

Working together effectively to enhance the health and wellbeing of our communities

MINUTES

PPG meeting

Meeting Date:	28 th September 2022	Meeting Time:	1900
Attendees:	PPG members plus Liz Richards PM, Stacey Wingate DPM, Dr Ruth Williams, Dr Nina Ghai, Dr Sarah Dowling, Dr Elfrieda Power and Dr Rani Bathia GP Partners from the Practice.		
Apologies:	Many from patients and Dr Mark Bevis and Dr Ketan Bhatt GP Partners		

	ITEM	ISSUE / STATUS / ACTION REQUIRED	Responsible	Due
1.	Introductions and Welcome	Liz Richards (LR) welcomed everyone. LR thanked everyone for responding and coming to the first face to face PPG meeting since the beginning of the pandemic.		
2.	Apologies	Many were received by email Dr Mark Bevis and Dr Ketan Bhatt		
4.	Dr Ruth Williams	Welcomes everyone and thanked them for attending. Acknowledged that general practice is going through tricky times and access to GP appointments is difficult for patients not because GPs are not working hard but because of the capacity issues in the health service in general and recruitment of GPs. The practice is fortunate that we have managed to recruit two new partners recently Dr Power and Dr Bhatt		
5.	Dr Sarah Dowling	The phone system. As many PPG members are aware the phone system that we had was a hybrid system and as such patients got cut off, calls were not answered in order and patients often heard the engaged tone. The practice had no visibility in real time of what the demand was. We were stuck in the contract with a provider, and we worked with them for over a year to try and rectify some of the issues. Finally with some support from our CCG we were able to leave the contracts early and a new system was installed a month ago which is internet based, we have real time visibility so can start to match staffing to demand. There is a call back function if you are more than number 10 in the queue to request a call back and you keep your place in the queue. The system also allows staff to be contacted more easily as your number goes with you whichever building you are in. We are aware that our reputation on social media has not been good with the phones, and it takes a while to regain that reputation.		

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		Feedback was received that comments recently had been much more positive, and that user experience had been much better. Certainly, an improvement Acknowledged that Monday mornings are our busiest times.		
6.	Liz Richards	The NHS app. Encouraged to all to have the app and use it to request prescriptions book and cancel appointments. LR acknowledged that there are not GP appointments to book via the app as our capacity does not currently allow appts to be booked in this way. We hope to be able to change this. Currently smear, childhood immunisations and spirometry appointments are available to book in this way. From 1 st November patients will be able to see test results, consultations, referrals and documents on the NHS app. Patient access does still operate but we are not actively promoting it as we would prefer patients to use the NHS app as this is the digital platform of preference by the NHS. Patient access is a third party.		
11.	Dr Nina Ghai	Flu and covid vaccinations Already started doing our 2- and 3-year-olds. Adults we will start on 8 th October. All Saturdays in October have clinics across the 3 sites. Care homes and our housebound patients are being vaccinated early October and then through the end of October and November there are clinics throughout the week. We will not have enough stock to vaccinate all eligible patients for flu so 50-65 without a health condition are being asked to go to other providers such as high street pharmacies. Patients are asked to book one appointment and they can have either flu, covid or both. Covid is the Moderna bivalent vaccine currently and will also be the Pfizer bivalent in time. These are for boosters only. Those wishing for a first or second jab should go elsewhere, and children should also book through the national booking system.		
12.	Dr Elfrieda Power	Carers. We have about 500 people down as carers. We think there are probably many more. What we offer for carers- Our carers champion will contact you and send you a pack which gives you details of how to access help though carers in Herts and get a carers passport which does give discounts at various places. We offer flexible appointments where we can and are starting to offer a carers health check as we know carers sometimes		

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		neglect their own physical health. We also have social prescribers that can sign post individuals for financial help, help to adapt homes etc.		
	Stacey Wingate	Holly health. This is an app that the Lodge Health Partnership has purchased which we will be offering to patients in certain groups. It is a lifestyle coaching app which can give you advice and a nudge for small habit changing things which will improve your nutrition, sleep, mental wellbeing and exercise. We will be offering this first to pre diabetics, 18–25-year-olds and those that have suffered with sleep issues.		
	Dr Rani Bathia	E-consult We have a platform called e-consult which has replaced online consult. It is accessed in the same way – through our website by pressing the big orange button. This is the best way to get a routine appointment. Your e-consult will be acknowledged by 630pm the next day for clinical queries and within 3 days for administrative queries such as referral requests, sick notes etc. The platform has safety measures built in that if you say yes to certain symptoms, it will advise you to seek immediate help by calling us or 111 or maybe 999.		
	AOB	Locations- some feedback that Highfield surgery felt forgotten. Some types of appointments only offered at certain sites such as ear syringing which is a long way from Highfield and there is no public transport. There is a much better ear wax removal process called micro suction which we do not provide. It is much safer. Ear syringing is something we do offer but we cannot offer it at other sites as we only have one machine as they break very easily and are expensive. Highfield does have doctors every day and nurses 4 days a week. If an urgent appointment is required, it may not be at the nearest site. You may have to wait a little longer if you require a specific site. If appointments are delayed can reception let people in the waiting room know. There are signs that if you have not been seen in 15 minutes, please let reception know.		

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		<p>Ring back and lengthy appointment estimates are difficult for workers. We do encourage people to say please call after 330pm as I am a teacher for instance so, please let us know and when we can we try and accommodate. It's not always possible.</p> <p>Do abnormal blood tests get communicated to you. Yes, they do. We don't communicate normal blood test results but abnormal ones we do. Please be assured if it was urgent the GP would call you. Alternatively, if the result is slightly abnormal they may ask to see you in a routine appointment- this is not urgent and can wait a few weeks</p> <p>We are doing med reviews again. If you have no changes to your medication and no changes to your medication required- please use e consult to explain this and your med review can be updated. This does not need a phone call or appointment. More complex med reviews are being done by the pharmacy team and are called structured medicine reviews and take about 30 minutes.</p> <p>What is the best way to get an appointment. For non-urgent- please use e-consult. If you require help that day, please telephone. Busy times on the phones are 8-1030am.</p>		
	Date / time of next meeting	23 rd November 2022, 7pm by Microsoft teams		