

The Grove Patient Participation Group  
Sherborne  
Minutes  
4<sup>th</sup>.March 2024  
6:00pm

**Present:** David Bartle (Vice Chair) **(DB)**; Joan Cooper **(JC1)**; Jenny Davis **(JD)**; Gill Foott (Engagement and Communications Coordinator [PPGs]) **(GF)**; Carol Foster **(CF)**; Alex Kimber (Managing Partner) **(AK)**; Dr. Liz Long **(LL)**; Roger Marsh (Chair) **(RM)**; Tony Meehan **(TM)**; Vicky Morland (Social Prescriber); AJ and Amanda (Sherborne Girls – students); Fiona Ashley-Miller and Finella Watson (Sherborne Good Neighbours); Michele Holland (Community Action Network).

**1. Introductions:**

The Chair **(RM)** welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially those who were attending as visitors.

**2. Apologies:** Sarah Garside; Karen Gough; Maria Heard; and Lorraine Wallington

**3. Sherborne Good Neighbours:**

Both Fiona and Finella from the Sherborne Good Neighbours (SGN) scheme gave the PPG members details of how the scheme operates as follows:

- Entirely run by volunteers
- Comprises just over 50 volunteer drivers and 16 non-driving volunteers
- Takes requests for assistance from anyone registered with either the Grove or Apples medical centres
- Volunteer drivers taking people for medical appointments can travel as far as Bristol, Taunton or Southampton
- Selected volunteer given details of request and they make direct contact with the person making the request to make arrangements etc.
- Travel is paid for at a rate of 45p/mile and paid directly in cash to the volunteer by the person making the request
- Volunteers will wait whilst person is attending appointment
- Majority of trips are short distance
- Over 21,000 miles driven in the past year
- Help provided with fetching prescriptions and shopping, also letter writing, form filling, befriending and other small tasks etc.
- Demand for help has increased with 2,100 requests in the last year and 690 requests in the last quarter.
- New volunteers have to complete an application form and have references from two referees.
- Volunteers are DBS checked.

It was stated that the PPG had posted an advertisement for volunteers on several local Facebook groups and also published an article in the latest newsletter.

It was suggested that SGN should contact the Volunteer Centre at [volunteerindorset.org.uk](http://volunteerindorset.org.uk) as they would be able to help in recruiting volunteers.

It was agreed that once new television screens had been installed in the waiting rooms at the Grove, then a suitable request for volunteers could be advertised on them. **Action: (RM/AK)**

It was agreed to refresh the existing posts on Facebook. **Action: (RM)**

It was agreed that **(TM)** would speak / meet with Fiona Ashley Miller of Sherborne Good Neighbours to write a story for the Grove newsletter, contact Sherborne Times and discuss an approach to Abbey104 FM, using the same material. **Action: (TM)**

It was suggested by **(AK)** that young people over the age of 16 years might be willing to volunteer through Geoff Cook at the Gryphon School.

It was noted that SGN had been invited to attend the Sherborne PCN health fair on the 14<sup>th</sup>.May.

#### **4. Community Action Network:**

Michele Holland – Membership Development Lead from Community Action Network (CAN) had been invited to address the meeting on the work of CAN and ways that they could link with the Grove PPG.

(Note: the two members of SGN remained at the meeting to hear the details about CAN).

Michele gave the meeting the following information:

Michele explained that CAN was formed around 5 years ago from the amalgamation of BCP and Dorset councils Voluntary Services Councils, and as such has around 50 years experience in supporting charities and community organisations. They are considered to be an infrastructure charity (i.e. a charity that supports other charities).

CAN is commissioned by both BCP and Dorset councils to offer professional guidance and advice on practical services. They also run training courses, and opportunities for networking to enable the sharing of ideas across similar groups.

They have a searchable volunteering hub where people can explore opportunities for volunteering. The hub can also be used for groups to add information requesting volunteers.

CAN also works with the NHS and Public Health Dorset to connect voluntary sector organisations together (i.e. PCNs; schools; local NHS teams and also councils).

It was noted that Purbeck PPG has signed up for membership of CAN, as PPGs qualify by the fact that they do work in the community.

At present a service finder is being produced as a pilot project which is for use by professional organisations.

The meeting agreed that the Grove PPG should apply for full membership of CAN. **Action: (RM)**

It was also agreed that the PPG would supply CAN with a copy of the Sherborne Area Directory for Health and Care such that CAN could be made aware of local voluntary groups **Action: (RM)**

#### **5. Practice Update: (Managing Partner)**

Both **(AK)** and **(LL)** gave a full report on the work at the Practice:

**(AK)** reported that the Practice had experienced an unprecedented level of patient requests for an appointment on Monday 4<sup>th</sup>.March with 108 requests between 8 am and 9 am. The demand was such that the Practice had to suspend the online triage system until 8 am the following day. It was obvious that some patients were extremely sick and required to be seen urgently, whereas many had used the Practice as the first option for very minor problems that could have been dealt with by other means than an appointment with the GP.

The fact that some patients were waiting an extended time for an hospital appointment following referral from primary care was not helping the situation as quite often their condition would worsen and require further treatment by primary care.

There was an urgent need for continued patient education as to where they could get help for minor ailments rather than using primary care as the first port of call.

**(AK)** also stated that in the recent week around 40 patients who had requested an appointment were referred to the pharmacy with only 3 being referred back to primary care.

Dr Felix Asaju, who is in his second year of training, and is a fully qualified GP, had joined the Practice and would be with the Practice until August.

The second group of medical students from Bristol University were now visiting the Practice on a Wednesday. As previously agreed, a note would be published to patients asking for volunteers who would be willing to attend the Practice for examination by the students under supervision. **(AK)** agreed to provide the details **Action: (AK)**

It was reported that television information screens were being installed in the waiting rooms on the 5<sup>th</sup>.March. It was agreed that these would be very useful for publishing various information for patients.

**(AK)** requested help from volunteers at the next PCN Covid clinics to be conducted at the Digby Hall on the 30<sup>th</sup>.April and the 1<sup>st</sup>.May. The clinics will be for those patients aged over 75 and the clinically vulnerable. **Action: All to note**

**(LL)** gave the meeting details of the PCN pharmacy team. She stated that the team comprised three pharmacist and three pharmacy technicians. The pharmacy technicians were in various stages of training and were proving to provided a very useful role within the PCN by carrying out administrative functions to support the pharmacists. Additionally they can conduct blood pressure checks and also visit patients in their own homes to ensure that their medications are safe and are being taken correctly etc. The pharmacists are performing an extremely useful role among others by identifying alternative medications when patients report that they cannot obtain the medication originally prescribed. The pharmacist have been very useful in that they are conducting medication reviews with patients and they are also monitoring drug safety etc. This has taken a lot of workload off the GPs, especially as the GPs are having to deal with patient care that would previously been carried out by secondary care following a patients treatment in hospital.

It was agreed to liaise with Dr Long to enable the drafting of an article for the next newsletter and local media on the expanded role of Pharmacies in the Community and at the Grove.

**Action: (TM)**

## **6. NHS Dorset - Engagement & Communications (PPGs)**

**(GF)** reported on the following:

### **i) NHS Mobile Dental Unit:**

It was noted that Dorset will be getting a mobile dental unit as part of the Government's Social Care Recovery Plan and it was intended that it will travel around the county and will be particularly helpful to those living in rural areas.

### **ii) PPG Webinar:**

The recording of the recently held webinar on personal and community resilience has now been posted on the NHS Dorset PPG website.

### **iii) Views of children and young people / parents / carers for CQC/Ofsted inspection:**

**(GF)** reported that for parents and carers Ofsted would like to hear views about the support that their child receives and how it has helped them and their child. (It was noted that the survey closed on the 5<sup>th</sup>.March).

## **7. Health Champions:**

### **Fibromyalgia Support Group:**

The group continues to function well with around 12 people attending each meeting. It has also seen new members joining the group.

### **The Wellbeing Walks:**

The walks are continuing with a resonable take up by people, however more volunteer leaders are required.

### **Carer Support Group:**

The intention to form a group is still in the early stages of development.

## 8. Military Veterans Support Group:

The support group continues to meet on the third Saturday of each month at Manor Court, Newland and has now been running for 30 months.

At the February meeting, attended by 38 members, a talk on his life as a boy soldier was given by John Stokoe CB CBE.

Help for Heroes were scheduled to attend the March meeting of the group.

## 9. Apples PPG Report

No report.

## 10. Actions from 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 Meeting

### i) 'Virtual' PPG Members Survey on Accurx Triage System

Following the initial patient survey conducted at the end November 2023 it was agreed to conduct a similar exercise in the Spring of 2024 once the system had matured. **Action: (RM)**

### ii) Health Fair:

As requested members had provided a selection of organisations to attend the fair. The details has been passed to Sarah Webster (PCN Manager) **Action: Closed**

Regarding car parking for exhibitors, it had been agreed that the costs would be covered by a grant application to Sherborne Town Council. **Action: Closed**

### iii) Grove Newsletter (Propose articles for next edition).

All proposed items now included in the forthcoming edition of the newsletter No.13. **Action: Closed**

### iv) PPG Engagement with Young People:

(RM) reported that an item was now on the agenda of the Youth Council meeting at Sherborne Primary School on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. Also, that he would be attending the meeting to seek the views of the Youth Council for the need of information based upon an existing document titled 'When You Turn 16' **Action: (RM)**

### v) OpCourage – promotion.

A full marketing campaign for the new NHSE Integrated Veterans Mental Health and Well-Being service – Op Courage had been launched and the practice website had been revised with updated information. **Action: Closed**

### vi) Practice Waiting Room:

Signage regarding both waiting rooms had been repositioned to make the information clearer. **Action: Closed**

Members of the reception staff had been asked to inform patients if there was a delay in a GP meeting an appointment time. **Action: Closed**

### vii) Future Meetings Talk:

It was agreed that a talk on how the Practice is financed would be on the agenda for the April PPG meeting. **Action: (RM)**

### viii) Medical Students:

The request for volunteer patients to meet with medical students at the Practice as part of their training had yet to be made, **Action: (AW) and (RM)**

## 11. PPG Chairs Activities:

(RM) gave the meeting a report on his activities since the last PPG meeting;

- Met with Cllr Jill Warburton to discuss a possible meeting with Magna Housing Association regarding health and wellbeing issues with local tenants.
- Took part in the PPG webinar on medicine waste.
- Met with Somerset PPG Chairs to discuss changes to NHS Somerset Stroke service.
- Attended North Dorset PPG Chairs meeting
- Attended the unveiling of a plaque at Lambs Field in memory of those who lost their lives in the Coldharbour Hospital fire.
- Attended Our Dorset Public Engagement Group meeting
- Attended the Military Veterans Support Group meeting
- Interviewed by Andy Read of Abbey 104 to talk about the Military Veterans Support Group
- Attended Sherborne Town Council meeting and gave an update report on health and care
- Met with Sarah Webster and othes to discuss health talks and the health fair
- Attended NHS Somerset meeting on changes to Stoke services

## 12. Any Other Business:

i) Medicine Waste

Following discussion on the possibility of the Practice providing a facility for the recycling of blister packs, it was agreed that this would be prohibitive on the basis of cost.

**Action: All to note**

## 11) Date of next meetings:

**MONDAY 22<sup>ND</sup>.APRIL 2024 ~ 6.00 pm at the Grove Medical Centre**

**MONDAY 3<sup>RD</sup>. JUNE 2024 ~ 6.00 pm at the Grove Medical Centre**