

Aylmer Lodge and Cookley PPG 2pm Tuesday 26th July 2022 at the surgery.

Attended by Corinne Wood (Practice Manager), Cathryn Plain (Chair), Alison Price (Secretary), Barbara Pugh, John Wilson, Audrey Jones, Heather Fulcher, Barry Hibble, Elaine Botfield, Julia Stanfield.

Apologies : Joan Kidd, Carol Hinett, Mary Payne.

1. Cathryn welcomed members to the meeting and accepted apologies .Debbie Rees, Reception Manager, was also welcomed.

2. Minutes from the last meeting were approved. Matters outstanding -

A new manager at Cohen's took up post at the beginning of July so it was decided that they will be invited to the meeting in September.

ACTION Corinne to invite the new manager at Cohen's to the next meeting.

Corinne had agreed to try and free up more appointments. This was put in place but currently embargoed because of GP annual leave. More appointments will be available online after the summer.

There was now an online option to cancel an appointment and a facility to leave comments.

3. Minutes of the AGM were approved.

Actions outstanding were for Dr Carter to update the website and Facebook page to explain the current situation with appointments and services .

ACTION Corinne to discuss above with Lisa Benton.

Dr Carter had agreed to encourage colleagues to help recruit some younger and more diverse patients for the PPG.

ACTION Corinne to follow up with Dr Carter.

3. Debbie Rees was invited to talk about her role managing the booking of face to face appointments and arranging telephone . The surgery is currently extremely busy and reception is short staffed. Yesterday there were 64 calls in the telephone queue when the surgery opened at 8 am. Patients are seen on the same day if they are in pain or have an acute infection.

PPG members discussed the many issues that had been raised with them by patients since the last meeting regarding the current appointments system. These included :long waits on the telephone; being unable to get an appointment on the same day; being told they could not book an appointment ahead and having to repeatedly phone at 8am each day ; being told a GP would phone them that day and this not happening.

The group discussed the recent NHSE GP survey. The results for our practice showed a high satisfaction rate for patients who had seen a GP, but less positive experiences for getting through to the surgery on the phone or for making appointments.

ACTION Corinne and Debbie were concerned to hear this feedback and will look into matters raised as a matter of urgency. Further training for receptionists will be offered, this will include communication.

Some measures already in place are taking other responsibilities away from receptionists so that they can concentrate on phone calls and identifying a dedicated receptionist each day to deal with other issues. It is hoped that by October reception would be full staffed.

One member reported an incident involving a receptionist who had been discourteous.

Corinne asked PPG members who were approached by patients with concerns to speak to her personally with the name of the staff member concerned if possible .

Members asked whether GPs were aware of the level of concern around the appointment system.

4. Practice Report

Corinne reported that this was an extremely challenging time in the practice.

She updated the group on the staffing situation.

Planning permission had been granted for alterations at Cookley which will improve capacity and accessibility.

In October, the PCN will be offering extended hours some evenings and Saturdays.

The flu vaccine will arrive in September and it is hoped that the covid vaccine, which will be offered to over 50s and those at risk, will be co-administered at the same time. Patients invited to receive their flu vaccine at a pharmacy will still need to get their covid vaccine at the surgery.

Members made a request to update the website with the specialisms of clinical staff.

5. Revised PPG leaflet. Members were asked to feedback any comments in the next 2 weeks.

ACTION Corinne to arrange the printing of the updated leaflet.

6. Promoting the PPG. When the leaflets have been printed, members are planning to have a table in reception once a month to hand out leaflets and talk to patients raising awareness of the group. This could be aligned with health awareness conditions.

ACTION Alison to gather information about health awareness weeks.

A Suggestion Box was discussed.

7. Speakers. Corinne had recently met with the manager of the PCN.

Corrine praised the work of our PPG which had continued during covid via zoom meetings, when others in the PCN had been suspended.

There was a suggestion that the PCN PPGs could meet together twice a year with a speaker invited. All members supported this idea.

8. Anniversary event on October 27th .

ACTION Corinne to discuss with Northumberland House and get back to members with plans.

9. Patient Feedback.

See agenda item 3.

Other issues were : the car park which may be being used by patients at the hospital. The practice may consider reinstating the barrier which might be a deterrent.

A new protocol for urine tests was discussed.

Alison Price