

## Present:

*Patients:* Jacky Frost  
Mei Lin Li  
Philippa Jackson  
Anne Marks-Maran  
Garry Harper  
Gerry (Geraldine) Matthews  
Felicia Ogunleye  
Dinah Glover

*Practice Staff:* Dr Judith Littlejohns (interim chair)  
Dr Emma Hawkins  
Ruth Waring – Practice Manager  
Wilma Bol – Social Prescriber / Wellbeing Link Worker (minutes)

*Apologies:* Angela Dietrich, Karen Jones, Elisabeth Crafer

## Welcome & Introductions

Philippa kindly prepared tea & coffee and will do this again in February, possibly with Jacky?  
It was Dinah's first Practice PPG Meeting – welcome Dinah

## Minutes last meeting

Accepted

## Explanation of Primary Care Structures (Judith) and Mission Practice appts (Emma)

- We learned from Judith in which context the Practice operates: we are part of The One Network which is part of wider structures: the previous Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) does not exist anymore, we are now part of North East London Integrated Care Board (ICB). See presentation and Kings Fund video. There are several subgroups in the ICB, for example the Mental Health subgroup, which is chaired by Judith.
- We learned from Emma which staff are employed by the Mission Practice and the rationale behind the current appointment system (see presentation). There are many new roles, including Care Coordinators, OTs, and soon we will have a Mental Health First Aid Practitioner as well. As there are simply not enough GPs, other people are employed in Primary Care to keep patients well. Many of these roles are created via ARRS (additional Role Reimbursement Scheme). Each Network can decide from a list of roles which ones they need most. It means some staff are working for the Network and therefore 'shared' between practices.
- As the Practice not only employs nurses, HCAs and GPs, the Patient Assistants are trained to triage patients to 'new roles and new type of appointments', ie: pharmacists, Advanced Clinical Practitioners, welfare advisors, hub appointments when available, wellbeing link workers, midwives etcetera. If in doubt about the best route, the PA will request assistance from the on-call/ duty GP who sits at Reception.

Since the demand on the practice has increased by 20% compared to 'before Covid' combined with an increased sickness (Covid / flu) of staff, the Mission Practice is not able to meet demand. It is very frustrating for staff and for patients, and however hard we try, it is unlikely to be solved without improvements in the wider NHS system. We discussed some major issues:

**Telephone system:** The issue was raised of being on hold on the phone without knowing how long it will take and even being cut off after a certain time. Ruth explained that the practice is trying to change Telephone Provider as they are not meeting expectations. Suttons Wharf Practice has very positive experience with a new provider, where you hear where you are in the queue and where can opt for a call back. We can't just change though, as the contract with current Provider officially lasts till 2024, Ruth is trying hard to bring this forward.

**E-consults:** Some of us found the e-consults very tedious. However we have changed provider, it is now done via Accu-Rx and has become a lot more user friendly, so worth trying again. The Practice encourages everyone who has internet access and is able to, to use e-consult, in order to keep the phone as free as possible for those who can not. Unfortunately, even the e-consults get closed usually quite early in the morning, to ensure we don't overbook patients and risk patient safety as a consequence.

**Limited prebooked appointments:** It was raised how frustrating it can be to only be able to book appointments on the day, as for many issues you don't need an urgent appointment. There are two reasons for the current system:

- Increase in staff sickness, so easier to book less patients in when staff is ill rather than having to cancel and rebook
- Difficulty of managing demand: when to open slots for future appointments, as they will be booked up within minutes as well.

Currently only GPs can book a future day slot, and as the on-call/duty GP sits at Reception, any Patient Assistant can ask for guidance and permission to book whenever needed.

**8am appointments opening time:** It was raised that opening the slots at 8am doesn't work for every patient, it may clash with getting ready for work or school runs. However it is the time when it is clear what the availability of staff is for the day and therefore at what number we need to cap the appointments for the day.

**Communication:** Knowing the rationale behind the system is helpful and we agreed that it would be useful to better communicate this with all patients. We could improve guidance on how and when best to access the Practice. It might be helpful to offer clear explanations of the roles on the website, ie via using FAQs: *'what is the difference between a pharmacist in the GP Surgery and a pharmacist at my pharmacy?'*

Several PPG patient members shared their concerns about access, equality of access and it was decided to collate them either verbally or by email to [nelondonicb.missionpractice@nhs.net](mailto:nelondonicb.missionpractice@nhs.net) (with subject PPG – will be forwarded to Ruth). Ruth will collate and order the concerns which can then be discussed in the next PPG. It would be helpful to send concerns 2 weeks before the next PPG? So please email these by 10<sup>th</sup> of February.

**Possibly discuss next time:**

- Final dates 2023
- Consent to share each other's email addresses/contact details
- How to engage patients who can't make it to the PPG?
- Healthwatch has kept its name but is now run by a different organisation. They are commissioned to support the Patient's Voice, so how can the PPG engage with Healthwatch?
- Set up working groups (PPG Subgroups) to address the issues raised

**Actions for next meetings:**

- **Ruth** to send out minutes
- **Ruth** to send text/email reminder a few dates before meeting (+ zoom link so people can join remotely)
- **All** to share any other issues either verbally, handwritten or by email

**Next meeting dates:**

It was agreed to have bimonthly meetings in 2023, every other month on the **4<sup>th</sup> Friday at 10am**. We will not meet in August. And will meet in September instead. The 2023 dates are:

- 24 February
- 28 April
- 23 June
- 22 September
- 24 November

**Next Meeting: Friday 24 February 10am**