

# The Stephenson Medical Practice

[www.drstephensonconcord@nhs.uk](mailto:www.drstephensonconcord@nhs.uk)

VICTORIA ROAD HEALTH CENTRE

## **NOTES OF PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MEETING held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February – 10.30 a.m.**

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Patients: MLP, JTP, BP, DG, VB  
Staff: HC  
Chair: LC  
Speaker: Rev. Julie Wing, St. Michael's and All Angels Church (Mickey's Place)

The meeting welcomed Rev. Julie Wing who gave a detailed insight into what Mickey's Place offers. Rev. Julie came to the church almost 11 years ago and started a food bank, initially in conjunction with Washington Community Food Project and later with the Trussell Trust, to support the local community and the surrounding area. These days Mickey's Place has a lot more to offer. There are a lot of social issues in the area and some people are reluctant to keep appointments. Mickey's Place enables various organisations to use it as a "hot desk" to meet with clients and encourage them to engage. Mickey's Place continued to operate during the Covid pandemic by having a table outside with bread and fresh produce which needy people could take. Currently the only food outlet which supports Mickey's Place is Asda in Washington who operate a tin collection. Local allotment owners also bring along their spare produce. Open 3 days a week, Mickey's Place not only provides food parcels and hot food from the café but also is a community hub where people can come together in a safe space to find companionship and get guidance and support from a team whose aim is to make the community a better place. Various events also take place during the year including a BBQ in the summer, tea dance, craft fair, a halloween party and carols round the campfire. There is also a digital hub where people can access computers to do the likes of job searches, and a free photocopying facility. Church services are held every Sunday and a point of interest for visitors is a 7ft x 4ft picture of the Madonna and child created out of 160 slices of toast. The church is aiming at being an eco-church with zero waste, with a composter and as much as possible being recycled. At the rear of the church is a mini garden where the community could grow their own food. Rev. Julie thanked the Stephenson Medical Practice for all of their help in the past. Full details of Mickey's Place can be found at [www.mickeysplace.co.uk](http://www.mickeysplace.co.uk)

1. Apologies – AH, PS, SD, RB
2. Minutes of previous meeting  
  
Accepted as read.
3. Practice update

Nursing team members AB and ST are due to retire. Two practice nurses have been appointed, one full time who will commence on 24<sup>th</sup> February and will work alongside AB until her

retirement, ST's replacement will be working 20 hours and is expected to start by the end of March. The coder who joined the practice in October on a temporary basis has had her contract extended.

Billing issues are continuing and work is ongoing to reduce costs. Accurix messages are being sent out instead of letters, we have also been asked to reduce the number of text messages being sent. An additional person is required due to the volume of work but the position has not yet been filled. The NI hike is expected to have a massive impact on the practice. Two GP Registrars, Dr. Hill and Dr. Zwe, left the practice at the beginning of February. A new GP registrar is joining and will be with us until August. Dr. Kelly has requested to take responsibility for year 5 students. Zero tolerance letters have been sent to some patients. Collective action by GPs had taken place without patients being affected.

ICB contracts department had contacted the practice regarding eConsult and comments from some patients with regard to no longer being able to make appointments by telephone. The new eConsult is going live on 1<sup>st</sup> April. There has already been a massive increase in eConsults which were previously running at 160 per week, this has now doubled and staff are assisting patients with the process. There is a lot of debate about how we are dealing with the appointment diary which is now coded. Further messages will be sent to patients. Appointments to see a practice nurse can be made in the traditional way but appointments for GPs and nurse practitioners can only be requested via eConsult. We have allocated admin staff who communicate with the GPs on eConsult. This has resulted in some patients being contacted on the same day regarding an appointment. Dr. Sumner is creating a video about eConsult which will go on the practice website and social media. It will be classified as "for information only". If patients have an issue they will be asked to contact the practice. There are 2 GPs dealing with eConsult and regular monthly meetings are held on the subject.

#### 4. Any other business

One member of the group stated that he supports student doctors at Sunderland Royal Hospital during their exams, having had a medical procedure which they are questioned on by a consultant who is their examiner. There are some real quality 3<sup>rd</sup> year students coming through. HC confirmed that Dr. Sumner works with 3<sup>rd</sup> year students.

A question was raised about the weighing machine in the reception area and could it be moved to a more private location due to it making announcements and displaying a patient's weight. HC advised that, unfortunately, the machine is networked and is not mobile.

One member asked if directions to the numbered rooms could be displayed on the screen in the reception area. HC advised that this was not possible, posters would still be displayed on walls.

It was pointed out that new housing estates are being built in the locality, however, when the postcode is entered on the practice website it states that it is outside of the area covered, even though the website states that the practice covers all of Washington. HC advised that the map on the website is the original one which was uploaded and cannot be amended, however, people residing on the new estates will be able to register with the practice.

#### 8. Next meeting – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April