

Port View Surgery PPG

Notes of meeting held on 14 May 2024

Present: Peter, Sarah, Brenda, Marilyn, Julia, Jenny, Pauline, Gail, Jane

In Attendance: Tina

Apologies: Rod, Tony, Sally, Margaret, Marie, Angie, Mandy, Dave

Notes of previous meeting: Approved. Agreed also that the new Messenger (on the role of PA) would be held back until it was clear that it would not interfere with communication about the new appointments system.

Practice Update

Tina reported some progress in GP recruitment, with possibility of 2 salaried GPs being available in September, and Dr Colley's maternity leave ending soon. Also, Dr Mathew will soon be supervising trainee GPs in the Practice, which will provide more sessions.

One PA has been recruited, still one vacancy. Members were concerned that more training should be provided for staff in such a key role.

New system for contact/appointments

Tina had circulated some initial thoughts, and members supported both the rationale and the need to introduce it asap. Main concerns were that the system still might get overloaded after the initial phase, and that resistance to technology might impede progress.

It was acknowledged all round that no system can be perfect, that it won't necessarily suit everyone, and that there is usually resistance to change however well intentioned. Jenny urged that the word "triage" should be continually explained to patients.

The target date for implementation is mid-June, when the phone system would change but the Red, Amber, Green approach would be held back. It is hoped that the effect will be to spread the Practice workload among team members and bring greater control of appointments. Routine appointments would all be in the afternoon.

Information about the changes will be sent to patients by text, and be put on the website, Facebook page, and in waiting area. Julia (who is now the Mayor) said that the Council would help in any way possible to get the messages over.

It was agreed that an earlier batch of texts and other information should be sent out alerting patients that the continuing negative feedback about the current system had been heard and understood, and that the Practice was now planning to revise the system to make things better for patients. Then, a little while later, detail of the proposed new system would be sent.

Patients will be encouraged to give feedback on the new system, inc the Friends & Family process.

Role and Operation of PPG

After discussion, it was agreed that Peter will remain as chair for one more year, and that Marilyn and Gail would work as a team with him in between meetings, linking with the Health Centre PPG and planning new patient surveys, etc.

It was generally felt that the way the PPG was operating was satisfactory. Gail thanked Peter for driving things forward.

Priorities for the year ahead will be: developing the Messenger; and monitoring and evaluating the changes in the appointment system.

Social Prescriber's report

At the last minute, Mandy was unable to attend, but has supplied a brief report to be circulated with these notes.

Chair's report

Peter gave an update on progress at the last Health Action Group. And also on the "umbrella" group of PPGs in East Cornwall, all of whom are trying to improve patient access to help with triage, signposting and new systems - we are not alone! He mentioned that all Practices offer to put the existence of Lasting Powers of Attorney on patient records.

Possibility of PPG joining Patients' Association

Jenny had sent out a proposal, but there was insufficient time to consider it in detail, and it was deferred to the next meeting. Jenny was asked to clarify what the benefits would be for our Group.

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 2 JULY AT 5.30PM IN THE COMMUNITY KITCHEN