

Pangbourne Medical Practice – Patient Participation Group

Minutes of the PPG meeting held on 30 January 2020

Present: Barry Ashdown, Lee Carter, Sue Darroch, Sarah Dixon (PPG Chair), Carolyn Geraldine, Doreen Hawkins (PPG Deputy), Lucy Hill (Social Prescriber), Kim Hiscutt, Tanya Jones (Receptionist), Dr Chris Keast, Kit Marriott, Diana Smith.

Apologies: Rosie Barker (Practice Manager), Joan Bott, Patricia Dent, Jane Hodgson (PPG Secretary)

Approval of previous minutes: Agreed, except for two spelling corrections in PPG members' names.

Matters arising from previous minutes:

Sarah was reminded to contact Alwyn about the possibility of holding a Diabetes Awareness event.

The access ramp to the surgery entrance has been repaired; however, the kerb at the base of the ramp has not been levelled so access is still challenging for mobility impaired people. This item will remain on the agenda for the time being.

Carolyn told us about the Thursday Club for people with dementia – or who are simply alone. She asked if Dementia Awareness could have a corner in the surgery for their literature: Dr Keast had no objection and said to liaise with Tanya. Lee asked if Dementia Week (May 11-15) could be publicised on the website: Dr Keast was supportive and said to liaise with Rosie.

John Lowe

John Lowe has decided to step down from the PPG. John was one of the founding members of the PPG and his calm presence, good sense and humour have been appreciated by us all. He will be very much missed. The PPG want to record their thanks to him for his service to the community for so long, and we wish him well in his retirement.

Social Prescribing

Lucy Hill is the Social Prescriber for the West Berkshire Village Primary Care Network (Pangbourne, Theale, Mortimer and Chapel Row). She gave us a short presentation to explain the concept of social prescribing, her role, and what she aims to achieve.

Social prescribing is when health professionals refer patients to support in the community in order to improve their health and wellbeing. The goals of social prescribing are to reduce the rise of healthcare costs and to ease the pressure on general practice clinics: a 2015 Commission estimated that about 20% of patient consultations were for social problems rather than medical problems.

Lucy explained that her role is to help patients to live well and more independently, to be more active and healthy, and to be more socially connected. She can guide patients towards activities and organisations that will support their mental wellbeing, and support with finances. She is able to offer much longer appointments than the GPs and can really get to know her clients. She has a good knowledge of the many different organisations that can offer help, and can match up her clients with appropriate activities and services.

Patients may be referred to Lucy by health professionals, or may self-refer. Lucy is being very proactive in publicising this new service, and has had articles published in various local newsletters and websites. She is seeing clients on a regular basis and is getting good feedback. Social Prescribing is quite a new concept and we were very interested to learn about it.

News from the Surgery

The CRP (C-Reactive Protein) test machine is being used and proving to be a valuable resource. The surgery has also acquired a Doppler machine which is used to measure the quality of a patient's blood supply; the assessment time will be reduced from 40 minutes to 5 minutes.

Dr Keast was asked what preparations are in place to deal with Covid-19 (the corona virus) and we learned that plans were being formulated nationally. Currently, the advice is to self-isolate, and those requiring hospitalisation will be treated in specialist hospitals [NB this advice was current at the time of the meeting and may subsequently change]. Paper masks are unlikely to be effective in preventing infection as they become porous quickly.

He was asked about the status of E111 cards and we were told that they are valid until 31 December 2020 and that it was not currently known what the situation would be after this date.

News from Group Practices

Sarah recently met with the chairs of the other Berkshire Villages PPGs and they discussed the PCN DES (directed extended service) and whether it was feasible in its current proposed form.

Patient Voice Group:

Patient Voice Group (PVG) is made up of representatives from local surgeries and from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and meets every two months. We attend the North and West Reading group. It is an opportunity to feedback on NHS services, to learn from other PPGs, to find out about local organisations providing services to patients, to learn about health initiatives, and so on.

Sarah D attended the December meeting. There was a presentation about the Berkshire West Primary Care Mental Health model which is a new way of providing mental health care. GPs will have access to allied professionals such as nurses, psychiatrists and dedicated pharmacists with mental health training. The model is in the development stage and it is not yet clear whether it will be adopted or not. The goal is to provide effective and integrated healthcare to all who need it: under the current system it is possible for some patients to "fall through the gap".

PPG members from South Reading were invited to attend the meeting to share experiences. They have a real problem with attracting and keeping members whereas North and West Reading PPGs are well supported and active. We had a round-table discussion about the various activities we are involved in, how we support our surgeries and how we attract new members. We were all struck by how lucky we are to live in such active communities.

Dates of future meetings are 11 February, 14 April, 9 June, 8 September, 10 November. If anyone would like to attend please contact Sarah.

Friends and Family Test

The NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) was created to help service providers and commissioners understand whether their patients are happy with the service provided, or whether improvements are needed. Patients are invited to complete the FFT when they complete their treatment or are discharged from a service. It is a standard form, used across all services, and asks “How likely are you to recommend our service to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?”. The answer can be ranked from “extremely likely” to “extremely unlikely”. There is also the opportunity to explain the ranking by adding comments.

Rosie has collated the comments from one of the flu clinics and shared the results with the meeting. Out of nearly 100 replies only 2 negative comments were received, and they were minor grievances which have been addressed. All the other comments were extremely positive. We congratulate the surgery on a truly excellent result, and thank all the PPG volunteers who assisted at the flu clinics.

Any Other Business

Following the success of the Art Café coffee morning in November it was agreed to hold another one. The only date available in Spring is 11 April, which is Easter Saturday. Fortunately, sufficient PPG members are around to help run it so we decided to go ahead. Sarah will send round an email with details. Money raised will go towards the purchase of a Holter Monitor.

There was a short discussion about the future of Eastfield House, a care home in Whitchurch which closed some years ago and which the owners want to develop into a larger care home.

Date of next meeting

Thursday 2 April 2020, 6.15 pm at Pangbourne Surgery.

Provisional date for the one after that: Thursday 18 June 2020.