# **Chafford Hundred Medical Centre**

## **Patient Participation Group (PPG)**

## **Thursday 26th October 2023**

**Present:** Roger Passfield (Chair), Terry Brown, Jenny Claridge, Lindsey Inglott, Yvonne Simpson, Dori Tillett (Practice Manager), Kevin Brice (PPNG)

**Apologies:** Stacey Franks (Secretary), Rose Watson

The group welcomed Kevin Brice to the meeting. Kevin attends the Patient Participation Network Group and attended the meeting to offer some support.

In Stacey’s absence, the minutes were taken by Dori.

Previous minutes - Circulated and agreed.

**MIND** - On a Tuesday earlier in the month, Roger had accompanied a representative from MIND to highlight their services to patients visiting the surgery that day. A few people spoke to the representative. Roger was disappointed that reception staff were not aware of the visit and the manner in which he was challenged on the day. Dori was absent and there appeared to be some miscommunication. Also noted they were not offered a drink. Dori to ensure the Deputy Manager and all receptionists are aware in future.

**Action: Dori**

**Terms of Reference** - Circulated and agreed in principle but in order to have time to read in detail these will be formally agreed at the next meeting. Dori to forward with minutes and next agenda.

**Action: Dori**

**Newsletter** - Some had not had time to read the draft. To be discussed and agreed at the next meeting. Dori to forward with minutes and next agenda.

**Action: Dori**

**Communication** - The group discussed ways of communicating meetings and Practice information, ie regarding appointments, clinicians, etc.

PPG information (meeting notice, newsletter, leaflets etc) are placed on the noticeboard within the waiting room. Also posted on the Practice website and notices posted on the Practice’s facebook page. It was suggested to also place notices in the Café at All Saints Church - Roger and/or Yvonne will collect posters when ready. Roger will also look into placing notices on the nearby Chafford Hundred noticeboards. It was noted that posts on the Facebook page were unavailable for sharing - Dori to check and members to let her know if they are still unable to share the next post. Kevin advised that at the current time Facebook appears to be one of the best solutions to reach most patients. The group to consider creating a PPG Facebook page.

There was some discussion on how best to communicate Practice information to patients. This includes highlighting the different options for booking appointments and information on the various clinicians now working within GP surgeries. Yvonne suggested it might be useful to have some education on the processes within the Practice, ie reception, as this might help the group to pass on information to other patients. DT to look at how this can be organised.

**Action: Dori, Roger, Yvonne, Group**

**Telephone Access** - An update on the new telephone system was requested as there were still problems in contacting the surgery. Dori advised that the current contract expires in March 2024 and changing before then would result in an early termination fee. However Thurrock ICB (Integrated Care Board) have indicated there may be some funds available to cover this cost and Dori will update once more information on this is received. Dori also explained the new callback facility which will be available from the new provider which enables the caller to “save” their place in the call queue without waiting on the line and a receptionist will call them back when they reach the front of the queue. This does not result in being answered sooner but avoids the caller waiting on the line. However, it was noted that if the patient does not answer the callback they will need to call the surgery again. Dori also explained that all receptionists deal with the switchboard and front desk from 8am-9.30am to help with initial rush before moving on to other duties, therefore there are up to 5-6 receptionists dealing with the phones and desk at this time. However, although having additional receptionists would answer the calls quicker, this would result in the appointments being booked quicker as there would still be the same number of appointments available.

Terry asked how many appointments are available each day. Dori explained there is a different number on each day as not all clinicians work every day. However she will obtain the number of appointments available per week and also the number of appointments expected to be made available to patients.

Dori explained the different appointments available and the various ways to book. Patients can telephone or book at the desk from 8am and the whole day’s appointments are booked from the morning, avoiding the need to call later for the afternoon’s appointments. Half the appointments are available to book in advance (2 weeks) and half are held to book on the day. There are a number of appointments available each day for patients to book online, and these are released for booking at 7am. There is also the option of submitting an eConsult which is available each weekday 8am-11.30am.

GPs have instructed receptionists that all their appointments are booked as telephone consultations initially and GPs will book an appropriate face to face appointment directly with the patient where it is needed. Telephone appointments are still 10 minutes therefore, in effect, the same as a face to face appointment. Telephone calls are made within the morning or afternoon, ie usually before 12-1pm, or between 3-5pm and not necessarily at the booked time.

Dori provided information on the different clinicians working from the Practice, some of whom are shared with other surgeries within the Network.

Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Paramedic Practitioner - These are both ableto prescribe and refer to secondary care. They are experienced in diagnosing and managing minor illnesses and chronic diseases.

Physician’s Associates - Can diagnose and manage minor illnesses and manage some chronic diseases. They are not able to directly prescribe or refer but are able to discuss with a GP for onward referral and prescribing.

Pharmacist - Undertakes medication reviews and deals with medication queries and changes. Unable to directly prescribe or refer but is able to discuss with a GP for onward referral and prescribing.

The receptionists have been advised by the Doctors to book patients with any of these clinicians where appropriate for the symptoms described.All clinicians within the surgery have access to discuss complicated queries with a doctor where necessary.

Roger reiterated the information from Dr Grewal at a previous meeting regarding a GP who decided not to join the Practice due to the workload. Kevin also commented that the Thurrock area has had difficulties with recruiting GPs for some time. He also highlighted that the NHS nationwide is changing, which includes using many different clinicians and changing the way appointments are managed.

Roger asked whether it would be possible to advertise the U3A group in the Practice. Dori explained that the Practice is unable to endorse non-NHS organisations, therefore this would not be possible however suggested using the noticeboards in Chafford Hundred.

Next meeting was arranged for Thursday 9th November at 1pm.