

## Minutes of Patient Participation Group Meeting – 1.00 pm on 13 June 2023

### Present:

Georgie Weir – Practice Manager	Jane Upward – PPG member
Debbie Skidmore – Asst to the Practice Manager	Julie Drummond – PPG member
Dr Laura Savage – GP Partner	Simon Peters – PPG member
Dr Izibeya Otobo – GP Partner	David Sibley – PPG member
Jeannette Cooney – Minutes	Margaret Quincey – PPG member
	Sue Conley – PPG member

### Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting from 17 November 2021 were distributed and 3 new members – Julie, Simon and David - were welcomed to the group. Julie began by asking for a definition of the role of the PPG which Georgie explained was to further good relations between patients and the Practice and although not compulsory, it is recommended that all Practices have a PPG Group

### Staff changes

There have been quite a few staff changes over the last 2 years. Georgie is now Practice Manager with Debbie as her assistant, we have a new Head Nurse, a newly qualified Practice Nurse, a new Dispensary Manager and various admin changes. We are very sorry to be saying goodbye to Dr Curtis and the Practice is actively looking to recruit another doctor. However, RHC remains a GP training centre and is well supported by the wider clinical team.

### Appointment system

New member Simon asked about the appt/triage system as he had been unable to book a face-to-face appointment since joining the Practice 6 months ago and had waited 2 weeks for a telephone appointment. After some discussion it was felt something had gone wrong in this instance which would be investigated as no-one else in the group had experienced this problem. He also felt that within reason it was important to keep to the timing of telephone appointments as he had been called several hours before the agreed time – with obvious implications. Dr. Otobo agreed this does sometimes happen but that patients would always be called again at the correct time. Jane suggested that certain changes would obviously be needed in the NHS to deal with increasing demand and a changing demographic, for example younger patients are generally happy with technology and zoom consultations but this is not usually the case with older patients. The difficulty of booking an online appointment with a doctor was raised as most of the appointments were for Dispensary. It was questioned whether 111 can book straight into the appointments that are reserved for patients to book online – the answer is no. The Practice is required to provide two additional appointments for the 111 service to book straight into. The Practice does try to triage appropriately and is open to suggestions and Dr Savage added that if an appointment is needed outside RHC hours patients can be offered something at Warboys, St Ives or March.

### Impact of new houses for RHC

In view of the very large increase in new homes in the area there were concerns about the impact this could have on RHC. According to Georgie there has only been a 5% increase in patient numbers between 2020 and 2023 but this could be because many of the newcomers were younger people who don't tend to register with a doctor until needed. Dr Otobo said that private GP services such as Babylon also attracted younger patients who find their service convenient and are happy to use apps. There is apparently no set limit of patients per Practice as staffing levels change and funding depends on the different services offered but at the moment it was not felt that RHC was overwhelmed by the increase in the local population. Julie wondered whether pharmacists could prescribe antibiotics and other drugs. Dr Otobo said generally not but more effort is now being made to direct patients to pharmacists who can recommend certain medicines for minor problems and give good advice.

### Building Contract

The NHS contract for building maintenance is still a work in progress

### Friends and family audits

These had been paused over the winter but resumed this year. Georgie was happy to report a 99% satisfaction rate with RHC but the number of DNAs was still extremely poor, eg in March 2023 there were 100 DNAs for combined doctor and nurse appointments. It was agreed that a possible solution to this should be discussed more fully and the Practice will be proactively sending out letters to patients that Do Not Attend "DNA" their appointment, in the hope that this will improve the situation. In extreme cases patients may be removed from the Practice list.

### Any Other Business

In view of the rather long message given when patients ring to make an appointment Jane asked whether there had been any improvement in abusive telephone calls. Sadly there has not so the warning online will remain. However, the information re Covid could perhaps be removed as the pandemic was now officially over. Simon asked whether there was a problem with the telephone system itself as it sometimes cuts off whilst he is waiting online. Georgie confirmed that the system is in need of up-dating and regretted that despite trying various ways to attract new members to join the PRG (Patient Reference Group) and the PPG via Facebook, email etc there had been little response. Simon suggested a What's App group but this was not felt to be a viable option. Dr Savage then asked for volunteers to become the new Chairperson who should be someone from the PPG and not a member of staff as it was important to keep the role independent. Dr Otobo proposed Julie Drummond who, despite some misgivings as a new member of the group, kindly agreed to a trial run. Simon wanted to register his appreciation to Charlie for always being so cheerful and helpful on Reception. Everyone agreed that it was very good to have such positive feedback. There being no other business the meeting ended at 2.15 and the next meeting will be arranged for a later date in September.