

One Ellesmere Port PCN Patient Champions Meeting Notes

Thursday 27th February 2025

12:00 – 1:00pm

Location: Whitby Health Partnership, 114 Chester Road, CH65 6TG



Present

Dr Rhys Lewis	Co-Clinical Director
Dr Emily Morton	Co-Clinical Director
Sam Minshall	PCN Executive Administrator
Katie Ainsworth	PCN Team Care Coordinator
Liam Holebrook	PCN Lead Clinical Pharmacist
Jean Wilde	Patient Champion - Great Sutton Medical Centre
Kenneth Spain	Patient Champion - Westminster Surgery
Mary McOnie	Patient Champion – Whitby Health Partnership
Anna Cleary	Patient Champion – York Road Group Practice
George Foster	Patient Champion – Whitby Health Partnership
David Grove	Patient Champion – Hope Farm Medical Centre
Tom Foxhall	Patient Champion – Hope Farm Medical Centre
Jean Edge	Patient Champion - Great Sutton Medical Centre

Apologies

Charlotte Wynne	PCN Manager
Michael Perkins	Patient Champion – Whitby Health Partnership
Helen Thompson	Patient Champion – Westminster Surgery
Gloria Bonner	Patient Champion - Old Hall Surgery
Marion Barnett	Patient Champion - Hope Farm Medical Centre
Julie Rees	Patient Champion – Great Sutton Medical Centre
Colin Rhodes	Patient Champion - Westminster Surgery
Peter Butters	Patient Champion – Old Hall Surgery
Gordon Trigg	Patient Champion – York Road Group Practice

1: Welcome & Introductions

The PCN team welcomed everyone, especially our new attendees.

Everyone introduced themselves and which practice they are registered with.

2: PCN Updates

PCN Overview: We gave an overview of the PCN structure, for all new attendees.

We highlighted that individual GP Practices hold their own General Medical Services (GMS) contract, but they receive additional PCN funds to build capacity and resilience into general practice, if they fulfil the PCN contract requirements.

Estates: The PCN practices are still struggling with estates, with limited clinic space to host additional staff needed to increase appointment capacity.

The Great Sutton Medical Centre new build is still being built with an estimated date of completion moved to summertime.

We made everyone aware of the ongoing Compulsory Purchase Order for Stanney Lane Clinic, and the uncertainty this holds. We reminded the group that Stanney Lane Clinic hosts a number of PCN services; First Contact Physiotherapists, PCN Dietitian and Wellbeing Coordinators. Other services such as phlebotomy, sexual health and the wheelchair service are also located at Stanney Lane. We do not have a date yet to decant the building as relocation is still being reviewed.

It has come to our attention that the Phlebotomy service have stopped offering appointments at Stanney Lane from April onwards. We have not received any communications or confirmation regarding this, and we are mindful that patients have started booking in and clinics might need to be rearranged.

UPDATE 25/03/25 – The Phlebotomy Service have now reverted their clinics back to Stanney Lane for the time being.

The move is controversial as the car parking at Ellesmere Port Hospital and Whitby Health Partnership is already unmanageable and adding the Phlebotomy service who at full capacity can be seeing three patients every five minutes. Whitby Health Partnership have requested an improvement grant to convert the grass verges and potentially a green area near to the high school for additional care parking spaces.

It was also mentioned that the Countess of Chester Hospital is also struggling with car parking.

Some Patient Champions have already drafted letters which they plan to send to MP Justin Madders regarding the NHS estates issue. The PCN will support anyone who would also like to send a letter.

It was suggested we investigate Port-a-cabins (also known as Pods) as an estate's solution. We have already received quotes from suppliers, but we know the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) are against them, as they very rarely get used as a temporary measure and result in being a permanent and costly solution.

3: Perception of Access to practices

For this agenda item we wanted to get feedback on patients' perception of access and any barriers they are facing when trying to get an appointment.

Many attendees from varying practices mentioned they can struggle to get an appointment, whether that be by phone, online consultation or in person.

There was positive feedback on the 'call back' system which has been implemented at all practices, in which a patient calls and will receive a call back not having to wait in the phone queue. It was questioned what a patient should do if they do not receive the call back within one hour, it was suggested by that point to contact the practice again and mention it did not work. Instances such as this can only be a technical issue, because if you are on the phone call back system you cannot be removed until a reception team member calls back.

In recent years patients have learned more about the role of the Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) and are being more comfortable seeing them instead of only wanting to see a doctor. Equally many patients now prefer a telephone call, due to their busy lives and schedules it can be hard for some to find time for a face-to-face appointment.

Many practices received praise from attendees due to recent improvements to access, however the problem practices now face is capacity of appointments. Although it might be quicker to get through to the practice reception team, if there are no appointments the patient will still not receive the care they need.

4: Practice PPGs working collaborative

Great Sutton Medical Centre PPG have been running awareness months, recently focusing on National Heart month. This involved raffles, fundraising for charity, and handing out information booklets in the practice reception area.

It has been suggested other PPGs could collaborate and spread the message of awareness further. Potentially if every practice promoted the same campaign each month, it could improve awareness across Ellesmere Port.

It was agreed we would inform all the other practice PPGs of this proposal and await their responses. We would ask the PPG chairs if they are happy to give their contact information to us.

- ACTION - Check if the practice PPGs chairs are happy to share their contact information.

5: AOB

Vaccinations: It was queried if we have had any news on the outcomes for RSV vaccines. Currently there have been no official news released.

However, since the meeting, there has been a short national publication, see below:

RSV vaccine sees drop in hospitalisation of older people

A new study has found a major drop in respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)-related hospitalisations following vaccination among eligible age groups in Scotland.

RSV vaccination for older people and pregnant women was brought in across all UK nations from September last year following a recommendation from public health regulators, with GPs tasked to target over-75s.

The study, from Public Health Scotland (PHS) and the University of Strathclyde, showed a 62% reduction in RSV-related hospitalisations among those who received the vaccine and concludes the vaccine is effective in reducing such hospitalisations in older adults.

The 1st April is the start of the COVID Spring Booster Vaccination programme. We will be running walk-in clinics at Civic Hall and in the Port Arcades, Old Boots chemist.

It was raised that the Shingle vaccine done privately costs nearly £200 per vaccine, and for some patients they need to have two injections. It was questioned why some patients have one whereas others have two. It was explained that there are two eligible cohorts for the Shingle vaccine depending on the patient's year of birth. For all eligible patients the Shingles vaccine is free at your registered GP Practice.

It was questioned whether a walk-in centre like Eastham clinic could be made in Ellesmere Port. This would be ideal, however with limited funding for estates we doubt this will happen. However,

we will always keep it as a potential discussion point to the ICB if funding in the future becomes available.