

St Margaret's Medical Practice - PPG Meeting Minutes

Friday 17 October 12:30

Attendees: Lisa Anderson (Practice Manager), Zoë Smith (Assistant Practice Manager), Dr Saini (GP), Barbara Benedek, Nigel Edwards, Colin Marsh, Heather Flint, Pauline Dunn, John Peirce, Colin Marsh, Talat Bryant, Susan Bond, Jeanette Kruger

Apologies: Janet Clarke, Linda Green, Sue Joyce, Hilary Shenken

Meeting Recap

The meeting began with discussions about AI tools for meeting documentation and the previous newsletter distribution, followed by updates on GP contracts and practice changes including vaccination services and space allocation for new rooms. The team reviewed patient feedback and service experiences, particularly focusing on positive comments about the physiotherapy service and call-back system, while also addressing concerns about appointment delays and hospital referral processes. The conversation ended with plans for future meetings and newsletter contributions, along with discussions about healthcare service changes in Northwest London and the implementation of new systems for patient care.

Actions

- **Zoë** to attach the previous meeting minutes to the meeting invitation email for future meetings.
- **Zoë** to look into the issue of in-person appointments being changed to phone calls without patient notification.
- **Dr Saini** to discuss with the clinical team about patient feedback regarding Cora ophthalmology services.
- **Lisa & Zoë** to consider including information about the physiotherapy service in the next newsletter.
- **Jeanette** to format and prepare the next newsletter when content is provided.
- **Lisa** to pass on compliments to Elidio and Matt from the PPG members.
- **Dr Saini** to update the PPG at the next meeting about the North West London GP appointment systems best practice discussion.

Summary

AI Meeting Minutes and Updates

The meeting began with a discussion about using AI tools for meeting minutes and summaries, where Jeanette explained how the AI companion generates minutes and summaries after the meeting, though participants still need to review and edit them. The group then discussed the previous meeting's newsletter, which was successfully distributed by Zoë, Lisa, and Jeanette, and Jeanette suggested attaching meeting minutes to future meeting invitations to make them easier to find. The conversation ended with plans to discuss GP contract updates and practice updates with Dr Saini, who was expected to join after finishing triage duties.

Contract Updates

Dr Saini discussed a contract update requiring all communication channels to remain open until 6:30 PM, noting challenges with urgent requests after surgery hours. They emphasised the importance of submitting requests early in the day to allow sufficient time for processing. Dr Saini also mentioned an online event for parents of children aged 0-4, focusing on winter health issues and vaccination information.

Facility Changes

Dr Saini described the conversion of a large extension into two rooms, one for phlebotomy and the other for consulting and physiotherapy, with the second room expected to be operational within a week.

Flu Vaccination Service Access Discussion

The group discussed flu vaccination services, with Dr Saini explaining that while pharmacists offer walk-in appointments, the surgery requires scheduled appointments due to limited capacity and efficiency concerns. They also addressed the flu and COVID vaccination campaigns, noting that while there was some negotiation with Northwest London about conducting COVID vaccinations, they were eventually allowed to proceed with vaccinating their own patients. Lisa clarified that while patients can choose to receive vaccinations at pharmacies, there is a financial impact for the practice as the practice only receives payment for vaccinations administered by the practice. Dr Saini clarified that while flu vaccinations at pharmacies do have a financial impact on the surgery, it's not a significant issue, and they prefer to focus on patient access and efficient service delivery. Jeanette suggested implementing walk-in mornings for the first two weeks of October, but Lisa and Zoë noted logistical challenges with staffing and patient flow, particularly given the removal of COVID tents outside the practice and the need for doctor oversight.

Healthcare Service Changes in NW London

The meeting discussed changes to healthcare services in Northwest London, including staff reductions and the establishment of a new primary care collaborative to handle various services previously managed by the local authority. Talat shared a positive experience with the two-week wait pathway, which Dr Saini explained has been extended to 28 days in some cases, though this can lead to delays in routine appointments.

Patient Feedback and Staff Recognition

Barbara and others praised the practice's care and efficiency, particularly the online appointment booking system and phone support. The team discussed patient feedback and service experiences, with several members praising the physiotherapy service for its effectiveness and the dedication of staff like Elidio (Receptionist) and Matt (Practice Pharmacist). Jeanette highlighted the excellent in-house physiotherapy service, while Heather shared positive experiences with flu and COVID vaccines. Jeanette highlighted issues with the triage system that led to a last-minute change from an in-person to a phone appointment, which was quickly resolved by the reception team. Lisa and Zoë acknowledged these issues and agreed to look into them further. John complemented Matt's helpfulness in managing appointments and medication issues, and Dr Saini acknowledged the practice's fortunate staffing situation with skilled and thoughtful employees.

Call-back System Success and Updates

The meeting focused on positive feedback about the call-back system and its successful implementation, with staff appreciating the improvement in morale. Dr Saini mentioned an upcoming event in November for GPs in North West London to discuss best practice appointment systems. The group also discussed the total triage system, which has been working well for over a year and is being risk-assessed weekly. Lisa explained the challenges with the new system for 0-4 year olds, noting that while it offers one appointment per day at a local practice, it may not always be convenient for patients.

Cora Service Feedback Discussion

Participants discussed their experiences with Cora, a local ophthalmology clinic, and its' poor administration. Pauline shared her positive experience with the service under a previous name, while Talat pointed out limitations with Cora's automated system, noting that it cannot handle complex queries. Heather expressed concerns about long wait times for appointments and the lack of follow-up options due to the limited availability of consultants.

Hospital Referral Process Improvements

The group discussed issues with hospital referrals and patient communication, particularly regarding the handling of discharge letters and referral confirmations. Barbara highlighted gaps in the process between hospital discharge and general practice follow-up, while Colin shared his experience of uncertainty about referral confirmation. The team agreed to feed back to doctors about local ophthalmology services, including Kingston Hospital, during the next practice clinical meeting. They also discussed the use of online patient records to track referrals, with John checking his online account during the meeting and confirming that the paperclip indicators show referral documents in the system.

Future Meetings

The group decided to meet every three months, with the next meeting planned for the end of January, and agreed to continue contributing items for the practice newsletter with Jeanette offering to continue helping with formatting.