

## Port View Surgery - Patient Participation Group

### Important Update - March 2021

written by Angie Fisher and Peter Thistlethwaite

#### Looking back

The Coronavirus lockdowns have successively caused major disruption to the work of our PPG in the last year. In fact, our meetings and activities have largely ceased, apart from:

- (1) the efforts made by a few members of the group to undertake marshalling at the Flu clinics over a few weeks in the autumn,
- (2) Angie and Peter joining monthly video meetings of the East Cornwall Umbrella Group of PPGs which managed to keep going in this way,
- (3) Dave Bamber keeping up the information flow from the Practice, the PCN, etc.

This situation was also made more difficult because we had no offer to take over the Chair from Lisa.

#### Lessons from the Umbrella Group

The situation in our PPG is not untypical. Meetings have become infrequent or non-existent, members have lost contact with each other, and some PPGs have not been able to participate in the Umbrella Group meetings. On the other hand, some have done some remarkable things, e.g., being involved in the delivery of prescriptions, food parcels, and other support to the community and Practice. In Saltash, however, these things have been done by other community organisations.

What struck us, however, was that the most dynamic PPGs were led by a couple of active members, in contact with their Practice managers very regularly (but briefly), using community newsletters/websites etc., and well-integrated into local networks. In the end, we two decided that we should try to adopt such a model in the interim at Port View, and we got a very warm and positive response from Tina when we raised this last week.

#### Port View Surgery website

Some of you may have noticed that the Practice website has changed. In fact, it is now managed by an outside firm (like websites of some other local Practices) and Tina is now no longer able to make changes herself. Changes have to be fed to the company to upload. We were concerned that the PPG information had not been updated over the year, and that there was no mention of patient participation on the home page.

The outcome of our discussion with Tina was that:

- (1) the PPG is now on the home page
- (2) Angie is now authorised to forward PPG information to the company in order to keep everything accurate and up-to-date. This note will appear there.

#### The immediate future for the PPG

As long as current members are happy about this, we will be having a brief video meeting with Tina every fortnight, and will let you all know the outcome afterwards. We will also continue to attend the Umbrella Group, and keep members informed about that.

Dave Bamber will join us at the sessions with Tina if he can, but he is in full-time work and has told us he is very busy! But he remains keen to maintain his secretarial duties, and we are delighted about that.

That then is the framework we are proposing until normal meetings can be resumed and a new chair is elected. Please let us know:

- (1) that you are happy to accept this interim set of measures
- (2) if you have other ideas to suggest that would also help us maintain the PPG
- (3) if you have any information to share on patient experiences generally
- (4) if you have broader issues which you would like to see discussed

### Practice News

A new salaried GP is joining the Practice next month. She is Dr Colley, who has just qualified and will do 4 sessions per week to replace Dr Charlton who is about to retire.

Tina has offered to discuss with the partners how they view patient participation now and in the future. We have said we think it would be a good idea to have one GP to take the lead on this.

### COVID-19 vaccination

We have resisted all temptation so far to major on the hot topic! Please keep your eyes on the updates posted in the website. The basic message from Tina is that the main struggle for them is not knowing when vaccine deliveries will take place; and also having to oblige patients to go to Pensilva if what is delivered is the Pfizer vaccine.

But the Practice has been delighted with the rate of vaccination achieved in the main cohorts so far. It is proving a bit trickier to get the same high percentage in the current cohorts.

Angie and Peter