**MINUTES OF PPG MEETING**

**HELD AT HEATH LANE MEDICAL CENTRE**

**TUESDAY 25th JULY 2023**

In Attendance:

Dr Zoe Thompson- Shaw (ZT)

Richard Johnson (RJ)

Greg Yates (GY)

Dave Morris (DM)

Jane Bignall (JB)

Ian Gould (IG)

1. Apologies and Update on New Members

Apologies were received from:

Robert Beacham

Krissy Myler

Mike Croft

Anne Ireland

GY welcomed all to the meeting and declared it quorate despite the low attendance. He welcomed Anne Ireland as an enthusiastic new member.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 April 2023

Approved as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

GY asked about the current situation with local pharmacy services (Item 4.3). RJ said there were still problems with demand for pharmacists outstripping supply and a lack of funding in the system to address this.

In response to a question from IG on item 4.4, RJ said there was no news yet from NHS England on an Autumn Covid Booster programme.

On item 7.2, RJ confirmed that the ‘sign in’ screen was now working again but the TV screen in the waiting room was still not operating fully while awaiting a new part. This would hopefully be installed next week. GY used this point to express his view that the 4 practices could do much more to publicise the information about all the services they now provide eg the well-being co-ordinator, social prescriber, dietician, physio first, the extended hours appointment system etc. He was uncertain whether this would best be done at Practice or PCN level, since the services were to a large extent common, so it would be efficient to share the publicity.

RJ had looked at the issues with website revision (item 7.4) but explained that the Practice has only limited ability to make changes in-house because the site is owned by a private contractor. The other PCN Practices each has a separate contract so achieving commonality of ‘best practice’ is not easy. PPG offered to help in reviewing the current website content and suggesting improvements – see also item 5 below.

4. Updates from Heath Lane Medical Centre

4.1 Staffing matters – RJ reported that the Practice was once again short of receptionists with two vacant posts. These had been advertised but would not be easy to fill.

4.2 Econsult/Patches transfer – RJ said that this had been completed successfully and that Patches now offered a more sophisticated and effective system for online consultations. He was encouraged by the level of use so far. GY felt that the explanation of Patches on the website could be more informative and he would feed-back suggestions.

4.3 Flu/Covid autumn vaccination programme – ZT expressed disappointment at the relatively low take up of the vaccines offered last year. In particular, the supply of flu vaccines obtained had not been used fully resulting in a financial loss to the Practice. One of the reasons for this was the delay in obtaining vaccine supplies, leading to the cancellation of planned clinics and patients then going to local pharmacies for their jabs. The Practice is obliged to continue to offer this service so has placed a more modest order for vaccines this year. No dates for expected receipt of these have been given by NHS England although it was noted that some private pharmacies are already advertising a vaccine pre-booking opportunity.

ZT also said that the take up of Spring Covid boosters had been less than expected. This may simply be a case of ‘vaccine fatigue’ within the qualifying patient groups.

4.4 Results of NHS/MORI annual survey – the headline results for the Practice had been shared and discussed by the PPG and were felt to be very encouraging overall in relation to both national and local comparators. There were several areas where the Practice performed particularly well, including the ease of telephone contact, and there was nothing of real concern. ZT commented that the one area of slightly below par achievement, the ability to see a GP of choice, still reflected the view of many patients that they needed to see ‘a doctor’ rather than another health professional who may be much better suited to deal with their condition.

5. East Cheshire Primary Care Network (PCN)

GY referred to the PCN meeting on 28 June which several PPG members had attended. He tabled the Action Plan circulated at that meeting and asked how the PPG might become engaged in helping the Practice achieve the relevant targets. After discussion, it was suggested that a PPG working group might be set up in the Autumn to look at those actions where PPG could have a direct input, such as improving ‘scores’ for Friends & Family tests, reviewing the website and the information available in the waiting room. AI had already offered to help with reviewing the information (leaflets, posters, notices etc), and to help keep it up to date; and JB offered to help her. This idea was welcomed by ZT and RJ. GY will now develop with volunteers from PPG. ZT suggested that it would be helpful if the PPG had a pretext for meeting patients in the waiting room again, as had happened before Covid. This could be to perform a modest survey based around an enhanced Friends and Family form, to pass on information about services as discussed in 3 above, and even recruit more members to the PPG!

6. Chairman’s Update

GY had attended the recent Cheshire PPG Chairs meeting along with 11 others from the total of 34 Practices in West Cheshire. There was no representation from the Integrated Care Board who seemed unable to provide any resources to support the group as a means of obtaining the patient viewpoint, so its future is questionable. There was an interesting presentation by the Hospital at Home Service which is highly regarded but little known. ZT confirmed that GP’s can and do refer patients to this service where appropriate but overall capacity is necessarily limited.

7. Any Other Business

The “officers” haven’t been put up for election for over four years, so it is proposed to do this at the October meeting. GY is prepared to stand again as chairman, but any other nominations for that post, the vice chair or the secretary should be sent to RJ when the next agenda goes out in October.

GY thanked all who had made a donation to him for tomato plants. The overall result was a donation of £500 to the Neurotherapy centre in Saltney.

8. Date of Next Meeting

**Tuesday 31 October 2023 at 3.30 pm (PPG pre-meeting at 3.00)**. Agreed that members should be asked specifically to confirm attendance or otherwise when the Agenda is sent out to avoid the possibility of a non-quorate meeting.