

Port View Surgery PPG

Notes of meeting held on April 29 2025

Present: Peter, Brenda, Gail, Marilyn, Sue, Sonia, Jill, Barbara, Suki, Julia, Trevor

Apologies: Sarah, Roy, Sally, Pauline, Jenny, Rod, Angie, Micky and Tina

This was an informal discussion, firstly because of Tina's absence, and secondly because of the recent comments on the Saltash Community Facebook page, some of which had been critical of PV and its process for dealing with requests for appointments.

Appointment Process

Peter distributed copies of a confidential note provided by Tina in response to the Facebook comments. However, and very significantly, she added that all Practices will be required under the new NHS contract, to adopt a national online approach from October to the process for dealing with requests for appointments.

Tina has concluded that PV will have to change its approach totally because of this. She expects the system will have to operate every day from 8am to 6.30pm. All patients will have to use this method instead of phoning the Surgery. However, if a patient exceptionally cannot access the online system, they will be able to phone and ask the the Patient Adviser to fill in the online form for them. It will then go into the system with all other requests, and be "triaged" with all the others received.

Tina indicated that planning for this has not yet started, but patient views will be sought. PV staff will be visiting Saltash Health Centre shortly to see how the system is already operating there. Ideally, PV will introduce the new system from July.

The note stimulated quite a discussion!

Our final conclusions and recommendations to PV were:

- It will be beneficial to patients if there was an identical approach covering both Practices in the town
- We should ensure we learn from the Practices in Cornwall already using this system (which is often called "Total Triage")
- On balance, PPG members saw advantages in using the online approach, even though PV has resisted in the past the wholesale shift from telephone access to eConsult and similar systems
- It might be helpful if the system could be contacted through the NHS App?
- However, PPG support would be conditional on there being a sensitive alternative for patients who cannot or will not use the online system
- The chairs of the PPGs at PV and SHC should be involved in planning from the start, and therefore should be invited to join the initial visit by PV staff to SHC

- Opportunities for a wider group of patients to participate in the planning process at PV should be built in from the start, eg in testing and agreeing the wording of the recorded phone messages and website instructions
- A special event open to all patients should be held, so that staff, including clinicians, can explain the why and how of the new process and answer patients' questions
- PPG members should be used positively when it comes to implementation - we want to help allay fears and misunderstandings

Emails to PPG members

We have recently adopted the "Bcc" method of emailing members, so that the contact information of individual members is not revealed to others. This ensures compliance with data protection Regulations.

It was the unanimous view of all present that we should now state in our constitution that we will be sharing our contact information openly. A formal proposal will be put to the next meeting for a vote.

May Fair

A stall will be set up to promote both PPG membership at the 2 Practices, and also membership of the new St Barnabas Charity. Details will now be sent to those members volunteering to help

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY May 27 AT 5.30 PM