

THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG)

APPLETREE MEDICAL PRACTICE

CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

PANDEMIC; NATIONAL EMERGENCY; LOCKDOWN; SOCIAL ISOLATION- These are terms I definitely did not think I would be using in my first annual report! Never mind Coronavirus, Covid-19 and Sars-CoV-2. I did not think I would be using these terms even at our last meeting never mind a year ago. Still, it just goes to prove that it is extremely difficult to make predictions in the field of Health and Social Care. Nevertheless we do what we can in the face of adversity, and that I would contend is what the PPG does do.

Firstly I would like to thank the members of our PPG and the staff and partners of Appletree Medical Practice for all your support over this last year. Your encouragement and warm support has made my role as chair enjoyable from day one and made me feel welcome whilst carrying it out. I have tried to reciprocate that welcome to everyone at our bi-monthly meetings by holding them in as warm and inclusive manner as possible.

This year we celebrate the 10th year from the creation of our PPG. One person in particular was the main instigator for our creation and that was Steve Leather in his role as Practice Manager. Steve has been a very big supporter of the PPG and has been the inspiration for our continuing success. The PPG was set up before the Government legislation required such bodies from the implementation of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 in 2013. I'm sure I speak for all previous chairs by saying we recognize and thank Steve and his staff especially Lianne Burke and Sarah Lakin for all their help and support over the last ten years. Steve has just retired, last month, and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

A very important function that was identified by the PPG is the need for a Carers' Group to support the many carers who are patients of Appletree M.P. The group was initially set up by Margaret Raw approximately 6 years ago and was run very successfully in the Appletree M,P, surgery in conjunction with Steve Leather and his staff. The bi-monthly meetings acted as a support forum for carers. Guest speakers from relevant external bodies were invited to address the group. Margaret was then able to help and advise carers on the negotiation of the myriad of bureaucratic processes required to obtain assistance (financial and otherwise) in their sometimes difficult caring roles. After her sterling efforts Margaret reluctantly had to relinquish her role as chair of the group. However around two years ago Elizabeth Reed, who was the PPG Chair at the time, took over as chair of the carers' group and has continued the success of the group. This in spite of a necessary (due to a much needed expansion of

consultation rooms) move of venue away from the surgery. Elizabeth managed to locate a suitable location in the Weston Centre ,at no cost. This location was obviously not quite as suitable as the surgery, however the group provided continuing support for those carers who could attend ,with an interesting array of guest speakers, Notwithstanding this the reduction in numbers attending have required an innovative solution which Elizabeth has implemented by joining a larger group in Belper run by Derbyshire Carers Association. Please see Elizabeth's report on the Carers' Group for more details.

The closure of Babbington Hospital and the building of a new clinic has unfortunately slipped somewhat behind schedule. Communication on the difficulties faced on the building of a new clinic on Derwent Street was limited from the Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (C.C.G.) and the Derbyshire Community Health Service (DCHS). Therefore the 4 Belper PPG Chairs group arranged a special presentation from DCHS and CCG on the latest developments, before it was circulated to the media or general public, for members of the 4 PPGs only. Eight members from our group attended the presentation at the Strutts Community Centre in Belper on December 17th 2019.This was the largest attendance of all four PPGs. The revised proposals involve building a larger 2 storey facility on the site of the current Belper clinic site, with £4 million extra spending over above the initial plans.

The Practice is joining the 3 other Belper Practices under a new initiative, as part of the NHS "Long Term Plan " entitled the Primary Care Network (PCN) which will bring general practices together to effect the benefits of scale. It is hoped to improve the ability of practices to recruit and retain staff, to manage financial and estates pressures and to provide a wider range of services to patients. Since July 1st 2019 GP practices have come together in 1,300 geographical networks across England covering populations of around 30,000 to50,000 patients. The Networks will be expected to provide a wider range of primary care services to patients. For example first contact physiotherapy, extended access and social prescribing. The Belper PCN currently provides all three of these services. PCNs will also be expected to think about the wider health of their population taking a proactive approach to managing population health and from 2020/21 assessing the needs of their local population to identify people who need targeted proactive support. PCNs will be focused on service delivery as part of "Integrated care systems".

The Duffield Good Neighbours Project initiative has been very successful with PPG member John Raw taking a major part in the planning and scheduling required not just for the MEETINGS WEEK with lots of events but throughout the year. John furnishes our PPG with bi monthly reports which provide interesting up to date information on their latest initiatives. This year unfortunately the important Meetings Week which was planned to start on Monday 23rd March has had to be cancelled because of the Coronavirus Lockdown regulations.

Currently there are no plans , because of the uncertainty about the length of time the National Emergency will extend for, on how and when to reschedule a new event.

This year we formed a sub group of the PPG to redesign a new questionnaire to take into account the changing priorities of the Practice. The new format was then developed by Lianne Burke The Assistant Practice Manager to create an online Patient survey questionnaire. The response was positive in its overall findings although based on a relatively small sample.

We were pleased to welcome four Ecclesbourne school students to the PPG . These students bring a welcome different demographic perspective to the PPG. This year they were vocal with their valued comments. However understandable exam and other pressures meant that these priorities reduced their contribution during the academic year.

I would finally like to thank all of you ,our PPG members for volunteering for the role. That is of itself worthwhile and valuable and even if you can't make the meetings you are still contributing by reading the minutes of meetings and keeping abreast of current developments.I would like to thank my two vice-chairs John Rowlands and David Greatorex for their apt kind words of wisdom so generously given at appropriate times. I would also wish to thank the Partners, G.P.s and staff who help and support our PPG. Especially Lianne Burke Assistant Practice manager who has taken over the role of supporting the PPG from Steve Leather on his retirement and we very much look forward to working with Lianne in the future. Also to the Partners for providing the location and space and administrative assistance to enable the PPG to function with our meetings etc. Also to the G.P.s and staff who so generously give up their time at the end of a hard day's work to attend our meetings. That is very much appreciated

We are now living through unprecedented times as I referred to at the start of this report. All our lives are being drastically changed. I hope we are all able to keep well and safe throughout the coming weeks and months, in part by following the guidelines and advice given by the government and the NHS. I am ,like us all, not sure when we will next be meeting but I know we will sometime later this year. Under what circumstances and just how remains to be seen. Until that date I wish you all the very best health and thank you for your support in the interim.

R.George Newton

31st March 2020.

