

Minutes of Patient Participation Meeting. 16th August 2023

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Meeting Chair – Dr Nadeem Akhtar, GP partner

Meeting Minutes – Seema Jagota, PPG Championship Administration

Practice Manager - Ben Goss

Operations Manager – Lisa Fawcett

PATIENTS PRESENT:

Apologies: RH

CA

MH

MA

INTRODUCTION: All members introduced themselves and Ben welcomed all attendees.

Ben apologised for the delayed meeting. It should have been held in July but was postponed due to issues with the practice merger. This has included maintenance and management of all the buildings (such as electric systems and solar panelling), managing rotas as we now have over 45 clinical rooms across the sites and increasing the workforce.

We have been actively recruiting more reception staff to deal with the larger practice population and improve access. We have added a further eight receptionists which has increased the number to 35. This allows over ten people answering the telephones at any given time, emails to be handled promptly and online requests to be answered.

CA asked how many telephone calls were received by the practice and how many appointments were available daily. Ben informed the group that typically, we had about 4000 telephone calls a week and approximately 700-800 calls on a Monday. However, we also receive appointment requests through our online services and PATCHS. We had approximately 700 appointments available on Monday across all sites, including nurse appointments, physiotherapy appointments and pharmacist appointments. The group all agreed that there was an improvement in access.

Ben explained he continually analyses the appointment to data to try and make sure appointments are available and allocated to services where there is an increased demand. Further to this, Lisa said they were constantly training reception staff to make sure patients were being allocated to the correct clinician and service.

CA asked if more online appointments could be added. These currently account for 10% of all appointments. Ben explained this would reduce the number of appointments available via telephone, this is the most popular option. Also, online appointments are now being triaged as before patients were able to book appointments directly and these were often wasted for issues that did not require a GP appointment.

CA asked if the new PATCHS system could be improved as she said it was not user friendly and difficult to navigate. Lisa explained that we were all experiencing difficulties with it but unfortunately it was mandatory, as agreed by the NHS. We have been consulting with technical support to help staff training.

Dr Akhtar then gave an update on clinical staff recruitment. At present we have 16 new doctors. These include 14 GP trainees and 2 Foundation Year doctors. Several of these doctors have now embarked on GP training after training in other specialities such as ophthalmology and gynaecology. Dr Akhtar hopes this will add to the current services we have available. We also have added more physician associates. Springhall Group Practice is now the largest training practice in Calderdale. Again, this will improve patient access and our resilience as a practice.

Ben informed the group that he has been meeting with various telephone companies to improve and upgrade the communication system as patients have continually raised this as a problem. We are hoping to incorporate a ring back system where a caller's position in the queue is held without the patient having to be on the phone. They then receive a call back when they are at the front of the queue.

CA asked if there were any updates on the patient champion scheme and Incredible Edibles. Ben explained the lady who had been organising the champion scheme was now working elsewhere. However, he would look into this. Incredible Edibles was currently on hold due to lack of time and resources, but Ben informed the group that the Outback Garden behind the Jubilee Centre in Halifax did something similar and would see if they could help.

CA asked about parking at the surgeries. Ben confirmed that all members would not have to enter their details at the surgery if they gave him their registration details.

The group asked if attendance at the PPG meetings could be improved. We will look into this, perhaps changing the location and including online availability.

The group were asked if there was any other business. They were then thanked for their attendance.

It was agreed the next meeting will hopefully be held in November if there are no unforeseen circumstances.