

Waterfront Patients Participation Group Meeting

Thursday 19th September, 2024: 11.00 a.m. – 12.20 pm

Attendees:

- Louise Bunce, Practice Manager
- Joan Allen, Treasurer
- Chris Swaithes
- Clive Spicer
- Chris Beddall
- Sylvia Swaithes
- Jane Spicer

Apologies

- Dawn Fellows

Matters Arising

Did Not Attend (DNA) Review

Louise reported that the number of DNAs had reduced in August to only 175, however, she commented that the decrease may be due to the summer holidays. From this week the practice was started a trial with a member of staff, Molly, texting patients with appointments either on the day, or the one before, reminding them about their appointment and providing a link to click on if the appointment is no longer required. The initiative appears to have had a positive effect – the previous week there had been 56 DNAs and since the trial started only 26 from Monday to Thursday (date of PPG Meeting). The intention is to continue the trial despite it being very labour-intensive and Louise will report back to the PPG on the impact it has on DNA numbers.

Waterfront Website

Louise confirmed that there have been no changes to the website.

NHS Patient Survey and PPG Patient Survey 2024

Jane distributed copies of a Draft Summary Table for the PPG Patient Survey 2024: there had been 278 responses which is the most received for any PPG Patient Survey to date. She then took the meeting through the results in detail and the PPG members discussed the outcomes.

Overall, the results were very pleasing and in many cases the percentage of positive answers compared well to last year's PPG Patient Survey. Comparison with the 2024 National, Integrated Care System (ICS) and Waterfront Surgery GP Patients survey results was also very good.

There was discussion around areas where results were low including seeing a GP urgently on the same day and seeing/speaking to a preferred healthcare professional. In addition, there was a discussion about how patients booked an appointment and the practice might encourage patients to book using the website or NHS App. Chris B noted that she had not been able to book an appointment using either the NHS App or Patient Access. Louise recognised this was a challenge but highlighted the importance of having a full range of forms of access to enable all patients to contact the surgery.

It was agreed that for the next meeting Jane and Clive would produce a full report using the same format as 2023 PPG Survey and the PPG would then agree action points for the Waterfront Practice to consider.

Chris S asked how the PPG could thank those patients who had responded to the survey. Louise agreed to put a message of thanks on the website once the results are published.

Treasurer's Report

Joan (Treasurer) confirmed that the PPG remains in funds. Louise gave Joan the paid invoice for the PPG Newsletters to be reimbursed. It was noted that children in reception had been observed discussing the posters that the PPG had provided.

Waterfront Surgery Staffing Updates

Louise informed the meeting that Dr Buse is to leave the practice at the end of October. An advertisement has been placed to find a replacement with a closing date of 30th September 2024: she was pleased to report that some applications had been received already.

Any Other Business

NHS England Improvement of Online Communications for Patients.

Louise advised the PPG that there has been a change to how new patients can register at a surgery. NHS want a more streamlined and standardised form which means the current application will be removed and will be replaced by a link on the practice's website.

As a result of patient feedback the Waterfront has made a change to the way in which sick notes are requested. Patients were applying for sick notes without a clinical appointment so the process has now been updated and clarified. Patients are being reminded that if they are making a new request then they need to book an appointment to see a GP.

Inspection Visits

Louise reported on yesterday's Dudley Practice Managers meeting. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is aiming to restart inspections in March 2025. At present there is a backlog of inspections in the area with some dating back to 2015 as well as underperforming practices. The Integrated Care Board update the CQC with the results of their reviews. Chris S asked what happens to failing surgeries, Louise went through the process possibly ending in a practice being closed. Louise also explained the challenges of maintaining an "Outstanding" grading for GP surgeries.

Louise advised the PPG that the practice has had to sign an agreement that allows NHS England access to telephone answering data. The British Medical Association (BMA) had reservations but has agreed with the proviso that the results cannot be used to punish practices. Data will only be telephone answering figures, statistics, with no personal data attached. This will enable NHS England to ascertain if patients are able to access the surgery online during designated surgery opening hours.

Staffing Issues

There were no staffing issues to raise.

Friends and Family Test

The Friends and Family Test question has been included in the PPG Patient survey and the results from the data collection period are discussed above.

PPG Newsletter

The PPG Newsletter has been received and distributed as well as uploaded to the practice website. Louise said that the partners were very happy with the newsletter.

Autumn Campaign - Flu and Covid Vaccinations

Louise said that sending texts inviting patients to book Flu vaccinations had proved positive with a significant number using the link in the text to book appointments. She confirmed that vaccinations will be available from the beginning of October.

Jane asked about Covid vaccinations which are scheduled to be offered to people over 65, in residential care homes for older people and those in a clinical risk group. Louise informed the meeting that they have not been offered the opportunity to deliver Covid vaccinations this year and it is assumed that eligible patients will need to book at designated centres such as Wordsley Green.

Pharmacy Services

Following promotion of Pharmacies to assess and treat a range of illness or problems, members cited a number of beneficial experiences of the service. Joan told the meeting about being given both Paracetamols and Piriton from her local pharmacy though she was aware that vitamins had to be paid for. Chris and Sylvia told the meeting of their experience of being given Covid tests when collecting their repeat medication.

Podiatry Services

It was confirmed that accessing Community Podiatry services remains an ongoing issue.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Thursday 17th October, 2024 at the Waterfront with the following meeting scheduled for Thursday 21st November 2024 also at 11 a.m.