

The Grove Patient Participation Group

Sherborne

Minutes

3rd. June 2024
6:00pm

Present: David Bartle (Vice Chair) **(DB)**; Jenny Davis **(JD)**; Carol Foster **(CF)**; Alex Kimber (Managing Partner) **(AK)**; Roger Marsh (Chair) **(RM)**; Tony Meehan **(TM)**; Vicky Morland (Social Prescriber) **(VM)**; Dr. Matt Phelan and Annabel Crabb (visitor)

1. Introductions:

The Chair **(RM)** welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Dr. Matt Phelan and Annabelle Crabb.

2. Apologies: Gill Foott (Engagement and Communications Coordinator [PPGs]); Sarah Garside; Karen Gough; Maria Heard; and AJ and Amanda (Sherborne Girls – students).

3. The Grove Medical Centre – PCN Frailty Team:

Dr. Matt Phelan gave a talk on the work of the Frailty Team's across the Primary Care Network. He explained that the team had developed to become more pro-active in their approach to patient frailty by moving away from the 'tick box' system of addressing a patient's condition.

Their assessment of a patient's condition and level of risk takes into account many factors including their long-term health condition, mental health ability, medication etc. The assessment identifies those most at risk of adverse events including hospitalisation, nursing home admission and death. Early identification coupled with targeted support can help older people living with frailty to stay well and live independently for as long as possible.

Dr. Phelan was thanked for a most informative talk which had helped the Patient Group members get a better all round knowledge of the work conducted by the Practice.

4. Practice Update: (Managing Partner)

Staffing Levels:

(AK) stated that the Practice was still having to recruit another Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) as unfortunately several applicants for the post had proved to be unsuitable.

Regarding staffing levels, **(AK)** reported that two GPs were leaving the Practice. One being Dr. Thomas who was taking up sole responsibility for Sherborne Girls School patients. However, Dr. Aimee Barnes was returning in July from maternity leave and Dr. Tham's contract with the Practice was being extended. There had also been a new starter in the Patient Services Team and two students were being recruited to help out on administration duties over the summer period.

Phlebotomy:

The Practice has had to make the difficult decision for the time being to stop doing any blood tests requested by a consultant or doctor from Yeovil Hospital that needed to be taken to the Yeovil lab for processing. This was the same for all North Dorset practices. From the beginning of April, the courier contract for the collection of samples for the Dorchester lab changed and the commissioners were unaware that the previous courier also used to collect samples for the Yeovil lab and anything that needed taking to the Yeatman Hospital. Anything for the Yeovil lab would then be added to their collection at the Yeatman. The new courier is now Dorchester hospital porter services and they are only taking DCH samples. This means that there is no collection for the smaller number of Yeovil samples taken each day. The impact for patients is that either they have to go back to Yeovil to their phlebotomy department to have the bloods taken or the Practice can still take their bloods but the samples would be sent to Dorchester. The issue then arose that these are different pathology systems that do not link and whilst some consultants have access to the DCH pathology many don't so the onus would be on the patient to either be able to look the results

up for the consultant on their NHS app or use their online account to download a copy to take/send. However, the Practice would support anyone vulnerable to get their results but it was not something they could do for everyone.

GP Contract:

(AK) reported that the BMA had now formally gone into dispute with the government over the GP contract enforcement this year and the paltry 1.9% uplift. The GP profession was almost all unanimous in rejecting the contract but the form of action to be taken was still to be determined. However, no action was being planned to be undertaken until August.

Vaccination Clinics:

The 5th and 12th October had been earmarked for the flu vaccination clinics in the autumn. Due to non-availability of the Digby Hall the first clinic on the 5th October would be conducted at The Grove Medical Centre, however the second clinic on the 12th October would be held at the Digby Hall. Although yet to be determined it was hoped to combine the clinics with that of the Covid booster vaccinations.

5. NHS Dorset - Engagement & Communications (PPGs)

Although (GF) had sent her apologies to the meeting, it was noted that the weekly NHS Dorset updates had been circulated to PPG members etc.

6. Health Champions:

(VM) Updated the meeting on the continued work of both the **Fibromyalgia and Bereavement Support Groups** along with the **Wellbeing Walks**.

As it was 'Volunteer Week', daily publicity was being posted on each day during the week showing different areas of where one could volunteer in relation to the locally run health groups.

7. Military Veterans Support Group:

(RM) stated that the Military Veteran's Support Group received a talk by John Barrett MBE on National Service days at its May meeting.

There would be no meeting in June, but the July meeting would be a presentation on the work of the Countryman's Club.

8. Reflections on the PCN Health Fair:

The following points were noted from the Fair:

- Approx 150 people attended
- There were 42 organisations in attendance
- Between 70 and 80 people had their Blood Pressure checked – with at least 5% showing as having previously undiagnosed Hypertension
- Between 15 to 20 people were helped to sign up to the NHS App and other online healthcare services
- Those who attended were able to watch or join in with armchair exercises and armchair yoga
- More 'Virtual PPG' members signed up
- Good contacts were made with various organisations

9. Reflections on the PCN Health Talk:

- The talk on 'Preventing Diabetes' was held at the Sherborne Sports Centre on the 15th .May.
- This was the first on a series of health talks.
- The event was well attended
- Presentation by Roxanne Botha from 'Living Well Taking Control', about making lifestyle changes to improve our general health.
- Brad Jones from 'Active Dorset' who highlighted the important connection with being active.
- The talk included one of our local councillors Jon Andrews, who gave a very personal account of his journey with Diabetes..
- Further talks are being planned this year, including 'Weight Management', Hypertension', 'Lowering your Cancer Risk' and 'Sleep'.

10. PPG Recruitment:

A short discussion took place on the need for one or two more patients to join the PPG committee. It was felt that the best way for recruitment was for existing members to approach others that they knew who might be interested in joining the group. **Action: All to note.**

11. PPG Newsletter:

(TM) reported that articles for the summer edition of the newsletter were in the final stages of being formatted. These included:

- Dr Charlie Middle item
- A View from the Waiting Room
- NHS Quicker Service Finder App
- Military Veterans – Help for Heroes
- Health Fair Report
- Health Talk Report

Regarding the item 'A View from the Waiting Room' there was a need for someone to take over writing this item following the retirement of Joan Cooper from the group. (JD) said that she would liaise with (TM) to determine what was involved and to see whether she could offer help in the future.

Action: (JD) and (TM).

12. Actions from 22nd April 2024 Meeting

i) Health Talks and Health Fair:

Request for volunteers to help at both events had been carried out.

Action: Closed.

ii) '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 repeat exercise for comparison during July. The questionnaire would be reviewed prior to issue.

Action: (RM) and (AK).

iii) PPG Engagement with Young People

The action for the two student members to write a ten point synopsis on what was important from a health point of view to younger people had been completed and passed to (AK) **Action: Closed.**

The action to use the information produced by the students to form the basis for some suitable information to be included on the Practice website had now been completed, but it required reviewing.

Action: (AK) and (RM).

iv) Wessex Local Medical Council notice to patients:

Subsequent to the discussion on this subject at the last PPG meeting Dr Charlie Middle had produced a detailed letter to patients concerning the pressures and difficulties that the Practice was presently under in providing a safe and timely service to patients. Due to the considerable detail culminating in a lengthy letter, it was decided that there was a need to identify the key points such that they could be easily highlighted to patients. The patients could then be directed to the letter itself for a fuller explanation. It was agreed to review this approach. **Action: (AK) and (TM).**

13. PPG Chairs Activities:

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

- Attend the PCN Health Fair
- Attend Health talk on diabetes
- Took part in a workshop on voluntary help for patients following discharge from hospital
- Attended Military Veterans Support Group May meeting

14. Any Other Business:

i) Patient referrals to Secondary Care:

(RM) stated that he had received comments from patients regarding the difficulties in obtaining a timely appointment with Secondary Care (i.e. consultant; scans; physiotherapy etc.) following a GP referral. Following discussion it was stated that the best way to highlight the problem was through the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) of the respective Hospital Trust.

ii) Befriending deaf patients

Annabelle Crabb, a patient, had been invited to attend the meeting as she wished to set up a local group for deaf patients. She was already meeting with a couple of deaf people on a regular basis to improve signing and also as a befriending group. However, she wished to expand this group and was asking if the Practice/PPG could help in any way. (TM) suggested that he might help in getting publicity through the local press and also an interview on the local radio station Abbey FM.

Action: (TM) to liaise with Annabelle Crabb

(VM) also suggested that she may be able to help in her role as a social prescriber. **Action: (VM)**

To enable the above actions to take place it was agreed that the email address of each would be circulated. **Action: (RM).**

iii) Health Walks Accessibility:

(VM) asked the PPG whether help could be provided in mapping the location of all the dropped kerbs around the town as this would aid the health walk leaders in determining suitable routes for those who were less able. (AK) stated that this would be a suitable project for those students taking part at the Gryphon School in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. A contact could be made through Geoff Cook at the Gryphon School. **Action: (VM)**

(DB) stated that the routes detailed in the orienteering courses around Sherborne were also planned with accessibility in mind.

iv) Reducing Medicine Waste:

(RM) reported that he had been in contact with Tracy Lyons – Principal Pharmacist NHS Dorset regarding recent Medicine Waste campaign. Tracy had given him details of the results from the recent campaign. In the Sherborne PCN the increase/decrease in prescriptions over the period of the campaign showed a mixed bag of results with Yetminster at +4.9%, The Apples at +0.4% and The Grove at -1.4%.

Across the whole of Dorset the campaign saved £475k over 2 months, and this would have released the equivalent of 6500 GP appointment slots in time. Some of the teams found it had such a positive impact on staff workload that they were planning on running the campaign again during the year and the ICB was planning on running it again at the same time next year.

Action: All to note.

v) Medicine Prescriptions:

(AK) stated that there was a new policy introduced whereby no medicines would be prescribed by prescription to patients that could be easily purchased over the counter at a pharmacy.

Action: All to note.

11) Date of next meetings:

MONDAY 15TH JULY 2024 ~ 6.00 pm at the Grove Medical Centre