

Sheepcot Medical Centre

Minutes of PPG Patient Meeting 14th January 2019 at 6 PM

Attendees:

Steve Macaulay (Chair)
Jack Alvarez
Sharon Carter
Brenda Hall
Stephen Hill

1. Apologies

Barbara Johnson sent her apologies owing to illness.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were accepted.

3. Matters arising

None

4. Local networking meeting of all PPGs

A local networking meeting of all PPGs locally will be held on 12 March 2019 at the Stanborough Centre, Garston. The meeting felt that this was an important gathering to glean new contacts and ideas. In addition to Steve Macaulay attending, Brenda Hall and Stephen Hill agreed that they will also attend. Steve will notify Heather Aylward that Brenda and Stephen also wish to attend.

5. PPG website: external hosting

It has now been decided by SMC that the costs of hosting the PPG website externally were greater than the benefits of leaving it on the current Sheepcot site. The meeting was unanimous in expressing disappointment with this decision, given that it was hoped that this initiative would have saved staff valuable time and would have offered the PPG more scope to provide a more extensive website which would be appealing to its audience. The costs involved seemed very small, particularly when it was likely that at least some of this cost could have been expensed as a business cost. It was requested that Steve contact other bodies such as the CCG to see whether funding for the project might be available from other sources.

The Practice had suggested the PPG explore setting up an email group, but it was felt that there would be a lot of effort involved for only a small number of recipients, unlike a

website. There was also the risk of entering into dialogue on individual patient issues outside the PPG remit.

Teresa has confirmed that, for the PPG section on the Practice website, they will aim (other commitments permitting) to turn PPG requests around in 7-10 working days.

6. Priorities for the PPG in 2019

The meeting discussed extensively the priorities for the PPG in 2019. As a template for starting a discussion, Steve suggested using criteria developed by Diane Eaton and Colin Barry in a paper called Supporting Practices to Develop Patient Participation Groups. The criteria were as follows, with comments against each in relation to Sheepcot PPG:

Act as a critical friend for the practice. It was felt that Sheepcot PPG had performed positively here, for example seeking amendments to the telephone system, commenting favourably on improved reception approaches, commenting supportively on the management of flu clinics.

Use patients as experts. Whilst it was not entirely clear what this meant, it was assumed that patients' views and perceptions were encouraged by the PPG.

Connect to other community groups. Examples included Carers in Herts and Herts Health. This was an area where we could expand in the future.

Support to patients and the Practice, i.e. with health campaigns, consultations, surveys. The PPG had been active in supporting campaigns such as patients moving to online and carrying out patient surveys.

Encourage inclusion of diverse groups. The PPG had gone out of its way to consult groups such as younger patients in its surveys.

Create dedicated PPG web area, communication channels for updating information. Material for the PPG part of the website was frequently updated, though more could be done if there was more staff time available for uploading new information.

Inform to aid quality improvement within practices. The PPG were keen to follow up suggestions made in surveys, the suggestion box and through the PPG email address.

Sheepcot had been consulted over what they considered to be a priority for the coming year. It was felt that promoting Patient Access through its online system was very important and steady progress had been made which is hoped would be continued. The Practice wanted more people to use the online prescription request service and also view test results and medications, including where necessary medical histories.

Jack expressed the view that we may be reaching the end of further new signings, but Steve said that the Practice particularly wanted to increase patient use of test results online and also greater patient use of online medical histories. The aim was to reduce the need for patients to spend face-to-face time with the doctor and therefore be more efficient for patient and doctor. Each test result was looked at by a doctor, with comments and indications as appropriate. Any adverse results would be followed-up with the patient as a matter of course.

It was felt that the Practice could assist by being proactive in this process. For example, putting information on the waiting room screens about the benefits of online access and perhaps producing leaflets and indicating every time a paper prescription is issued that it might be more than beneficial to be online.

A second area that the PPG would focus on would be keeping a listening ear for patient views and comments. This might be through an annual patient survey, the suggestions box and also discussions at other times in the waiting room. It would include groups that were more difficult to gain views from, such as parents through baby and parent clinics.

The third area of priority was to encourage new PPG members, since there was such a small current group and more membership would help to represent different points of view and also provide for allocation of tasks across a wider range of people. One possible avenue which had been used in the past would be for Partners to ask some patients they are seeing whether they might be interested in becoming a PPG member.

The final area was to link up with other PPGs and get new information on best practice and contacts of external groups who might be useful to the practice.

7. AOB

Though there were some misgivings about a trial telephone conference call to a future PPG meeting, it was agreed to set a date and publicise it, alongside a clear published remit on what is and is not suitable to be discussed during a telephone conference call in the meeting.

8. Next meeting

The next Patient PPG meeting will be on Monday 18th March.
The next Practice PPG meeting will be on Monday 4th February.