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To: The Members
The Patient Participation Group (PPG)

10th March 2016

Dear Members

It is now a little over 3 months since the last update of events at the surgery and once again there have been many outside influences that have affected the practice.

You may recall that in the last letter I asked for comments from members regarding forming one PPG for the whole of Witham. I received a very poor response (1 member) opposing the suggestion with very valid reason. We will therefore not be considering joining other practice as one PPG but remain independent.

Update

Care Plans & A&E Avoidance

The Care Plans for patients have progressed well with regular meetings between members of the practice and other organisations such as: Social Services, Community Matron, District Nurse representative, Practice Nurse and a frailty co-ordinator. This is part of the A&E Admission avoidance and inappropriate use of A&E from 1st April 2015 the practice has avoided a total of 148 attendances by our patients at A&E. This represents a considerable saving to the NHS economy.

Back Pain

The process or pathway has now been agreed for the Low Back Pain Service pilot in Witham which if successful will be extended to the whole of the Mid Essex area, This represents the safe movement of a service from GP Practices in Witham.

Phlebotomy (Blood Tests)

This service has now been moved from the Fern House Surgery to the Douglas Grove Surgery although patients wishing to use the service still have to contact Fern House for their appointment. At the request of some of our patients we have extended the daily phlebotomy sessions each morning, this has proved to be very popular to patients especially the frail and elderly.

Other Services

The 24 hour blood pressure, INR clinic, D-Dimer services introduced by the practice have all proved to be extremely helpful for the Doctors in helping to diagnose patient problems.

Friends and Family

This is now a contractual obligation for practices and whilst we are still getting concerns raised by patient over having to complete another questionnaire we have persevered with a big drive in February. An outline of the year to date results is shown in the table below.

Friends and Family to date:

Month	Extremely Likely	Likely	Neither Likely or unlikely	Unlikely	Extremely unlikely	Don't know	Total Responses
Jan-15	12	8	4	2	1	1	28
Feb-15	20	10	0	2	0	0	32
Mar-15	4	3	0	0	0	0	7
Apr-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
May-15	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
Jun-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jul-15	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Aug-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sep-15	8	1	0	0	0	0	9
Oct-15	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Nov-15	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Dec-15	2	2	0	0	0	0	4
Jan-16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Feb-16	19	3	1	0	0	0	23
Mar-16							
Total	72	30	5	4	1	1	113
% of total	63.72%	26.55%	4.42%	3.54%	0.88%	0.88%	

The practice is measured on the total of the Extremely Likely and Likely returns at present this equates to a total of 90.27%.

Telephone System

The main concern of patients is the telephone system which at present is not owned by the practice but is owned by the NHS. Following investigations by the practice it was found that during the last re-organisation of the NHS nobody was given the responsibility of the telephone systems and bills had not been paid for several years.

The practice has worked with BT to establish what was owed by the practice and paid the long outstanding bill. This has enabled the practice to consider acquiring a new telephone system independent of the NHS.

After almost six months we have now progressed to a stage whereby the practice has commissioned a new system which is scheduled to be installed in the middle of April 2016. The system has been tried and tested in many practices throughout England and we are confident that there will be a great improvement for patients and staff.

Patient Registration

Members of the Group might be aware that the Fern House Surgery received approval for the closure of their list to patients; in addition the Douglas Grove Surgery has also stopped accepting new patients. This has created a situation at this practice in the number of new patients registering at the practice.

We are also experiencing a growing number of patients from both the Fern House and Douglas Grove Practice requesting to register with us due to what they perceive as problems.

As a practice we would rather concentrate on registering patients that are new to Witham rather than patients that express dissatisfaction with their present practice. We are also concerned that the care of our longstanding and loyal patients may suffer.

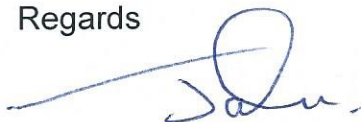
As a possible solution to this problem we have approached the Local Medical Committee as to the best way to restrict patients registering who have already registered at a practice in Witham without acting outside our contractual obligations.

We would appreciate any feedback you may have on this issue.

Final Note

This will be my last letter to you as I will be leaving the practice at the end of March 2016 but will be around for a little while to hand over to the new Practice Manager. Although a small group it has been a pleasure working with you all and I trust you will support my successor.

Regards



John Croager
Practice Manager