

# **NOTES OF PATIENTS' VOICE GROUP MEETING**

**HELD ON TUESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2023**

**AT HANSCOMBE HOUSE SURGERY**

## **Members Attending**

Kristina Lawson (Acting Chair), Linda Davies, Dorothy Hayward, Stella Sagers and Mara Barber (note taker)

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Dianne Desmulie

### **2. Review of the Meeting Notes and Action Points from the Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

Before the meeting it had been confirmed that there would still be no representative from the Practice. The staff continued to be very busy and had been unable to resolve outstanding issues from previous meetings. For personal reasons the Practice Manager had not been working at the Surgery for some time. It has been suggested to Kristina that the situation might improve in September, allowing staff to attend.

It was still not possible to confirm a date for the AGM but it was hoped this could be in September / October or the earliest date on which members of the Practice can attend.

### **3. Practice Report / Update**

No official information was available from the Practice.

During an informal chat with Alison Anderson (who is leaving the Practice) prior to the meeting starting, it seems that Practice has too many patients and insufficient GP capacity. The list cannot be closed and the number of patients at the practice is rising by up to 25 new patients per week.

Too few appointments are available for the demand: 80 slots could be released at 14.00 hrs and by 14.05 they have been filled.

Other difficulties for GP Practices were mentioned in the context of the new surgery for Wallace House, in the Lea Wharf development (Bircherley Green). There will be new premises, but no automatic funding for furnishing or equipment. It was noted that the Wallace House surgery at Sele will remain open.

At the moment there is no replacement for Sally Freeman, who left the Practice at the end of April.

The PVG Patient Survey, conducted in February 2023, had generated interest from 21 new potential members of the PVG. These had not been contacted at the time (prior to Clair Ball leaving). Alison had not been able to locate any list. Kristina agreed to try to contact Sally Freeman to find out what might have happened to the survey responses.

**ACTION: KL**

Kristina explained that a new email address had been set up for the PVG earlier in the year, but she understood that access to this account is limited to Practice staff. We need to clarify who is responsible for checking the mail box to ensure that potential members, who respond via the website, are not ignored.

**ACTION: KL & Hanscombe House**

It is expected that the Hertford and Ware Practices within this PCN will start to arrange events for patients once the new Wallace House Surgery opens at Lea Wharf (the old Waitrose site) and its meeting room becomes available – probably in late 2023/early 2024. For this and similar purposes we need to ensure that Patients who have provided a mobile phone number can be contacted by text, by the Practice, to invite them to events of relevance to them.

**ACTION: KL & Hanscombe House**

It was noted that the Enhanced Access (formerly Extended Access) service is now available from Monday to Thursday at New River Health in Castlegate, from 18.30-20.30. On Fridays there is a telephone service only: 07535 086314.

On Saturdays the service is held at Hanscome House from 9.00-17.00. **Should this read 9.00-12.00?**

#### **4. Website Update**

Some comments have been made that the new website is not particularly user friendly and does not always provide what is needed. A list of comments from PVG members will be forwarded to the Surgery as soon as possible.

**ACTION: all members**

An issue was mentioned which has occurred in other meetings with Patient Groups. Patients do not always seem to be told who they will see at their appointment, whether it will be a GP or another practitioner. It is also not always clear whether the specialist (Pharmacist, Physiotherapist, Paramedic) is based at Practice, or elsewhere (eg PCN).

A member has enquired whether Hanscombe House has, or will be introducing, "Care Navigators". Will these be existing staff members with additional training or new employees?

**ACTION: Hanscombe House**

#### **5. Plans for Newsletters / other communications**

Members have viewed several of the useful webinars organized by the ICB and Patients' Association. Some of these have been difficult to access online. Kristina will contact Heather Aylward to comment on this and confirm which webinars are available as recordings. She will also find out if any useful information is available on arrangements for Health Fairs.

**ACTION: KL**

The poster, being designed by the members of the Hertford Heads group, is expected to be signed off very soon. This will be a generic poster which can be tailored for each Surgery, alerting patients of the existence of each Patient Group and inviting participation.

The PVG notice board in surgery is to be updated, as discussed earlier in the year.

#### **6. Update on any matters arising not otherwise on Agenda**

The “Cancel out Cancer” session did not take place at Hanscombe House in March as arranged. Kristina will follow this up again with Linda Pryor (Hertford Heads) to see whether it will be possible to schedule this again soon.

**ACTION: KL**

### **7. Suggestions for improvements and future activities**

One aim should be to try to divert some patients towards other forms of help, to avoid so many phoning the Surgery on Monday mornings, when this is not strictly necessary.

### **8. Date of next meeting**

Several alternative dates and times in September were considered.

The next PVG meeting will be the 5<sup>th</sup> September, time to be arranged.