

Sheepcot Medical Centre

Minutes of PPG Practice Meeting held on 2nd September 2019 at 6 pm

Present

Stephen Hill (meeting chair)
Sharon Carter
Brenda Hall
Steve Macaulay (secretary)
Dr Alan Jackson
Liz Lythaby

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Jack Alvarez.

1. Review of the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17 June 2019

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted. It was stated that Nikki Chamberlain was now working normal hours again.

2. Updates

2.1 Chairing future meetings

It was agreed that Jack Alvarez would no longer be the sole chair of future meetings. Instead, it was agreed that Steve Macaulay and Stephen Hill would alternate as chair. Jack had asked for time to consider what role he wished to play in the future.

Discussion on role of PPG

There was a wide-ranging discussion on the role and effectiveness of the PPG. Currently many members felt they were not making as full a contribution as they would have wished and expected when they joined. It appeared there were times when suggestions made were not taken up and sometimes not treated sufficiently seriously. Examples were discussed and it was agreed that it was helpful to see all sides of the situation, recognising the pressures on practice staff. It was agreed that PPG members fulfilled a useful role in putting forward the patient perspective. Whilst initiatives would often come from the practice, Dr Jackson would also like suggestions from the PPG, drawing on what they have learned from other PPGs and other contexts.

Stephen requested better communications on what was happening in the practice and of important NHS changes affecting the practice. Dr Jackson said that in future, the practice would circulate to the PPG regular updates which were currently available to staff within the practice.

2.2 Developments in local primary care network, including staffing

A new structure for the local primary care network had been agreed with Dr Faizy from Vine House Medical Centre as clinical director. Liz Lythaby will take on the finance role in the network. At a future date in a federation, a Business Manager will be appointed, but this is some way off. One of the initial members of the network, Garston Medical Centre, has left the network and is joining one which it feels is more closely aligned to it. This leaves in the local primary care network: Vine House surgery, Abbotswood and Sheepcot.

At Sheepcot, there are a number of staff changes, both currently and in the future. Among the doctors, Dr Lee will be retiring at the end of the year. Dr Rattan is currently working two days, with the possibility of working extra hours. Someone else will need to be recruited to fulfil an additional two days. In the longer term, GP trainees may help to supplement the current medical strength. In addition, a nurse practitioner has been appointed to work with Ameena as a minor illness specialist, by working on Tuesday Thursdays and Fridays. On the staff side, there are several leavers which will mean two vacancies to be advertised. It is proposed to aim to fill the posts against a new job description which is wide-ranging and offers flexibility between posts.

These changes reflect a considerable change in the nature of GP practices, including Sheepcot, with more people working part-time particularly on the medical side since it is now much less popular to work as a GP full-time and to become a partner. New companies are also moving into the field, such as Virgin Healthcare. Dr Jackson recognised that such a shift may be less popular with patients, though other members of the PPG felt this was a generational matter and that younger patients were happy to be seen by different medical staff.

At the forthcoming GP network meeting, new appointments will be discussed on a social prescribing champion, a clinical pharmacist, and a mental health specialist. In addition, there is the possibility of a physiotherapist appointment, though this will need to be justified in financial terms.

2.3 New PPG members

The search continues for new PPG members. Dr Jackson had approached a couple of people who said they may be interested but haven't taken the matter any further. It was proposed that a leaflet be drawn up on the aims and activities of the PPG at Sheepcot and distributed during the flu clinics.

2.4 PPGs in local network linking together

There have been no further developments in this area but eventually it is hoped that common issues will be discussed between surgeries.

2.5 Car parking for disabled and patients generally

Stephen Hill had gone to considerable lengths to speak to the council about applying for disabled parking, with a view to having bigger and better signage. In the process, he has discovered signs with prices which he has passed to Liz.

2.6 NHS patient survey results

The NHS patient survey results for Sheepcot were discussed briefly. Reception staff had been given feedback on the positive results of their relationships with patients and also the good quality of the appointments system was mentioned as a positive in the survey. On the areas for improvement, it was noted that the current period of change within the practice had undoubtedly had some effect, namely the increasing use of part-time staff and the pressure on medical staff may well have affected the results.

3 Areas requiring action

3.1 Spreading information on healthy living initiatives. This item was held over to the next meeting.

3.2 Social prescribing. At a forthcoming GP network meeting will be discussed the appointment of a social prescribing champion, who will lead the introduction of a social prescribing initiative. It was preferred that a candidate be considered who was already known to the practice.

3.3 Increasing use of Patient Access. It was felt that Jack's sessions in the waiting room familiarising patients with Patient Access had been a considerable success and Dr Jackson would like them to continue.

3.4 Upcoming flu vaccinations. The vaccinations will take place on Saturday 28th September 8 a.m. to 12 noon and two sessions on the first two Saturdays of October, at the same times.

4 Any other business

Brenda said that there had been suggestions placed in the comments box by reception. One was connected to patient confidentiality at the reception desk, another concerned online repeat prescriptions. Another comment criticised the lack of visibility of signs for disabled parking bays.

5 Dates of future meetings

The next meeting of the practice PPG will be on 4 November at 6pm

The next meeting of the patient PPG will be on 14th October at 6pm