

Minutes of the 2021 Patients' Link AGM
September 21st, 7.30pm at the Papworth Village Hall

Attendance: 24 including Dr Cronk and Alex Mackenzie, the Practice Manager

Apologies were received from Pat Porter

The Chairperson thanked everyone present for taking the time to attend the meeting, especially the keynote speaker, Leonnie Barlow from MIND, and then outlined the evening's proceedings which began with her review of the year.

Review of the Year and thanks

With Covid restricting everyone's actions, and the enormous pressure on our surgery, 'The Patients' Link Committee' has had a quiet time. We have been unable to host any events but we have looked at ways of helping patients be more in touch with Surgery News and more aware of the committee's existence. Each month a bulletin is now sent out via village newsletters and various other social media platforms. The aim is that this will continue and will be a useful source of information for all villagers.

As has been well documented nationally, getting prescriptions became a big issue for many patients when Covid restrictions were at their height. A few of our villages already had a weekly delivery service and we were able to build upon this expanding the service to more villages. The hope is that these arrangements will remain in place since they seem advantageous to patients and the pharmacy – not to mention, better for the environment by cutting down on car journeys to and from the surgery. Across all the villages, local support groups have been looking out for those shielding and the most vulnerable which has been great to see. I know that the Papworth Covid Support Group was a particularly big help to the surgery. Many, many thanks to all those involved.

The Committee was able to offer some small help to the surgery both when flu jabs needed to be delivered under Covid restrictions, and when a multitude of phone calls were required to contact patients who did not have mobile phones about their Covid vaccination appointments. In the main, however, the Covid vaccination challenge was met by our professional surgery team alongside staff from other Huntingdon practices and an army of volunteers recruited via the NHS app. They are all to be applauded for their amazing stamina and diligence through months and months of testing times.

The Patients' Link Committee had kept in touch via the occasional online meeting – for some this was a positive experience, for others 'something to be endured'. It will be interesting in the coming months and years how many committees switch to virtual meetings... We fed in comments and information to the various Healthwatch surveys that were launched over lockdown – the aim of all of these is for patients views to be considered when important decisions are made in our NHS. The *physical* monthly Diabetes Support Group that our vice chair ran pre -Covid 19 had to be curtailed , but Carole has been able to maintain contact with those signed up via the phone and online Zoom meetings.

I'd like to extend a big vote of thanks to those Papworth patients who have generously donated funds to the Patients' Link so that we can purchase extra items the surgery would otherwise not be able to afford. Our treasurer has more detail on this in his report.

In closing I'd like to thank all members of the Committee for their 'support of the surgery' and determination to help improve the patient experience. Special thanks to those committee members who are stepping down this year – Dean Jarvis, Kathleen Hodgson and Rob Turvey. It's been great having you aboard. And thank you of course to our doctors, nurses and other practice staff for the high level of service they continue to afford us. We are very fortunate indeed – and if we don't always show our appreciation, sorry....

Treasurer's Report

The Meeting received and noted the accounts for FYs 2019/2020 and 2021 which had been approved by the Committee under pandemic arrangements approved by the Charity Commission. The Treasurer advised that a total of £23,882 had been received and purchases of £35,562 had been approved from income and accrued funds. The Treasurer also advised that donations totalling £75,732, including £23,000 in the current financial year, had been received from a single Donor since 2011 which had enabled considerable improvements to be made for the Surgery- these included the ongoing replacement of flooring and redecoration. The Surgery and Committee were most grateful for this incredible generosity. Finally it was noted that after payment of the ongoing work that a total of £3,382 would be available to fund future Surgery requirements.

Appointment of Independent Accounts Examiner

The treasurer recommended Mr Jim Keys be appointed as our Independent Accounts Adviser again for the FY 2021/2022 All agreed.

Election of Committee

Paul Hill (Yelling), Alan Farrow (Elsworth), Pat Porter (Hilton), Ian White and Tim Bingham (Papworth), Jeff Tossell (Toseland), Carole Macbrayne and Nichola Donald (Eltisley) offered themselves for re-election. There were no new nominations. The chair requested the committee be voted in 'en bloc'. Proposer: David Potter. Seconder: David Cronk. All in favour.

"Mental Health support networks"

With the business part of the evening over the Chairperson invited Leonnie Barlow to take over. The presentation was very informative and prompted some diverse questions and comments. Covid restrictions had obviously impacted greatly on MIND's workload and the methods of support they could offer.

Finale

Dr Cronk brought the evening to a close by thanking the guest speaker and presenting both her and the Chair of the Patients' Link with a gift of appreciation. The drawing of the Raffle then took place, and thanks were extended to everyone for attending.