Abbey Patient Participation Group

minutes for September 17, 2014

Present: Gerry Coppel, acting chair, Debs Smith, Dr David Cavanagh, Richard Hepple, Eileen Grant, Janet Clarke, Jean Yarnell, Thelma Hembury, Christine Tyldesley, Joy Stevenson, David Cameron, Irene Goode and Sue McNab.  Sue introduced new member Jean Reid.

Apologies for absence: Alex Smith has resigned as a member due to work commitments.

Minutes of the last meeting: Approved

Matters arising: Debs said the Diabetes Day had been very good. Re Kissing It Better, Debs said people can volunteer or let the website know about new ideas. Richard said people had put forward some simple ideas such as chairs of differing heights in surgeries. Irene Goode volunteered to make a hundreds and thousands cake for the Macmillan coffee morning being held on September 26. Other members agreed to help and bake cakes.

Mystery shopper: It was reported that the caller would be a member of the ppg but members said they had not heard who. Joy said the surgery telephone system had been changed so that staff could pick up incoming calls in other areas, as well as reception. She said access to appointments had been difficult because of staff absence but only the day before the doctors had seen 18 people on emergency appointments.

National Association of Patient Participation Groups (NAPP): Debs said in response to a question asked previously by David Cameron, she had set up an email address which all ppg members have received.

The AGM of the Nottingham West Clinical Commissioning Group was being held on September 25 at Stapleford Care Centre and members could go along if they wished.

Patient Survey: Debs said one was unlikely because the surgeries have signed up to an access scheme and there will be a survey to do with that. But she wondered what the surgery can link any future efforts to if we don’t do a survey to find out what patients want. David Cameron said he hoped the Patient Reference Group would come up with a common questionnaire like they did last year. Debs said perhaps the surgery should do its own survey because it still needs to provide three key actions. Gerry said it sounds as if we need to do a survey for that reason.

Dignity and Respect Survey:  Michael James had once again collated it but was not able to attend the meeting. He reported that the percentage answers were slightly less positive than last year but still good. Joy said the comments that jumped out were that there should be a TV in the surgery, especially when the football is on, and that the radio programme played was “for women”. Debs said of 37 comments, 22 were really positive. Three were about appointments and six were about the entrance door, a topic which has come up before. Some years ago there was a leak in the roof in the entrance and it is a worry that the constant movement of an automatic door might be a problem. Joy said the entrance door is a problem for people on sticks or in wheelchairs or for people with pushchairs. Janet asked if there was any cash the surgery could tap into to provide an automatic door but Debs thought not. Debs agreed to make more enquiries about funding.

Other comments complained that the car park was always full and that it was difficult to get blood tests. Debs said the two practice nurses are now doing them as well as the phlebotomist. Joy said routine blood tests appointments take up to a fortnight. The surgery has an allocation of phlebotomy hours but because it was the second highest user of the phlebotomy service at the QMC there was a threat to take away some of the allocated hours. There is also a charge now if patients go to the QMC to have bloods taken.

Regarding Accident and Emergency, Joy said the surgery does check who has used the service when they did not need to and thus caused a charge to be made to the surgery. Debs will report on this at the next meeting. Dr Cavanagh said numbers of people going to A&E rather than their doctors was increasing across the board and Abbey did not have the highest figures.

Jean Reid asked if anyone commented in the survey on the signing in screen which she said was impossible to see when the sun shines on it. Dr Cavanagh said hoods might be available to shield screens and he will look into this.

Any other business: Richard gave details of public consultation at Beeston Library re changes to mental health services. He said a worrying proposal of the Notts Health Care Trust was to close two acute wards at the QMC with a loss of 42 beds out of 116 beds in the whole of Notts. David Cameron, who runs a bipolar support group, asked if the changes to mental health provision was something on which the practice has a view? Dr Cavanagh said he was disturbed enough about what had been said to want to look into the issue. Debs said it was disturbing there had been nothing sent directly to the practice concerning the changes. David Cameron said it was ludicrous that decisions like this are being made before GPs are consulted. Debs said it was happening more and more that GPs don’t get consulted.

Re EU and USA negotiations about international trade, there was worry expressed about possible effects on the NHS, where multinational companies might be able to sue a government on behalf of investors if they are denied profits. David Cameron said 70% of NHS contracts put out to tender in recent times have gone to private companies. He said it was not an issue the ppg could do anything about but something it should be aware of.

Next meetings: The Annual General Meeting on November 13 at 1pm and an ordinary meeting on January 14 at 6.30pm.