

Sheepcot Medical Centre

Minutes of PPG Practice Meeting Held on Monday, 4 November 2019

Attendees

Steve Macaulay (chair)
Jack Alvarez
Sharon Carter
Brenda Hall
Dr A Jackson
Liz Lythaby

Apologies for absence

Stephen Hill sent his apologies.

1. Review of Previous Meetings

From the last PPG practice meeting, the meeting was pleased that there was now a sign on the reception desk indicating that those that wished for privacy could ask for this. Dr Jackson asked about the Patient engagement meeting held on 8th October, which was discussed at the previous PPG patient meeting. There had been a discussion on a CCG proposal to introduce a three-tiered incentive scheme for the development of PPGs. This would be discussed further in item 2.4.

It had been agreed that Teresa would forward to the PPG edited details of the regular internal newsletter of SMC updates. As yet, there has been no new newsletter, but she did provide an update for the October Patient PPG meeting.

2. Updates and Items for Discussion

2.1 Chairing Future Meetings

It was agreed that the arrangement of Steve Macaulay and Stephen Hill chairing the meetings on a jointly rotating basis would continue.

2.2 Developments in Local Primary Care Network Including Staffing

Interviews were shortly to take place for a pharmacist and a social prescribing champion, which would cover the North Watford Primary Care Network, comprising Vine House, Sheepcot and Abbotswood practices. There was discussion of the role of the social prescribing champion; two candidates were to be offered for interview by Herts Health. It was hoped it would then

become clearer how social prescribing could be set up using volunteers who would broadly be able to recommend links to other organisations to meet social as opposed to medical needs. The PPG offered to support the setting up of social prescribing, but first this process must be clarified and respective roles agreed.

At this early stage of setting up the local primary care network, it was discussed that there was probably insufficient information as yet to communicate with patients meaningfully the implications for them of setting up this network.

2.3 Recruitment of New PPG Members

The face-to-face contact with patients at the flu clinics where we gave out a leaflet on the PPG and talked about its composition and purpose, requesting volunteers, had produced good results. Two married couples had put their names forward, alongside two other people. It was yet to be discussed with them whether they would be available on the particular nights and times that the PPG met. It was hoped that this would not only build up the strength of the PPG but also act as a springboard to recruit virtual members who would be able to contribute in their own time.

Dr Jackson mentioned that the Practice had run some educational events on Diabetes and Heart Disease. PPG members may be invited to future events to raise awareness of the PPG.

2.4 CCG View on Levels of PPG Effectiveness

The CCG had sent out for consultation a paper on improving the effectiveness of PPGs. This would involve three levels of effectiveness: bronze, the basic level, silver as interim and advanced level, gold, which was the highest level. Out for consultation was the idea of making incentive payments to GP practices who achieved the level of silver and gold standards. It was discussed where provisionally Sheepcot PPG fitted into this. It was felt that we met all the criteria at the bronze level and the majority of silver, sufficient to qualify.

It was agreed that although the PPG was small in terms of numbers it was active and had been successful in making good progress. Steve commented that an area that could be developed was more and regular communications with the wider patient group using a wide variety of communications methods. Sharon commented that with the current age profile of the PPG, we could usefully recruit more PPG members in the younger age groups and she had made a particular effort to aim to do so at the flu clinics. There followed a discussion on producing a PPG- led quarterly newsletter.

Steve handed out a sample newsletter from the Maltings Surgery which by general agreement had strong impact. As a trial, it was agreed that Steve would lead an initiative to put together a clear set of newsletter messages along similar lines to those set out in the Maltings newsletter. Sharon and Jack offered to contribute to the layout and design. All PPG members will

contribute to the draft wording. The aim of this first newsletter would be to pick out key issues most relevant to patients and how they were being tackled, rather than cover a lot of issues with many words as has been usual for minutes of the PPG meetings. Liz suggested that the newsletter be available near the PPG comments box and also on the website.

2.5 Car Parking for Disabled-Improved Signage

The new signs were now in place, thanks to assistance from Brenda and in particular her husband who deserved praise and thanks for putting these up. It was again noted that markings on the tarmac need Planning Permission which is time consuming to obtain.

2.6 NHS Patient Survey Results and Patient Comments from Flu Clinics

Some of the comments that the PPG picked up from the flu clinics were discussed. Some patients were unhappy that where the doctor told them to follow-up, they were hampered in doing so by having to wait a long time for a follow-up appointment. Dr Jackson said he would consult with fellow GPs to identify the practices they used to assist reception in making follow-up appointments. An idea from the last PPG Patient Meeting was that the GP would make an appointment with the patient while they were in the consulting room. Dr Jackson said that whilst he did this occasionally, the time it took meant that it could not be regularly carried out.

2.7 Increasing Use of Patient Access

Steve had put together a PowerPoint set of slides using quotes which commented on the benefits of using patient access. These were intended for the waiting room screens and would be loaded up as soon as Nikki was available again from annual leave. Also, Jack would resume his waiting room recruitment and information sessions to sign up patients to Patient Access. In addition, Sharon commented how helpful reception staff had been in sorting out problems with her husband's Patient Access account. This showed how knowledgeable reception staff had now become in assisting patients with any difficulties in this area.

3. Any Other Business

There was no additional business.

4 Dates of Future Meetings

The next PPG Patient Meeting is scheduled to be on 2nd December at 6 pm.

The next PPG Practice Meeting is scheduled for Monday 27th January 2020 at 6 pm.