

Notes from the Patient Group Meeting
Held via zoom conferencing
February 22nd, 2023 at 10am

Welcome and Introductions

There were 4 attendees including Jenni Rodgers, Chair, Maria Newey, Vice Chair and Hannah Matheson, Practice Operations Manager

There were four apologies including Val Newey, Vice Chair

Next Patient Group Zoom Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 22nd, 2023, at 10am.

Notes from the last meeting were read and approved.

Matters Arising

There has been good feedback from the ‘mystery shopper’ phone exercise.. Apparently, on two occasions the phone was answered extremely quickly and in one case after one minute.

.One patient reported that they’d received 7 texts asking for an ethnicity survey to be completed. Hannah replied that this was probably due to an end of financial year requirement and the need to check how many patients are signing up for regular testing etc.

Another comment was that a patient’s prescription had been sent to a different pharmacy than usual. Hannah replied that this might have been because they’d used that particular pharmacy in the past and it hadn’t been changed back to her preferred one..

Another query was why can’t the receptionists make an appointment face to face with a patient who has walked in to the surgery. Hannah replied that non urgent appointments should be made either triaged on the phone or through the online e-consult page. If the patient can’t write the e-consult, then the receptionist will do it on their behalf. Only GPs can make follow up appointments.

It was noted that there is sometimes a problem when phoning patients if either the landline or their mobile isn’t correctly registered.

Chair mentioned that on a couple of occasions after there were no more on the day appointments, the receptionists had promised to contact the patient the next day, and this hadn’t happened. Hannah will check with receptionists and explained that normally there is a

book where urgent cases are recorded for the duty doctor to phone the patient the next day, and this usually works well.

Chair's Report

Hannah will meet with Jenni and Maria to discuss the wording of a text to be sent out to all patients asking them to complete a Patient Group survey to improve the Patient's awareness and explaining how it benefits both the practice and patient.

Hannah's Practice Report

We are continuing to use the Accelerate programme to help us look at different parts of the practice and we've just finished a module where we looked at making our processes as efficient as we can. One of the problems is that general practice is so busy and there's never enough time to sit down and just look at how we can do things in the most efficient way. We've all sat down together with an external facilitator and looked at a few of the processes, and seeing how we can make them smoother. The idea behind encouraging patients to use E-consult was that the phones would not be as busy, but it's actually doubled our workload which means you either have to get more staff or you have to work more efficiently. I've given a lot of presentations of doing that to some other GP practices, and they're also doing the same in their own surgeries and yesterday we started looking at our GP appointment system. Although every practice is an individual business we do get extra funding from the NHS for health targets and for things that we need to run our business. We have the choice of how to do this and other practices would have their appointment system set up slightly differently. So what we're doing at the moment is just looking at ours to see if it's fit for purpose.. We do quite well with on the day appointments but it's more difficult to see how to reach our goals for future appointments

A lot of the doctors can get booked up two or three months in advance and that's no good to anyone, so we now have E-consults which get allocated to different people and every day there are different clinicians who have busy E-consults to go through. So in other words every day we have on the day appointments but we've also got other routines. We just need to see whether we're using it all appropriately. I think I sent something out as a traffic light to see how we can signpost people when they call us in the morning and then divert them to different places if we feel this is the best for their need on the day. This message is included in the answering phone waiting message because people are still quite cagey about not wanting to tell our reception staff. It's not that we're being nosy but we're just trying to help that person signposted to the right position, and be assured our reception staff have been fully trained to signpost patients to all areas of the medical care that's offered in the practice. Ultimately, general practice as well as the NHS as a whole is hugely busy at the moment and we just need to try and work as efficiently as we can.

Chair thanked all those for attending and the meeting ended at 10.35am.

The next meeting will be

March 22nd, 2023 at 10am

The above notes were compiled and published on February 22nd, 2023