

# Abbey Medical Centre Patient Participation Group minutes of meeting on August 8, 2019, 1pm

**Present:** Thelma Hembury, Christine Tyldesley, Jean Reid, Gerry Coppel, Richard Hepple, Sue McNab, Jean Yarnell, Juliette Abrams.

**Apologies for absence:** Chris Barnatt, Darren Bailey, Allison Dobbs, Lucy Morrow and Joy Stevenson.

**Minutes of last meeting:** Agreed (with change flagged up by Jean Yarnell).

**Matters arising:** Re email copies of the newsletter, Debs said this is possible. Juliette wondered if an opt-in question could be added to the form for new patients. Debs said patients can choose preferred ways of being informed about appointments etc and tend to always choose SMS messaging but said it would be possible to be more proactive about obtaining email addresses.

Gerry raised the question of the online appointments system and said it can be six weeks before you can get an online appointment. Debs said a percentage of appointments are released each day and said patients who phone in at 8am are more advantaged. She said Joy is already looking at this and Debs would see what other practices are doing about it and inform Joy. Debs said it is difficult to offer nurse appointments online because the times for certain things differ. i.e. people having a diabetic check-up will need a twenty minute slot, whereas someone having an injection will need a shorter slot. Richard asked why extended access appointments in the evenings and at weekends were not available online. Debs said these are on a different system to System One and managed by another service provider so cannot go online.

Re the new appointment system as a whole, Debs said the reception staff had gone through a difficult time but had performed very well. She also pointed out that the doctors would always be willing to see children and elderly people who needed to be seen urgently. Thelma asked at what age patients are considered elderly. Debs said she would say 80-plus but would have to confirm that with the doctors. It would also depend on the state of health of the person. Juliette said the word urgent was the relevant one - it would depend on what the situation is.

The results of the GP survey mentioned by Lucy at the last meeting in regard to her husband had, Debs said, been very good as far as the Abbey Practice was concerned. The practice is talking about doing its own survey maybe in the autumn and perhaps to coincide with the flu clinics. Sue had looked at the results on the NHS survey website <https://www.gp-patient.co.uk/practices-search> (look for Abbey Medical Centre, Beeston, NG9 2QP) and asked about

the question regarding mental health, where the practice had achieved only 70-odd%. Debs said she would mention this at the next practice meeting.

**Extended hours phlebotomy appointments:** All GP practices have now been asked to provide an extended hours service in the mornings before 8.00am. Many practices do already. The Abbey Medical Centre has decided not to do this and the money which would have come to the practice to offer this service has been given to two nearby practices who are willing to hold an early morning phlebotomy clinic for Abbey patients. They are the Manor practice, near the Beeston transport hub, and The Oaks, opposite Sainsbury's. The two practices are on the same data system as the Abbey and can therefore see what blood tests Abbey patients require. Patients requiring one of these appointments should go through the Abbey practice to make the appointment.

**Any other business:** Smoking: Allison Dobbs had emailed with an issue about people smoking in the grounds of the practice and the next-door pharmacy. She asked if a notice banning this could be put up. Debs said she would arrange for a poster to be displayed.

Change of staff: Debs said Dr Lyndsey Wheeler had left the practice on August 2 and a new female doctor, Dr Sam Clements, had started on August 5. The doctors can now offer the number of sessions they were offering before Dr Browne retired, though until September there is still the main holiday period to contend with. Sue asked whether the balance of male to female doctors (there is now only one male doctor) was an issue. Debs said in an ideal world there might be an equal number of male and female doctors but there can be no discrimination in advertising for new doctors. In terms of patient requests, she thought it would mainly be female patients who would ask to see a female doctor about some issues.

Debs said the practice, after a false start, has a health care assistant starting in September. She is Sam Thornley, who will carry out such things as blood tests, immunisations and ECGs, leaving the practice nurses to deal with more chronic health issues.

Retirement: Debs announced that her last day as practice manager will be on August 30. She wishes to reduce to part-time hours and the partners felt it was not a job-sharing role. A replacement is being sought. She said she will miss the practice, which, being a Londoner, she thinks of as her Nottingham family. Members expressed their sadness at losing Debs and thanked her for everything she had done to support the patient group over a number of years.

**Date of next meetings:** Wednesday, October 9, 6.30pm, and Thursday, December 12, 1pm.