**Reach Healthcare Patients Participation Group (PPG)**

Thursday 13th July 2023 at 6pm

Lordswood Healthy Living Centre, Sultan Road.

Present:

Dr. Sinha (GP Partner)

April (Dep Business/Fin Manager)

Carol T – patient

Lin – patient

Hannah – patient

Neil – patient

Gill – patient

Jeanette – patient

Lesley – patient

Daf – patient

Marion R - patient

Sue – patient/Chair

1. Welcome and introductions

The Members welcomed new member, Hannah.

1. Apologies for absence were received from Dr. Lall, Adrian, Carol H, Christine, Marion A, Kathryn, Ken and John.
2. Notes from the previous meeting in April had been agreed and available on practice website.
3. Actions from previous meeting in April.

Follow up invite to HOPT rep Yet to be confirmed

Follow up sensor light at Walderslade surgery car park to be followed up.

Follow up invite to lead GP Hypertension project to wait - going forward.

Distribute updated Terms of Reference Completed

Listen to shorter telephone message Completed – well received

Arranging for session to train, assisting patients registering Anima on Agenda

Attending in surgeries to assist patients (when trained) on Agenda

Arranging session for PPG to sign confidentiality forms on Agenda

Asking PPG for suggestions as to contents for patients’ group/website for future Agenda

Spend time with a receptionist to explain role to patients Completed and on Agenda

Book room next meeting Completed

1. Updates from practice
2. ANIMA – Update since going live in April

The group discussed Anima in general. On the whole, patients found it more efficient than eConsult. The practice will create a patient survey to gauge satisfaction or if any issues need addressing.

Anima has greater capacity than eConsult and since going live mid-April 2023, there were 9,643 patient submissions, equating to average 158 per working day.

Clinicians and team found Anima more efficient for triaging, and clinically safer.

Some patients have difficulty logging on; the practice is aware and will see if anything can be made easier.

There are ongoing issues re access as Anima closes early when capacity reached, with no indication of whether it might re-open same day. It felt sometimes no improvement from previously. Members were told though that as well as the 111 option, any concerns across the working day (e.g., young children) patients can telephone.

The group recalled eConsult had opened at 7am for better experience for working patients and asked why Anima does not open until 8am. The practice said it would look into that.

The practice was asked if there was a way for ‘admin’ submissions to be available even when medical submissions were not, instead of the whole system being turned off. The practice will communicate with the developers.

Members enquired whether there could be reminder texts for appointments sent, especially if a way off.

Also, the practice was asked if different languages accessibility was still on the radar. This was yet in development.

There was a request that GPs and other professionals, when contacting patients, allow the phone to ring for long enough to allow patients time to retrieve phones. There had been instances of GPs hanging up too quickly when patients had arranged their time around the appointment. The practice agreed to communicate that message.

1. New Telephone system; feedback from patients and staff

The average waiting time on new system was far less than before. The previous month (June) had seen 10,203 inbound calls, with average wait time of just over 9 minutes. When patients ‘press’ for medical issues, there is option for call back, and used during particularly busy periods. This was a positive experience for patients. In that previous month, 732 patients had selected that function (still remaining in the queue) with average wait of 18 minutes.

1. General updates re capacity and workforce changes

Dr. Musoke stepped down as GP partner but remains as a practice GP.

There had been several additions, including Dr. Alvi a full time GP. Also, a new practice Pharmacist and two new Paramedics. A Physician Associate and an Advanced Nurse Practitioner are due to start stoon. The practice is also working towards two new GP posts.

Members felt these additions was positive change and suggested GPs and other staff might be ‘named’ on a board in the waiting rooms (and photos?). The practice would follow up the viability of that suggestion.

The group was told, in response to a query, that it is possible to flag up on the system if a patient requests the same professional for continuity of care.

1. GP Hub (out of hours)

There were no new updates. The service continues and Reach is receiving its quota of appointments. It was confirmed that accessing this enhanced access service was via the practice.

1. Visit to Reception by PPG member.

On a day in June, a member spent a few hours with reception/admin staff at Lordswood. On arrival, there were 6 in the queue. Lin first sat with a staff member processing Anima requests after GP triage; dealing with blood test results and booking follow up calls. She also helped with taking telephone calls.

Then Lin sat with two receptionists. Just in that short time, the staff covered a number of tasks; including help with completing Anima form: adding forms to medical notes; dealing with covid vaccine enquiries: dealing patiently with worried patient over test results, making follow up appointment: assisting patient at surgery with urgent mobility problem: signposting patient who had come to the wrong waiting room, ensuring appointment was not lost: helping patient with repeat prescription need who could not remember what the medication was.

Lin found the staff she met to be competent, very patient, and entirely focussed on the patients.

The group asked the practice to pass those comments to the reception team.

1. Communication by PPG members with wider Reach patients
2. Confidentiality agreements

The Chair reminded the practice that members cannot help directly with patients (GDPR constraints) without the cover of confidentiality agreements. The practice agreed to set these up and contact the Chair.

1. Contact with patients re registering for Anima

The practice is ordering tablet(s) for use in assisting patients to register, but PPG members cannot help until confidentiality agreements are in place. There was a request that text messages be sent to patients when members could be available in waiting rooms, on particular days.

Training would need to be given to PPG for this activity, from the Management Team. Members asked if there were also videos. Apparently, YouTube have information.

1. Any forthcoming events that require PPG members in waiting rooms

This would be left until projects mentioned above are in place. Members could assist with projects being promoted (e.g., Hypertension).

1. Flu/covid clinics assistance – 2023

Initial plans for Flu Clinics (not covid, they will be arranged elsewhere) coming soon. Several members agreed to assist at these clinics. The Management Team will contact the Chair.

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

PCN (Primary Care Network) PPG. Several practices in Medway South who collaborate to buy in services and additional professional roles, giving patients better access to primary care. Five members from Reach are on its PPG group. PCN practices now being tasked to review how to improve patients being involved in their own care (Shared Decision Making). PPG members gave feedback. This is ongoing.

PCN reflected on the importance of reception teams listening to patients’ needs, with care navigation, signposting to the correct person/intervention. Currently more training for reception staff being rolled out across the PCN practices. PCN PPG members may be asked to support in the training/feedback on what is being developed and perhaps feedback on a webinar.

The New GP Contract will also stress the importance of patient experience.

Should a PCN community involvement event be arranged in the future, members of Reach PPG would be happy to assist. One member offered help in accessing venues as they had connections with family hubs in Medway. Dr. Lall would contact if necessary.

PPG Champions. National online Group hosted by NHSEngland. Gathering of those who want to promote how PPGs can influence/enhance the patient voice, with some Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) areas across the country far more integrated than this County. The Chair said it is useful to see how others are tackling patient experience via PPGs, and the differing importance put on them. They are addressing diversity issues

Medway & Swale PPG Chairs. Difficult at the moment as Kent & Medway NHS giving less support.

Listening event online re Primary Care - Kent & Medway NHS. All PPG members were sent invitations to attend this event and since received the slides from presentations. Several attendees asked why PPGs were not well supported across this county as they are a good resource in primary care. The hosts said that would be one of their “takeaways” from the event. There were other events advertised in the Community eBulletin sent to members.

1. Outstanding issues not raised above. – None.
2. Any other business

The Chair asked, on behalf of Dr. Lall, whether the Group would be interested in training in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. Members present acknowledged that the make-up/values of the group, though positive and welcomed, is not a true reflection of the diverse patient community it represents, and it would be good to access training. It was felt it should be separate session rather than during a planned PPG meeting.

A member wanted to know why a drug on repeat prescription, but not required every single time, could be taken off the list without patient consultation. There was discussion on a particular issue. Dr. Sinha responded the computer would have automatically picked up that it not been ordered for a while and placed it in the ‘past medication’ list, not deleted. However, there are ‘variable repeat’ options.

A member requested that “Online Prescriptions” be an agenda item for the next meeting.

A member enquired about text messaging not working and gave an instance. The practice said it would have been a technical fault and not the norm.

1. Date for next meeting was agreed as **6pm on Thursday 13th October 2023** at Lordswood.

The Management Team would arrange room booking.

Actions

Follow up HOPT invitation Man. Team

Sensor light confirmation checked at Walderslade car park Man. Team

Find out viability of reminder texts for non-urgent appointments Man. Team

Pass on appreciation to Reception team Man. Team

Sort out confidentiality forms before patients can directly assist patients Man. Team

Training for PPG members to help patients register Anima Man. Team

Inform, via Chair, when PPG members needed at Flu Clinics Man. Team

Logging on issues of Anima Partners/Team

Decide whether to re-open Anima at 7am for working patients Partners/Team

Check with developers if ‘Admin’ can remain open when Anima closed down Partners/Team

Request GPs/professionals not to hang up too quickly upon phoning patients Partners

Arrange Equality Diversity and Inclusion training for PPG Dr. Lall

Online Prescriptions added to next Agenda Chair

Book room for 13th October. Man. Team(April)