



Grove House Partnership

Patient Group Meeting: 11th November 2020 Via Zoom

Attendees:

Syd Broxton (PPG)

Ann Turner-Culverhouse (PPG)

Harry Howard (PPG)

Joanne Cripps (BM)

Kirsty Kendrick (DOPM)

John Timms (PPG)

1: Apologies

Tony Hayes (PPG)

Sharon Hearty (PPG)

Ted Rawlinson (PPG)

Terence Watkinson (PPG)

Alan Smith (PPG)

Carolyn Linton (PPG)

Roy Brown (PPG)

Beryl McWhan (PPG)

Deb Kelly (PPG)

John Martin (PPG)

Sharon Williams (Admin)

2: Up date from the practice.

Joanne explained that there was a phase, were it appeared that patients believed all GP Practices were closed, but this has never been the case, we have always been fully open. The Practice is open 8am till 6.30pm, but some of the GP's are still doing extended access from 7am and until 8pm. The Practice is still working with total triage first, which means we are asking patients to complete e-consultation as the first step, for those patients who are not able to complete e-consultation themselves, the Reception Team will complete an e-consult lite on their behalf. All e-consults are triaged by the Duty Doctor; from there any further actions will be taken. If the GP decides that the patient needs to be examined, then they will invite the patient into the Practice. All patients who are invited in for an appointment are advised to wear their face covering and all our GP's are wearing their PPE equipment.

GPs deal with most requests that come through within 48 hours, but if the patient needs any further tests, such as blood tests, the GP will contact the patient when the results have come back. Joanne informed the Group that the Practice Nurse team are still consulting with many patients who have chronic diseases by completing reviews via the telephone. Where patients do need an examination, for example check a BP reading or an ECG, the Nurses are still bringing those patients in. The GP's are still referring to Secondary Care if any patients need further investigation and Secondary care is working hard to deal with their waiting list.

The Practice is still dealing with prescriptions in the same way, but now they all go to the pharmacy electronically. We do still get a lot of patients coming down to Practice to drop their prescription in. This is an area where we feel that patients likes to physically come into the building to drop off their prescription and that it is a habit, where ideally it would be best that patients ordered their prescriptions online where possible.

GP's are working from home on some of the days; they tend to normally do a 50/50 split between home working and coming into the Practice. This is on a rotation basis. When they are working from home, the GP's can still operate in exactly the same way as what they would do when they are physically in the Practice. They can also send anything they need to print back to the Practice.

Flu Clinics have been ran on some Saturdays throughout the past couple of months, but we have also have had weekday appointments as well. To date, we have vaccinated approx. 3,000 patients and we have hit our target for the over 65 age group. We have not yet achieved our target for under 65's, but this is increasing. We are seeing approx. 30 – 40 patients for their vaccinations, which is low compared to the 300- 400 per week we were doing in the beginning.

Joanne asked if the Group if they have any questions:

- Anne mentioned vulnerable people, which had been discussed at the last meeting. She felt that the message the Practice put out with regards still being open and there for patients was very positive. Ann went on to say that her Stepdaughter was tested positive for COVID; she actually ended up needing antibiotics for her symptoms. They had to collect her prescription from a Practice in West Bank, which is specifically there for COVID patients who need further help with their symptoms. The Group asked if this a dedicated surgery for the whole of Halton.

If a patient still has symptoms after 10 days and they call their Practice, they will be referred to the dedicated surgeries, who just deal with COVID positive patients. This prevents bringing COVID positive patients into every single Practice. They are manned and run by our PCN network and use locum GP's. Joanne advised that Runcorn's face to face assessment centre is at Murdishaw, it was originally in Castlefields, and then we ran it at health road for a time.

- Harry asked about a visit he had to the treatment rooms. He didn't want to access the Practice, only the treatment rooms and wondered if there is a separate way to access the treatment rooms instead of queuing to enter the practice?

Joanne explained that we are unable to see the Community appointments and we are conscious of also managing the footfall in the Practice. We have put the repeat prescription box and forms in the foyer, which unfortunately causes a bit of a bottle neck in that area. We do have a member of staff at the door and this tends to be a staff member from Tower and from Grove. We know how many patients will be turning up for our Practice, but we don't know who will be turning up for Community area. We have tried to work with them and asked if they could collect their patients from the front door and bring them through, but they are limited on staffing.

Harry said he understands this and that he appreciates that there is no way around it; he was simply just going to Community Reception to pick up hearing aid batteries. Joanne questioned if Community do a postal service for hearing aid batteries, she explained that she will speak to them and ask them if they can do this service and will let Harry know the outcome. Harry also asked if Joanne could bring up the fact that they also don't recycle batteries. Syd explained that there are a number of shops that do recycle batteries; all the supermarkets have facilities to recycle batteries. Harry agreed with Syd, but felt it would be a good idea for Community to advise patients that the batteries will be replaced once you bring in your old batteries.

Post meeting note: Joanne has had a response back with regards to the hearing aid batteries. Community advised that you can send the old batteries directly to audiology at Warrington Hospital for recycling. They will post out batteries and patients can ring 01925 662420 to arrange this.

- Syd asked if some injections have now been out sourced to an outside body instead of been done in the Practice, as when Syd came for his usual B12 injection, he thought he would be seeing a Grove House Practice Nurse. However, it was another Nurse from the Community Team. Joanne advised that she thinks it would have been one of the District Nursing Team in the Treatment Room Nurse. Syd asked if our Nursing team still has the facilities to do the injections, Joanne advised that yes they do and that it all depends on who the injection was booked in with, some patients are under the Community service, so they will see one of their Nurses. Joanne informed the Group that there may be more Community services going forward, as the demand on Primary Health Care increases and it is about working as a whole team.

It was also discussed that there is also a frailty service that is run through Bridgewater Centre (Community service). GPs can refer patients to this and the patient could be seen within 2 hours, it could also prevent the patient having to be admitted to hospital. If the service does observe the patient and they did still need hospital admission, they will deal with that, it's a way for the Community Team Nurses to support the GP's.

Joanne informed the Group about the possible COVID vaccine explaining that this will be our next big area of work. There is no news at the moment; but we are working together with our network and NHS England at this point in time. The thought is, as a network, we will provide a facility within the town, but we are not too sure where that will be as yet. It is looking like all the Practices will join up to deliver it through one particular place. This may be one of the existing Practices or it might be an additional building. Syd asked do we know who will be called up first for the vaccine, for example; over 70's. Joanne explained that there will be a calling process, which will be done nationally and also with Practices having a calling process too. This might mean that patients get two lots of invites.

We don't have a clear instruction as of yet, what exactly is going to happen. Syd asked it would be the Pfizer vaccine that will be getting administered; Joanne felt that initially that is the one that is looking likely to be ready first. They are still talking about the Oxford one being ready also, so we are unsure at the moment. There is information coming through to Practice's on a daily basis , as updates come out we will share them with our patients, we will update our social media and website as and when information becomes available to us.

We have been told that we will be doing our own calling in of patients, as well as it being done nationally, once we know dates, we will send text messages and letters to patients. Syd asked do we know if the injection will last or if we will need another booster, Joanne explained that the only thing we are clear on at the moment is that it is not a one off vaccine, you will be brought in for one dose and then brought back again at a later date for the second dose.

Syd also asked if any known side effects have been recorded, unlike with the Thalidomide injection when that came out. Joanne says that as far as she is aware, it is going through all the checks and safety tests at the moment. Unfortunately, it has only been tested for a short amount of time, so it will be up to each individual to make their decision about if they feel is correct for them. There is going to be quite a lot of work for Practice to do, even if we are offering it as a joint set up, as we will all have to contribute to the organisation of that. There is a quantity of patients that have to be done every week for it to be achievable. We are keen on protecting the fact that it doesn't have an impact on any of our other services and we can run as normal. It will be about volunteering our GP's and Nurses for an hour or two a day.

3: PPG meetings.

Joanne asked the Group, how they felt about going forward in the current climate, with the Groups meeting. Some members are struggling to get onto zoom for one way or another. We

do not usually have a meeting in December and with all the impact of the COVID vaccination and struggling to get other members on board, do we temporarily postpone the meetings until March? All members agreed that this was a good idea and they are happy to postpone meetings until March.

Joanne felt that things may begin to start opening up again by March, especially if the vaccine is going well by then. So, March may be a good time to start the meetings again. The Group asked when the meetings do re-start, can the main focus of the Group be to try and get some new members. Joanne agreed and felt that would be a good idea, so look at the Group with fresh eyes in March and what we want Group want to do in future. Joanne said the PPG Group is very important to our Practice.

Joanne explained that from the 5th November, the NHS put Practices into level 4 and we are dictated to at the moment as to what we need to be doing. We are under a national forum of how things need to happen and our operating procedures are very direct. So, at this point, there isn't much scope on being able to change things as we normally could, when we are on level 1 and 2.

Syd asked what the levels mean. Joanne explained that NHS level 4, is a national direction, this means that we are under the crisis act and corona virus act. The NHS have their own levels set, so they issue what they call standard operation procedure's, which you have to follow and you are not left to any of your own devices. Our CCG, who we normally confirm things with, also have to follow that guidance to the letter. They ask that we prove that we are following that guidance and it doesn't give us as much decision making as we had in the past of how we run our services.

Syd asked if the screens on Reception have been able to be reclaimed, Joanne explained that the Practice did initially have to pay for the screens, but have now been able to reclaim about 90% back from NHS England. In terms of PPE, we can now order through a portal and we have an ID provided for us now. Joanne said, going forward GP's will still be working from home and the initial triage will be kept. We feel that the way we are working does get the patient seen quicker and video consult will also probably stay. Syd agreed and felt that you have ample opportunity to discuss any issues over the telephone. Joanne said that it is also helping the patients that do need to be brought into Practice.

Joanne informed the Group that we will call the Group in March, but if any of them need to get in touch please do.

4: Next meeting

Date of next meeting via Zoom:

3rd March 2021

4pm – 5pm