

Aylmer Lodge and Cookley PPG Wednesday 13 October 2021 via zoom.

Attended by Corinne Wood (Practice Manager), Julia Stanfield (Chair), Alison Price (Secretary), Elaine Botfield, John Wilson, Shelagh Ravenscroft, Stephen Ravenscroft.

Apologies : Cathryn Plain, Audrey Jones, Margaret Clilverd, Joan Kidd, Heather Fulcher, David Coultas, Carol Hinett, Keith Lawrence, Melissa Rogers, Frances Peckham, Barbara Pugh, Mary Rayner.

1. The meeting opened with a talk by Megan Altindas about the social prescribing service delivered by Onside at Aylmer Lodge. The aim is to empower patients over 18 to change their lives, working with them 1-1. They can support with a range of issues- benefits, money, housing, employment, unemployment, social isolation and loneliness. They can refer on to other community organisations and normally see patients between 6 and 10 times. GPs can make referrals and patients can self refer using a form kept at reception. Megan also talked about lifestyle advisers, another service delivered by Onside at the surgery. This is for patients over 16 and deals with issues like weight management, smoking cessation, alcohol reduction, increasing physical activity. On average, patients see an adviser 4-6 times over 3-6months. The emphasis is on slow steps and goals. They link patients in with other services like gyms and health walks. Patients have to self fund activities. There are waiting lists but patients can be prioritised by urgency. The service does not deal with high level substance abuse- those patients would be signposted to specialist services. Megan will forward some links and literature about the services which Alison will send out separately to members.
2. Introductions . Julia welcomed members to the meeting. It had been hoped that this would have been held in the surgery but Corinne felt that it was still not safe and advisable to do this. Some members are unable to access zoom so Julia and Alison continue to phone round members before meetings to pick up feedback and issues. David and Frances have both decided to step down and Julia formally thanked them both for their many years of loyal and committed membership of the PPG.
3. Minutes from the last meeting were approved. Matters arising included timed telephone consultations. Corinne assured members that patients were now given an approximate time for a call back. Members had asked Corinne to bring some demographic information to this meeting. This had not been possible because of pressure of work. 2 successful tea party socials had been held at Julia's.
4. Practice Report
Corinne said that they are still firefighting. There were continuous staff absences due to staff and family members contracting covid or being impacted by caring responsibilities because of school closures.
There was a big recruitment drive taking place with 5 new receptionists on phased starts. 2 of these posts are additional and expected to make a difference to telephone waiting times. 2 other members of staff were off sick following surgery. There has been some bad behaviour by patients at reception. More face to face appointments were taking place at Cookley but still confined by the lack of space for social distancing in the waiting room. A new advanced nurse practitioner will start soon and a locum had been filling in this vacancy. A new HCA had also been recruited and would be starting soon.
Corinne reported that covid was rife in local schools leading to staff shortages . This had particularly impacted the dispensary service and it had proved impossible to find a locum for this role.
The covid booster programme was underway and also vaccines for 16-18 and now 12-15 age groups. So far 46,000 vaccines had been delivered from the building. There was a good team spirit but it was a huge operational process starting at 630 am when the vaccines had to be taken out of the fridge. A member unable to be present today had fed back that they had had their booster that morning and that it had been well organised by pleasant and efficient staff.
4. Patients feedback
Corinne told members that there were now more book in advance appointments available.

Face to face appointments had increased. Staff still take a cautious approach. Patients can be asked to enter by the side door or even seen in the car if they are thought to have covid symptoms .

Recently 2 patients had turned up for a covid booster clinic although they were waiting for PCR results. They were asked to leave.

A member had an issue with prescriptions. Julia will discuss this with Corinne outside the meeting.

Referrals for micro suction ear clearing are possible and there is no current waiting list for this procedure.

Members' concerns about restoring service at Cookley were addressed in Corinne's report.

Concerns about telephone waiting times were acknowledged and not easy to resolve, but it was hoped that the additional receptionists would make a difference. One member knew of an instance where a patient had waited 3hrs using the ring back system. PPG will continue to monitor this situation.

5. Development of PPG. Julia expressed her intention to step down as chair next year and called for members to consider taking up this office. Interested members can meet with Julia and Alison to discuss what is involved if this would be helpful. Following the 2 recent resignations, there is a need to recruit more members and if possible from diverse ages and backgrounds. Because PPG members are not able to recruit using normal processes, like floor walking, they acknowledged they would need help from the surgery. Corinne thought Heather, the nurse manager, would be well placed to do this and will organise a meeting with Julia and Alison.

6. AOB

John praised the practice for the exemplary treatment he had received during the pandemic and the proactive approach of the staff. He suggested Corinne designed an A4 poster which outlined the changes the surgery had put in place during this time, including reference to the 630am start time. Patients need to understand the pressures staff are under. Corinne thought this was a good idea.

Julia had attended an older person's forum at the town hall and had arranged to give some talks to organisations about the work of the PPG.

Date for next PPG meeting
2pm Wednesday 15 December

Alison Price 10/21