

One Ellesmere Port PCN Patient Champions Meeting Notes

Thursday 15th May 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
Charlotte Wynne	PCN Manager
Sam Minshall	PCN Executive Administrator
Katie Ainsworth	PCN Team Care Coordinator
Liam Holebrook	PCN Lead Clinical Pharmacist
Emily Lightfoot	PCN Social Prescribing Coordinator
Jean Wilde	Patient Champion - Great Sutton Medical Centre
Kenneth Spain	Patient Champion - Westminster Surgery
Peter Butters	Patient Champion – Old Hall Surgery
Gordon Trigg	Patient Champion – York Road Group Practice
Tom Foxhall	Patient Champion – Hope Farm Medical Centre
Joy Edge	Patient Champion - Great Sutton Medical Centre
Deborah Morris	Patient Champion - Great Sutton Medical Centre

Apologies

Mary McOnie	Patient Champion – Whitby Health Partnership
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
Anna Cleary	Patient Champion – York Road Group Practice
George Foster	Patient Champion – Whitby Health Partnership
David Grove	Patient Champion – Hope Farm Medical Centre

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

Charlotte gave an overview of the PCN budget and ARRS roles services.

The PCN are focusing on capacity and access in our practices. We have made great progress with access last year, with our new websites, telephone call back functions etc. This year we will focus more on capacity. We are planning to complete a peer review at each practice to monitor and look at how we can improve capacity.

On the 1st October, online consultations will be open throughout working hours 8:00am – 6:30pm. There will be no cap to the number of submissions, but the practices do have 48 hours to respond.

It was raised that GSMC only allow patients to book appointments at the front desk from a certain time of day. We confirmed this should not be the case as patients should be able to enquire about appointments via the reception desk, telephone or online at all times during opening hours.

We want to promote the NHS APP more for patients. The PCN will be offering drop-in sessions across the practices. We will be particularly even targeting patients who are on 10+ medications who do not yet use the app, as this will save time both for the patients and practice staff.

Some practices are investing in Voice Connect software, which allows patients to order repeat prescriptions over the phone. The other practices are awaiting feedback and may look into purchasing it too.

As PPGs across the PCN practices are becoming more active, as we debated whether to reduce the PCN PPG meetings. Feedback from attendees is that they would like the meetings to continue as they still find them helpful. It was agreed to have a practice PPG feedback as a standing agenda item. Also, we will move the August meeting later in the year to avoid the summer holidays.

3: Patient Focused Health Events

We gave an overview of the Type 2 Diabetes Path to Remission Programme (TDPR), and our plans to do promotional events in the year. However, we have been told from the ICB that we have referred too many patients and so we are not able to actively promote it any further. However, patients can still be opportunistically referred on to the programme, should it be appropriate for them during their normal interactions with their GP Practice.

It was suggested concerns could be raised to the ICB and PALS.

We are also planning to run events focused on asthma. There has been a complete overhaul on the NICE guidance and treatment of asthma, and we want to educate patients what new options are available.

4: Mental Health Link Workers/Counsellors

Emily Lightfoot, PCN Social Prescribing Coordinator, attended to give an overview of the Mental Health Link Workers (MHLW), who are qualified Counsellors.

We have two qualified counsellors, then additional student counsellors who do 1-to-1 therapy with patients. Usually, patients have 6 x 15 minutes sessions which are delivered face to face in the evenings in our GP Practices. Unfortunately, we do not offer much daytime counselling as there are no available rooms to use, hence why the service operates mostly in the evenings. This is very popular for our working patients though.,

Waiting times are currently 3 months, but we are hoping to increase capacity when more rooms became available which will reduce the wait. NHS Talking therapies waiting time can be 6-9 months. Step 4 clinical psychology can be as long as 4 years.

We have also run workshops for patients, such as bereavement, relationships etc. This has also helped with capacity as we can support multiple patients in one session.

It was queried what agencies they work with, such as MIND. The MHLWs can refer on from the counselling session to specific community services and charities. The service is linked well with our Social Prescribing team, so it is easier for us to refer on.

It was raised that the term 'Social Prescribing' is hard for patients to know exactly what the service involves. The PCN Team were in agreement that it is a very medicalised term!

5: COVID Spring Booster

The COVID Spring Booster campaign continues to be delivered by the PCN. We have had a good turn out with an uptake of 65% on average for eligible patients.

We are now preparing for Flu and COVID Winter programme.

If any patients still want a COVID Spring vaccine this season, we advise they go to a pharmacy as our stocks are low and currently do not have any clinics planned.

6: AOB

The PCN Clinical Directors met with MP Justin Madders; to discuss the issues we have with estates.

The Sexual Health clinic will not be sent to the BRIO leisure centre as initially planned. Also, the Phlebotomy services is remaining at Stanney Lane until further notice.

All PCN Practices have made the decision not to receive repeat medication requests via e-mail from Community Pharmacies, to prevent over ordering. All Community Pharmacies have been made aware of this change, which will start in a phased manner from the 1st July 2025. Requests can be done quicker via the NHS App or by contacting the practice. Please note that vulnerable patients and those who use blister packs will still be able to have their repeat medications ordered by Community Pharmacy.

It was raised that there are limited ear wax removal services in the local area. We suggested services such Specsavers, pharmacies, and even private companies.