

Minutes of PPG meeting on 21.06.22 at 2.30 pm, Cross Road Surgery

Present: Colin Huckle (Chairperson)
Michael Lidstone (Secretary)
Hilary Lidstone
Tony Penn
Tomasia Sherwood
Angela White
Mary Webb (new member)
Jim Gammans (Dorset CCG)
Kirstie Purnell (Practice Manager)

1. Apologies:

Apologies received from Geoffrey Pritchard.

2. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 05.10.21

These were approved by Hilary and seconded by Angela.

3. Matters arising

Colin mentioned that there were no vaccination centres in Weymouth and that he had to go to Dorchester for a covid booster jab. He was informed by the group that fairly recently 2 centres have been set up in Weymouth, at Chickerell and at Westhaven hospital.

Hilary enquired if there were any plans for another booster jab in the autumn/winter, and if it could be administered at the same time as winter flu vaccination. Kirstie and Jim reported that information/guidance has not yet been issued.

Kirstie mentioned that another potential GP to join the practice was interviewed earlier this year, but no appointment materialised. She also mentioned that e-consult is up and running again during surgery hours only, and that a new ANP will join the practice at the end of July.

4. Update on Covid-19 vaccination programme

Still awaiting further guidance from the NHS regarding vaccinations for the 75 and over, and other vulnerable people. There has been a good take up in Dorset, especially for the booster jabs.

5. Surgery update and newsletters, and the surgery triage system

In addition to ANP Jane, there will be another one (called Bev) joining the practice from The Bridges Medical Centre. Also in September a new nurse (called Tina) will be starting in September. She is Dr Usher's wife and wishes to train to be an ANP. There is currently a locum doctor working on Wednesdays and a locum ANP on Mondays.

Prior to the meeting, Mike had enquired how well the current triage system was working, and if GPs were seeing patients with 'trivial conditions'. Kirstie reported that making appointments and triaging was now nearly back to normal or pre-pandemic times. With e-consult, telephone and face to face consultations now available, there appear to be few unnecessary GP appointments made by patients.

Angela asked about the role of ANP and how it compares with the role and status with GP's, - Kirstie gave a concise answer to this enquiry. Patients can arrange to see a nurse without referral from a GP.

Hilary asked if ANPs can prescribe antibiotics and the answer is yes. Tony asked how many e-consults the surgery receives, and according to Kirstie it's about 5 a day. He also mentioned the limitations of e-consult, thus requiring a follow up appointment at the surgery. Jim also attends PPG meetings at Preston Road and Royal Crescent surgeries, and reported that there were also about 5 e-consults a day at both of them. This system can be used to request sick notes, letters, etc, which don't require a GP appointment. Also appointments can be made online to see a GP.

In response to an enquiry from Colin, Kirstie reported that there are 3 nurses, Polly (will be having a 3-month sabbatical in December), Sarah and Heidi (HCA).

6. Patient Experience Action Group

In response to one of the suggestions raised by this group, is the introduction of self-check in screens when patients arrive for their appointments, a system already implemented at The Bridges Health Centre. Kirstie mentioned that a digital check-in screen should be operational at Cross Road Surgery before the end of the summer. Each surgery will have a digital volunteer who will assist patients when using new technology.

7. Any other business

Mike asked why the television monitor in the waiting room no longer shows the 'news channel', and instead broadcasts music on Radio 2. Kirstie replied that most patients would rather listen to soothing music, and not the news which becomes repetitive. Also many patients use their smart phones in the waiting room.

In reply to Hilary's query, patients can now be accompanied by another person when seeing a member of the medical staff. Also, the wearing of face masks is now optional.

Our new member Mary, asked Colin about the purpose of the Patient Experience Action Group, who explained that the main purpose is to improve access to health facilities, especially as a quarter of elderly people do not have digital or internet access. The group will continue to monitor accessibility to health services for all groups of people, and sharing of good practice, such as self-check in system, which will make life easier for patients and reception staff. Colin mentioned that the group had not met since the last PPG meeting. Jim mentioned that there are a list of proposals generated by surgeries in the Weymouth and Portland areas, which he will bring to the next PPG meeting. Some of them may not be relevant for a small surgery, such as Cross Road. Hilary enquired if there will be another patient newsletter, following the excellent one designed by Dr Clayton earlier this year. Kirstie will approach Dr Clayton on this matter.

8. Date of next meeting

This will probably be in early October 2022, on a date to be agreed with the Chairperson, and will be on zoom.