

MINUTES OF PATIENT GROUP MEETING – TUESDAY 13 JUNE 2023

PRESENT – John Flinders (Chair), Viv Palfreyman, Lesley Hall, Mary Shaw, Dr Jayne Lynas, Mandy Hallam, Jane Wharton

John reported that both Rosita Dowdall and Barry Wood have resigned from the group due to health issues.

Where do we go from here? – we only have a small group of members now. Many local groups have disbanded. We are the only Heanor practice with a group.

Viv attends the NHS Patient Group sessions online and felt that there were some busy active groups around.

Jane reported that although the majority of the nine practices in our PCN do not have a patient group they had been talking about having a PCN wide patient group.

After discussion all agreed that the group should continue and see where we go. We could have another round of recruitment. Brooklyn have recently sent text messages to their patients inviting them to join their group. Jane will ask their manager how they got on with this. Patients are currently able to express an interest via our website, which also gives more information on the group, and we can direct them to there to register their interest.

In house surveys – is there a place for these post-Covid and do we have enough patients attending the surgery to get the numbers in? Jane reported that we are offering face to face appointments routinely for our clinicians now. Our nurses and training GPs see all face to face and our waiting room is getting busier as a result. We could top up numbers of surveys by sending out links to patients who have had telephone consultations. Jayne commented that the patient group survey is valued so much because, unlike the annual NHS survey, it relates only to patients who are coming into the surgery currently.

Discussion around patients and their attitudes towards us and the staff. We try to take a balanced view because they can be feeling unwell and anxious, but we also must support our reception staff who are highly valued by us but take most of the abuse. We do send letters out to patients who have used foul language towards them or demonstrated intimidating behaviour. We acknowledge that we cannot give every patient exactly what they want due to the demand exceeding capacity. We have had difficulty recruiting lately but plan to take on our current training GP as a salaried GP in August this year. We have also taken on an additional Practice Nurse. Jayne informed the group that we facilitate four training doctors on an ongoing basis, so we are doing our best to support and inspire new doctors to go into general practice.

Agree we will do an in-house survey. John will do the numbers and Viv offered to do the report. Jayne suggested using Survey Monkey. The results could be fed directly onto a computer tablet rather than on paper and it does the analysis for you. Viv will investigate this and then discuss further with John.

Agreed the survey week will be from Monday 16 October 2023.

Members will put forward the times they are available during the week.

We will need questions; suggestions included the phone lines. We have increased the lines coming in and has this helped?, use of EConsult (which none of the group were aware of). Jane explained that this is an online consultation platform that patients can access via our website. It takes patient through questions relating to their condition and links directly into our clinical system. Patients are contacted within 48 hours.

Discussion around online appointments which were switched off whilst we were only offering telephone consults. Now that we are offering face-to-face, we could look at making some appointments available online if this is popular with patients. The group were informed that we are also now able to send out SMS messages to patients with a link to enable them to make their own appointment. Electronic consulting has developed over and since Covid. Patients can send us photographs and GPs are able to interact with patients electronically.

Jayne suggested that she keep a list of suitable questions that come to mind.

John informed the group that for personal reasons he must stand down as Chair and asked for a volunteer to take this on. After being reassured that he will remain part of the group Viv agreed to take this on.

In the past we had three meetings a year as well as the patient survey. We arranged speakers for some of the meetings and invited the other Heanor groups to attend. Things changed over Covid and we have only met once over a year ago since. It would be good to reinstate the regular meetings and to invite other groups to meetings with speakers in attendance.

Viv asked for ideas for speakers. Jayne felt that it would be an appropriate project for our training GPs if we were able to come up with subjects for them. Viv felt that the survey would generate some ideas.

John will send an email to all the members of the group so that Viv has everyone's details.

Viv spoke about her role as Manager of the Dwelling Place on Mansfield Road (previously a church that has been converted into a Community Hub). One of their plans is to set up a food pantry called Mary's Pantry. The name is in memory of Mary Wood who left money to the church in her legacy. Donations of food to sell will come from Fair Share and local supermarkets with the aim to combat food waste whilst offering people discounts of at least 25%.

They also have plans to set up sessions for people with dementia and their carers. People had expressed interest in having a memory cafés and Viv has visited other groups who provide singing groups, games sessions and performances. Some took their groups along to the cinema. They would aim to provide a session once a

month. She wondered if the practice felt this would be welcomed/attended and if we would be able to promote the launch. All agreed it was a great idea. Jayne felt that our Care Co-ordinator would be interested as she works closely with some of our dementia patients and carers. We also have carer and dementia champions at the practice who could get involved. We could arrange a meeting for all interested parties once Viv has more information.

Viv informed that, in addition, the Dwelling Place already hosts a LGBT group for teenagers run by two local young men which has a good attendance.

Agreed Viv will come back to us once she is ready to hold a meeting and this will be arranged.

Date and time of next meeting – Tuesday 18 September 2023 at 1-2 pm.

We will aim to have some questions for the survey by then.