

Minutes of virtual PPG practice meeting held on Tuesday, 29 September 2020

Attendees

Steve Macaulay (Chair)
Jack Alvarez
Sharon Carter
Andy Glodowski
Krystyna Glodowska
Brenda Hall
Stephen Hill
Ian White
Teresa Batchelor
Dr. Alan Jackson
Liz Lythaby

1. Apologies for absence

There were no absentees.

2. New member of PPG

Steve welcomed Ian White as a member of the PPG.

3 Updates: key changes since March 2020

Dr Jackson said there had been considerable changes since early April of this year, following the pandemic announcements. There had been the widespread introduction of online consulting, the considerable ramping up of use of Patient Access and the flu vaccination campaign at the surgery is well underway with thousand vaccinations already completed, many more to follow.

There have been a number of doctors' appointments and changes and staff appointments.

The surgery has reconfigured to ensure Covid security, so that currently there is only rear door for patients. Access through the front door is being explored, but is not yet in operation.

The number of face-to-face consultations has started to grow in the last month.

Liz said that there were regular staff meetings taking place daily as things changed so rapidly. The practice was pleased that they had such good team support to keep the practice running. The pressures had helped the practice come together as a team. Staff sicknesses with Covid or suspected Covid meant that it was critical to review staffing levels to provide cover for possible people absent.

Dr Jackson felt that patients needed to understand and support the practice as they have gone through considerable changes. Social distancing and PPE requirements have led to fewer available appointments. The requirements of PPE and Covid security have put additional pressures on time. Also, the rollout of thousands of flu vaccinations was putting everybody under extreme pressure, for example working on Saturday all day and Sunday mornings. In addition, the planned additional patient vaccinations were due to take place starting in November.

The possibility of Covid combined with an influenza outbreak would put untold pressure on the practice.

There was a risk of mental health issues during the pandemic.

IT has been introduced with considerable speed. The changes have meant targets have been met.

Dr Jackson said that, given the pressures the practice was under, it needed all the support it could get. He was unclear what this would be, but would give it some thought. Sharon concurred with this and said that all members of the PPG would be willing to help in any way that could be suggested.

Liz said online consultations were now the norm. Dr Jackson commented that these could take additional time over and above a face-to-face meeting.

SMC going forward

Communications

Ian suggested that patients would benefit from a number of short 'how to' videos on the practice website, which he was willing to produce. The videos would include how to come into the surgery under the Covid conditions, how to make preparations for video consultations from the patient perspective and to set up some form of testing to make sure that video consultations could be carried out satisfactorily. Ian also commented on the quality of the graphics on the website could be improved and he agreed to undertake an assessment of any potential risks and suggest improvements.

Steve said that the PPG were pleased to receive the practice news, but felt it should be distributed to a wider audience of the whole patient population. Even though staff were very busy, each one of the patients needed to understand more about what was happening in the surgery. By and large, the only communication about what was going

on was on from the news at a national level. It was hard for patients to understand the level of disruption and pressures experienced that have been going on at the surgery or the changes made. Teresa said phone messages at the start of a phone call were regularly updated and was some new information about Covid on the website. It was agreed that a form of practice news would be uploaded to the website. Steve requested that the new staff be updated on the website also.

Sharon reaffirmed that the PPG would assist with any agreed support the practice needed that we were able undertake.

Next meeting

The next virtual PPG practice meeting will be held on 2 November 12.30.