

Minutes of PPG meeting on 11.10.22 at 2.30 pm, Cross Road Surgery

Present: Colin Huckle (Chairperson)
Michael Lidstone (Secretary)
Hilary Lidstone
Tony Penn
Angela White
Geoffrey Pritchard
Jim Gammans (Dorset CCG)
Kirstie Purnell (Practice Manager)

1. Apologies:

Apologies received from Tomasa Sherwood and Mary Webb.

2. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 21.06.22

These were approved by Tony and seconded by Angela.

3. Matters arising

Colin commented on the winter flu vaccination clinic held at the surgery the previous Saturday. He thought it went very well and congratulated the surgery staff for the efficient service provided. In order to prevent long waiting times, Hilary queried why there were no timed appointments. Kirstie felt that as we are a small surgery it was not necessary, and also having timed appointments would be an administrative burden. She also mentioned that 1800 vaccination invitations had been sent out.

4. Update on Covid-19 vaccination programme

Colin mentioned that there did not appear to be covid booster vaccination centres in Weymouth. One or two others in the group at the time of booking their appointments were not able to get one locally and instead had been offered a vaccination clinic in places as far away as Salisbury, Poole and Bournemouth.

Jim explained clearly how the appointment system worked, which is simple in concept but complex in its implementation. On a regular basis block booking appointments are issued, for people to access by phone or on-line by a first

come first serve basis. As well as vaccine availability, there is the issue of staffing. Unlike the winter flu vaccinations, clinicians administering the vaccinations have to be accredited.

In Weymouth, there have been covid vaccination clinics including a walk in centre at Westhaven on an ad hoc basis, and Dorchester Road surgery, where both covid and winter flu are given at the same time.

Both Jim and Kirstie advised patients eligible for covid vaccination, to keep ringing 119 or go on-line until a local centre was available, rather than not bothering with it. Also, most GP practices in Weymouth and Portland do not have the facilities for storage of those vaccines that need to be kept at very low temperatures.

Mike asked who is currently eligible to receive the covid booster. Jim reported that it is available to everyone aged 50 and over (older groups vaccinated earlier), staff and residents in care homes and those over 5 who are at high risk.

5. Surgery update

Kirstie reported that the main staff news is that Dr Quast, who joined the surgery early this year will be leaving at the end of this December for family reasons, and will be moving back to Yeovil. The vacancy for this post has already been advertised. Drs Usher and Clayton will still remain as partner GP's. A locum GP, Dr Nickinson works one day a week at the surgery, as well as locum ANP Heather Griffith. We also currently have 2 employed Nurse Practitioners.

Dr Usher's wife Tina joined as a non-clinical partner and was previously with the blood transfusion service. She is currently training to become a nurse practitioner.

Hilary asked what proportion of consultations could be dealt with by ANP's rather than using up valuable time of a GP. Kirstie replied that an ANP can order tests, administer prescriptions and referrals to GP's or specialists. ANP's are not qualified or insured to deal with pregnancy matters. Jim added that some patients feel that ANP's or other professionals such as physiotherapists are less qualified to deal with their condition and insist on seeing a GP. Kirstie mentioned that patients ringing up for an appointment are asked in confidence what their medical problem is, so that they can be directed to a GP, ANP, mental health service, physiotherapy, etc. Jim also mentioned that pharmacists are experts in giving medication advice and whether to see a GP for example.

Colin mentioned that on making on-line appointments, patients are generally given an appointment with an ANP, rather than a GP. This is to help GP's from being overloaded with patients with relatively minor issues.

Tony queried how the physiotherapy system works in Weymouth and Portland. There is a physiotherapist who visits our surgery twice a month,

who does an initial assessment (15 min. slot) before referral to a physio dept for exercises, a GP or to the hospital for a scan. A triaging system is in operation, before referral upwards to physio specialists.

Lastly Colin thanked the surgery for a helpful newsletter, which includes a section on where to seek help. Clinicians at the surgery can send urgent/emergency prescription requests to local pharmacies.

6. Patient Experience Action Group

Colin had heard good reports about the digital volunteers who hold sessions at various surgeries. These volunteers provide advice on how patients can access the surgery via the internet for making appointments, viewing their medical records and seeing their test results. This service started in June at Dorchester Road Surgery. At our surgery there is one digital session a week. Kirstie mentioned that more volunteers are required, and they do not have to be IT specialists.

7. Any other business

Kirstie reported that the surgery has had a delivery of a self check-in appointment screen, which is waiting to be installed. Initially a volunteer will be required to show how the system operates, until patients are familiar with it. This system will enable receptionists to have more time dealing with phone calls and other admin tasks.

Mike asked about the patient feedback and experience form. Kirstie mentioned that most patients submit it electronically, and overall the feedback is favourable. Due to confusion or misunderstanding there is sometimes a mismatch between the 1 to 5 scoring system and patient comments !

8. Date of next meeting

This will probably be in February 2023, on a date to be agreed with the Chairperson, and will be on zoom.