

## Sheepcot Medical Centre

### Minutes of Virtual PPG Practice Meeting held 21 October 2021

- 1. Present:** Steve Macaulay (Chair), Sharon Carter, Andy Glodowski, Krystyna Glodowska, Jyoti Gupta, Brenda Hall, Ian White, Dr Alan Jackson, Teresa Batchelor, Nikki Chamberlain, Stephen Hill.

#### **Apologies for absence:**

Apologies were received from Jack Alvarez, Isabelle Holloway and Jade Hoare.

- 2. Review of the minutes of previous meeting**

These were accepted.

- 3. Updates from the practice**

The bulk of the meeting was spent discussing updates arising since the last meeting, though many of these issues were continuations of previous discussions. As is happening nationally, there are many comments on all fronts. The challenges are considerable: high workload, vaccination programmes, illness within the practice for example. This makes it hard to keep the practice running on a day-to-day basis and fulfil all the demands. Nevertheless, this is being done successfully.

Dr Priya Patel will be joining the practice from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November initially for 2 days a week, increasing to 3 days from January 2022. In addition, locums are boosting the numbers of medical staff on a Monday when there is peak demand.

There is a need for new practice nurses and advertisements have been placed, but as yet there has been no response. The same is happening with the requirement for doctors.

3 new clinical pharmacists have been recruited, one to start at the beginning of December and the other 2 in January. Their role is to help carry out medical reviews, plus the considerable admin workload which is now being undertaken.

An advert has been placed for paramedics, so far with no response.

Training GPs and students can assist and relieve the appointments process since they can spend longer with patients.

Invitations are being sent out for Covid booster vaccinations and there are still slots available.

#### **4. Practical ways to improve the patient experience**

The initiatives already set in motion, such as the new telephone system and staff appointments were underway and on completion would go some way towards helping solve the current need to keep up the level of patient satisfaction.

##### **New telephone system**

A new cloud-based telephone system is to be installed using a new supplier. This will provide much greater future proofing. This requires cancelling the existing contract, at a substantial cost, to be borne by the partners. There was discussion about the financing of the system and whether the local MP should be brought into the equation, with support from the PPG that the system needs changing.

There was a query from the PPG whether the Patient Access system was working satisfactorily.

#### **5. Sheepcot website and social media progress and update**

The meeting spent some time looking at how to improve communication with patients. For example, it was felt that initiating newsletters would be a big help and assistance was sought from the PPG. Jack Alvarez had been in touch about possibly starting Patient Access tuition sessions in the waiting room again. It was agreed that the time was not yet ready, given the prevalence of Covid.

There was discussion about putting more content onto Facebook about what is going on at the surgery, such as short interviews with staff. Given the high workload at the practice, it was agreed that the PPG could provide a useful framework for content. Ian White agreed to put something together, alongside PPG input and give this to Sheepcot. Nikki felt that it would be valuable to have

contributions from PPG members as time constraints made this virtually impossible in a working day.

## **6. Future vaccination sessions Covid and flu**

There is a Covid vaccination session on this coming Saturday, 23rd October. Jyoti thanked those who had volunteered to be marshals and to assist with admin.

## **7. Patient appointments-update**

The appointment system difficulties have eased somewhat, though staff sickness absence has made the improvement less than hoped for. The PPG members observed that the crunch point for patients comes on making urgent on-the-day appointments, where patients may have to try several times to get through and obtain an appointment. Online appointments can now be made again, though it appears from the experience of 2 PPG members, there is a three-week wait.

## **8. Any other business**

None.

## **9. Date of future meeting**

The date of future meeting would be circulated once agreed with Teresa.