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Patient Participation Group (PPG) Meeting Minutes

Date: 8 May 2024

Time: 12.30-1.30pm

Venue: The Practice @ 188 / MS Teams (hybrid meeting)

Participants:

Raksha Savla (PPG member) - RS

Maxine Dewhurst (PPG member) - MD

Laurence Kleerokoper (PPG member – chair) - LK

Sandra Newman (PPG member) - SN

Susan Duboff (PPG member) - SD

Juliet Aghion (PPG member) - JA

Bernard Benn (PPG member) - BB

Ryan Bentley (Practice Manager - scribe) - RB

Apologies:

Kavita Hindocha (PPG member)

Introductions

The minutes of the February 2024 meeting were approved by the group.

Actions from previous PPG meeting

Self-check-in machine:

RB informed the group that the ICB has confirmed there is no continued funding to licence this machine. Options are being explored as to whether it is worthwhile funding the contract locally by taking funding from elsewhere.

SN remarked that the machine did not always work as intended when it was on.

LK asked if there is a risk that the machine is removed altogether. It was noted that this risk does exist but it is unlikely to materialise.

BB asked if other providers had been explored. It was noted they had and the current provider remained the most cost effective choice.

eConsult:

RB updated the group that it is not possible to customise the eConsult form as it uses a national template.

There was discussion surrounding the length of the eConsult form and whether the questions it asks are necessary.

It was noted that some prefer seeing their GP in person but new methods of consulting are necessary to ensure there is enough capacity to deal with all requests coming into the Practice. It was also agreed that patients need to be clear on when it's best to use eConsult and when it's better to phone/walk into the Practice.

Updates from Practice Manager

Processing of referrals in-house:

RB reminded the group that the Practice has been processing referrals in-house since February 2024 when the Barnet Referral Support Service (RSS) was closed down due to cuts in NHS funding and updated on the progress of this.

There was some discussion surrounding the process for referrals and the choice afforded to patients.

It was agreed that patients should be able to specify a preferred hospital for the referral to be sent to, where this is an available option.

Upstairs appointments:

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

Modern general practice access (total triage):

RB updated the group about this NHS England initiative and the Practice's initial thoughts. It was made clear that the Practice does not currently have any robust plan for this, hence it is being brought to the PPG first for discussion and input.

SN noted that patients are very used to calling at 8am for an appointment and this is difficult to change.

There was lengthy discussion surrounding the different triage models, who would staff this, and how burdensome it might be on the patient. It was noted that not all medical issues need to be seen by a GP but this is a culture-shift for many and the triage pathway would need to be sensitive to the needs and context of the patient.

It was noted that patients need to be kept well informed of any changes in systems and how to access care – this is currently done primarily through the Practice website.

SD suggested the revival of the PPG newsletter which was previously successful.

AOB

JA noted the premises and other infrastructure needs to be considered when providing additional capacity.

SN noted the issue of confidentiality at the front desk.

SD raised the possibility of running weekend clinics as was done previously.

LK asked if any other members wanted to chair a meeting in future – if so, they should contact him or RB outside of the meeting.

Positive feedback was noted about the speed with which the phones are answered at the Practice.