

Heathgate Medical Practice
Patient Reference Group
Tuesday 21st November 2017
Minutes from the meeting

A pre-arranged meeting with PRG members, advertised beforehand on the Practice website, the patient information screen and with signage in Practice.

The meeting was chaired by Mr Henry Gowman, with Mr Whiting and Dr Wallace in attendance from the Practice.

A list of attendees was made, with representation from across the patch.

The author of these notes is Mr Whiting, Managing Partner.

Updates since last meeting

Mr Whiting updated members with various operational matters.

- **DNA (lost clinical time)** – Mr Whiting had some positive news here in that the number of patient's not keeping appointments has reduced to its lowest in the two years since we have been monitoring this. October saw 18 hours of lost clinical time. The text reminders of appointments has helped here and our waiting times for seeing a GP for routine need have been less than two weeks recently and so patients are not having to book so far in advance which has in the past proven to be a contributory factor in the DNA rates.
- **Flu vaccination take up** – this year has seen our highest take up rates for 8 years across the eligibility groups (both age related and disease related). For the first time we wrote to everyone in the over 65 eligibility group where as in the past we have focussed on the chronic disease groups. This is good news for the winter season ahead
- **List size** – members have asked to be kept informed of the changes in our Practice list size. Our registered population at the end of the last quarter (September 2017) reached 9,100. Mr Whiting explained that the Partners remain close to list size movements and monitor this carefully and have a trajectory of the dates of the larger new build sites in our catchment area, which will affect the Practice. The Norfolk Homes site adjacent to us is at the moment having an effect on our registered population, simply because of proximity (no through road out of the development passing Old Mill Surgery). The latest development site to be cleared on the Norwich Road out of Poringland towards the City may, for proximity to the Old Mill Medical Practice, have a greater impact on their list size. We will need to wait and see.

- **Local Pharmacy** – the latest enquiries to NHS England (NHSE) by the Practice suggest that no decision has been made on the application for a licence for a new Pharmacy in the new retail units next to Budgens Supermarket in Poringland. We discussed the consequence of this in detail at our last meeting. One member suggested that he was under the impression that all four units had now been let but not to a Pharmacy. We still await the formal response to the licence application from NHSE.

South Norfolk Council Community Connectors

Kerrie Gallagher, Communities Manager at South Norfolk Council introduced members to the concept of the South Norfolk Help Hub, the Community Connectors and the role they play in social prescribing.

The Community Connectors are advisers that are basing themselves in GP Practices to help support patients with non-clinical issues such as housing, relationships, benefit payments or jobs, which if not resolved could lead to a detrimental effect on their health.

The South Norfolk Help Hub is a partnership between organisations that support people in South Norfolk offering practical support, advice and guidance to help people get back on track. Kerrie explained that in many cases there are services and organisations available for people but the challenge is knowing about them and how to contact them.

The principle is that a Community Connector will know about local council services that are available and have a very good understanding of local groups, clubs, societies and organisations that may under the banner of social prescribing help patients indirectly with their health. The Community Connector will listen to the patients' needs and signpost them to the appropriate service or group available locally.

The Community Connector for the Poringland area will be based in our Practice from the New Year for half a day a week and our GPs will be able to provide a paper social prescription to patients recommending an appointment with the Connector in the Practice.

At this point we are waiting for the appointment of a new Community Connector and they are expected to start in the New Year.

For links to wider Norfolk County Council Services, the Connector is expected to liaise with the Integrated Care Co-ordinator for our patch who has strong links to the Practice and is used to bridging the gap between health and social needs of patients.

Kerrie's presentation was well received and she answered various questions from members about the service.

Extended access

In previous meetings members have regularly asked for updates on the national statements that have been made about extended access to GP appointments in the evening and weekends.

Now that details are starting to emerge and the CCG has initiated a consultation with patients, this was the ideal opportunity to share what is known.

Mr Whiting outlined the basis of the scheme as we know it, which will see patients offered routine and same day need appointments in the evening between 6.30pm and 8pm and at the weekend as led by patient preference (hence the consultation).

Members were made aware of the likely need for this service to be provided out of a hub model, with appointments with a GP not always offered locally by us but potentially some clinics run out of other Practices in our area/locality. This was not favoured or well received, although Saturday morning clinics were flagged as a benefit to those who worked weekdays.

There was a clear view though that appointments at some of the proposed times, such as Sunday afternoons, were not deemed necessary.

Mr Whiting explained some of the wider challenges around shared IT and how this service would integrate with the existing out of hour's service.

Questions around transport, sharing clinical records (IT) and continuity of care were raised by members.

Mr Whiting explained that at this stage, the provision of these additional appointments is outside our main contract for providing healthcare services and it was likely that the CCG would need to place this extended provision out to tender, which could open up greater risks with private providers or other healthcare providers outside general practice.

Certain aspects of the CCG questionnaire/survey were flagged with members so they understood the context of some of the questions. Several questionnaires were taken by members to complete, distribute to others and return to the CCG by the end of the consultation period, which has been extended to 15th December 2017.

Dr Wallace and Mr Whiting agreed to keep members agreed of the progress made with this. There is a County wide meeting with healthcare providers on this early in the New Year.

Proposed changes to the opening times at Rockland St Mary Surgery

Members were supportive of the proposal to change the opening times at Rockland St Mary Surgery.

Mr Whiting shared his presentation which included the background to the need for change and the current opening times. In summary these are:

- The rate of new patient registrations in Poringland is growing at a faster rate than in Rockland St Mary and so we need to re-align clinical GP sessions.
- There is the need for a wider multidisciplinary team at Rockland St Mary to undertake long term condition annual reviews.
- An increased demand for appointments on a Friday morning when there is currently no GP provision.
- Increased number of patients from Poringland attending clinics at Rockland St Mary.

The members were supportive of:

- No reduction in GP sessions at Rockland St Mary.
- An additional nurse clinic each week.
- Open for GP clinics on Monday, Wednesday and Friday – two sessions each day between 8.30am and 12 noon and 2.30pm to 5.30pm.

These regular full days will make it easier for patients to remember when we are open rather than the different sessions at present. When we are closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, full service provision will be available from Poringland.

These changes will happen from the New Year and be reviewed after 6 months.

Mr Whiting and Dr Wallace thanked members for their support and committed to a period of communication with patients via a specifically designed leaflet that will be passed to patients between now and the change in opening times. The changes will be promoted on our website.

Any other business and patient questions

With such a heavy agenda, we did not have time for any other business but patients were thanked for attending and their contribution this evening which was valuable.

Next meeting to be arranged in February 2018.

This will see the offer of a presentation by patient and local Community Responder (John Hodgson) on the service offered by these volunteers in our locality.

End