a problem and we have found that using an automated system alongside offering access to reception staff has proven very successful,” she comments.

Evelyn would be happy to recommend the system and also has high praise for Voice Connect staff. “I would advise any practice that was having similar problems to us to try Patient Partner and see what they think. The level of service that we have received from Voice Connect over the past six years has been great. If ever we have any technical issues, they make every effort to ensure it is resolved there and then. The company really offers wonderful customer service with helpful and knowledgeable staff.”

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