

**Reach Healthcare**  
Patients Participation Group  
**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022 at 5pm**  
Walderslade Village Surgery, 62a Robin Hood Lane, ME5 9LD

Present:

Dr. Lall - Partner GP  
Ann E - Practice Manager  
Daf – Patient  
John – Patient  
Lesley – Patient  
Neil – Patient  
Ken – Patient  
Gill - Patient  
Jeanette – Patient  
Carol T – Patient  
Sue – Chair, and Patient

1. Welcome, and introductions.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and welcomed new member, John.

2. Apologies for absence were received from:

Martin, Marion A, Marion R, Lin, Kathryn, Carol H, Tanya, and Christine.

3. Notes from previous meeting

These had been shared, agreed and were available on the practice website.

4. Actions from previous meeting

a. Feedback on Community Pharmacy referral service

The practice had referred patients into this service, but it requires further discussions to improve. This is not just a Reach Healthcare issue. PPG to be updated after meetings have taken place.

b. Further details on new telephone system

A new, improved system is on order; funding approved; Reach's 3 Practice sites have been visited for technical purposes. Unfortunately, there is a waiting list due to practices with older systems being seen to first.

Is there feedback from other practices who use this system? There have been positive responses from practices/patients using it in the DGS (North Kent) area.

What will be the benefits? There will still be a queuing system, however callers will have option to be called back, and customised messages will be another option.

Will it solve all the waiting problems? There are a finite number of receptionists to answer phones.

However, the call back option, and the other options, should alleviate frustrations (expressed sometimes very unpleasantly) from callers. Receptionists have left because of abuse, so staff retention should benefit.

When are the worst time pressures currently? A graph will be provided from data collected, at the next meeting, showing days and times the pressures are mostly felt.

c. Recent CQC Inspection

The practice had an (at very short notice) Inspection by the Care Quality Commission, in June. The Rating was Good.

The full results can be found on the CQC website, but for ease, the Chair confirmed that the summarised version (also on the website) would be sent to members.

d. Other updates

PPG members were updated on additional roles within Medway South Primary Care Network (PCN), and other practices that are also linked to the PCN. For more information about the PCN, there is a website.

5. Potential alternative online tool for consultation and accessing appointments.

The agenda, with everyone's agreement, was changed, to discuss a potential new online consultation tool to replace eConsult. Following a presentation, it was agreed a working group be set up possibly for a soft launch, and to assist in communicating timely information to patients.

Members' questions were addressed and will be circulated to all, including absent members.

The date for the working group's first meeting is **5pm on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October**. An email will be sent by the Chair.

6. Communication

The working group, mentioned in Item 5 above, will focus on timely communications, including for new systems and services. There is a system where PPG members can help on an official footing. To this end, the Chair had already received from (most of the group), their skill sets, and where individuals can best help.

7. Vaccination Clinics this autumn, and involvement of PPG

PPG members were invited to volunteer at the autumn covid booster and annual flu clinics at Lordswood. Several offered which was appreciated, and the practice will manage the rota. There were requests for further volunteers if other members have the time over the following four weeks into October.

It was confirmed that health teams were also to visit housebound patients for vaccinations.

8. Meetings attended by PPG members (unless already shared online)

The previous day the Chair had been invited to attend with two other PPG Chairs from the wider Medway area to give the 'patient perspective' (at Medway Council Health & Social Care Overview and Scrutiny's Task Group) on GP Access. The Chair offered her insights into the experiences of patients; lack of GPs is a

national problem but is worse in the Medway area. It was also attended by Public Health, and Kent and Medway NHS who have developed a two years' plan.

The Chair had attended a Medway PPG Chairs meeting in late summer, but unfortunately no notes had yet been forthcoming. They would be shared with members if they turn up.

Several Reach PPG members are part of Medway South PCN PPG. The members have been used over the past few months in helping with the wording for specific patient surveys, role play for a new telephone service, posters relating to patients going into hospital; and learn and meet online some of the additional roles the PCN has created, including social prescribers, and health and wellbeing staff who assist patients in preventative work.

#### 9. Any other business

Patient concerns over no apparent choice for appointment 'location'

Members were informed that if patients cannot access the site where an appointment is given, they can, and do, request an alternative.

Members were informed that an Enhanced Access to GPs (and nurses) service, which is a PCN initiative for patient appointments outside normal working hours, is being set up as a 'Hub' at Lordswood Healthy Living Centre and will be delivered on behalf of the PCN practices, by Medway Practice Alliance, from October.

Patient concerns of 'only' telephone consultations (photos instead of real contact)

Members were informed that for those patients having real concerns about their condition only being communicated on the telephone, the GP will book a face to face. In addition, each day there is a Duty Doctor who do see, face to face, vulnerable patients, or children under 2 that day

PCN – A request to borrow sensory toys, picnic blankets or tent for an event. These were not needed now.

#### 10. Date of next PPG meeting.

The next quarterly meeting of the PPG will be held on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 6 pm**. Venue to be confirmed. At that meeting the PPG meetings for 2023 will be agreed and will not be exclusively on Wednesdays.

Actions:

Update PPG on Community Pharmacy referral service  
Provide data showing time pressures on the telephone system  
Confirm venue for PPG meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December

Practice Manager/GP  
Practice Manager  
Practice Manager

Send members the summary of CQC Inspection in June 2022  
Contact PPG members re working group purpose, with dates.

PPG Chair  
PPG Chair

Send availability for vaccine clinic volunteering  
Set PPG meeting dates for 2023

PPG Members  
All