

Abbey Medical Centre Patient Participation Group meeting June 26, 2019, 6.30pm

Present: Chris Barnatt, chair, Sue McNab, secretary, Christine Tyldesley, Alison Dobbs, Jean Yarnell, Jean Reid, Joy Stevenson, Gerry Coppel, Lucy Morrow, Richard Heppell.

Apologies: Debs Smith, Thelma Hembury.

New member: Juliette Abrams was welcomed as a new member of the group.

Rachel Cousins, the CCG Medicines Management Technician, was to give an update on prescription ordering but was unable to attend due to a family crisis. She will attend a future meeting. Joy said Rachel was to have talked about the decision by the CCG and nationally that pharmacies should stop ordering drugs on behalf of patients. The Abbey practice has noticed an over-ordering of medicines. Rachel has gone through our patient list and has listed those who are vulnerable and get their drugs in blister packs. All pharmacies our patients use and all patients will be told of the new arrangements, where patients will have to order their drugs each time. Joy said it was hoped this would have a big effect on over-ordering. Letters will be sent out to patients and there will be a meeting with local pharmacies.

Minutes of the last meeting: Agreed

Cuppa and Cake for Carers: Sue said six patients who are carers had come to the event, which was considered a good outcome and it was hoped to have another event in the future. Lots of information had been shared by Carers' Federation representative Yvonne Gregory and it had been a good social gathering.

New appointments system: Joy said there had been teething problems when the new system started in March, but feedback shows that this is now improving. There are fortnightly meetings to see how the system is working.

Dr Lyndsey Wheeler is leaving the practice on August 5 and nurse practitioner Ruth Fish has also left. A new lady doctor, Dr Sam Clements, has been recruited to cover six sessions. The practice has a new health care assistant starting in mid-August to do routine things such as dressings and blood tests. The practice will also look for a new nurse practitioner.

Joy said under the new system people were able to book appointments up to five days in advance, weekly in advance and up to six weeks in advance. From the beginning of July the practice will also be showing 25% of all appointments online for doctors and phlebotomists.

Richard said he had recently been asked to make a non-urgent appointment and 3 days in a row had looked online at 8am and saw no appointments yet he could ring up and get appointments. Joy said she would flag this up with Dr David Cavanagh, Gerry said she had also been tracking appointments

online and there was nothing appearing for weeks. Joy said during the first month of the new system feedback showed there were problems but now feedback from patients is better. Chris felt it was important patients could see a date for an appointment if they needed one. He was also still concerned that the way the system is explained differs on the noticeboard and online, Joy said she would take this up.

PRG Update: Richard reported that the PRG is no more. He and Sue agreed to keep the PPG informed of what form patient representation will take in the future.

Extended hours service: Joy said the surgery is now open twice a month on a Wednesday evening up to 8pm with a GP and one or two nurses on duty. There are also weekend sessions on Saturdays and Sundays from 8am to 11am. The next one is September 7 and 8. She said patients are loving it and all doctors appointments are always taken up and there has not been one patient who has made an appointment and then not attended. The nurses do smear tests and asthma reviews, diabetic checks and travel clinics at these sessions. Patients can also see doctors at other surgeries for these later hours sessions.

Any other business: Juliette wondered if people could opt in to receive an email copy of the practice newsletter. This would be helpful for relatively healthy patients who do not get into the surgery to pick up a copy. Sue said the newsletter could be read on the surgery website but agreed to take up the email suggestion with practice manager Debs Smith.

Lucy said her husband, who has not had cause to see a GP for 15 years, had received two GP surveys but found it impossible to answer questions about his recent appointments because there were none. Joy said these surveys were sent out to patients chosen at random by NHS England and the surgery had no control over them. The Abbey practice is hoping to do its own patient survey in the near future because there has not been one for a number of years.

Date of next meetings: August 8, 2019, 1pm and October 9, 2019, 6.30pm