

# Heswall and Pensby Group Practice

## Patient Participation Group

### Minutes of Annual General Meeting

Friday 25 October 2024

#### Election of Officers

The present officers were re-elected to serve as chair and secretary respectively. There were no nominations for vice chair, so the position remains unfilled. Thanks were given to the retiring vice chair for his contributions in this and other positions during his time in the group.

#### Minutes of last meeting

Agreed

#### Matters arising from the minutes

- a) *Out of date or inconsistent information on practice website* – This issue was discussed at a meeting between the officers and practice managers on 21 October. It was acknowledged that there had been problems but that these were currently being addressed and indeed some changes have already been made.
- b) *PPG achievements* – There had been a perception that the practice did not always value the suggestions of the PPG but the officers had felt reassured at the 21 October meeting that there was now a more positive perception. Recent examples include:
  - agreement to notify patients of the need to hydrate before attending for phlebotomy,
  - the move to daytime meetings at the suggestion of a GP to facilitate attendance of younger members
  - There have also been comments about the practice website not being as user friendly as it could be, and the practice has agreed to review it.

Prior to this year examples include:

- the annual Patient Survey (to monitor the experience of patients in their contact with the Practice)
- the production of a booklet giving details of local support services
- production of a guide to accessing the NHS app.
- accreditation of the Practice as being 'Armed Forces Veteran Friendly'
- discussions over the planning for the new Practice building

- discussions regarding the procedures for making appointments and over the introduction of care navigation and on-line systems (eConsult and PATCHS),
- access to patient records
- questioning the process regarding health reviews for older patients.

Generally the group acts as a 'critical friend' – engaging in discussion with the Practice over the way that care is delivered and over the developments which they are planning or which they have to deliver under direction from the NHS.

c) *Patient survey – response from practice –*

- a. the annual survey report informs staff training.
- b. Patients who are not IT proficient are assisted to complete PATCHS forms by practice co-ordinators in a private room if available or by phone.
- c. Clinic appointment messages now inform patients which clinician they are to see.
- d. It was noted that the voice bubbles on the stairs were out of date and had still not been taken down.

d) *Patient complaints –* The practice manager agreed to provide a summary of complaints and responses at future meetings in the practice. Generally, the nature of complaints is about availability of appointments and care navigation.

Update from Practice

*Merger with Commonfield practice –* administration and IT system merger seems to be stable now.

*New phone system –* this is now in operation. Initial analysis showed that there has been an increase in call waiting times, dropped calls and actual call time. The managers met with the phone providers and the system has been modified. The practice manager will review usage to see if any other amendments need to be made. There is now a call back system so that patients can opt to leave their number, and a member of staff will call them.

*GP Collective action –* The GP present explained the reasons that the BMA have called the action, which is essentially about underfunding of general practice. It was noted that this has had minimal impact on patient experience; the information flow between GP and secondary care is not affected

*Phlebotomy service –* In order to ease the workload at Heswall and Pensby some patients are being referred to Commonfield or Clatterbridge, although in many cases patients are reluctant to go there. The GP confirmed that urgent tests would be prioritised.

Merger of H&P and Commonfield PPGs

It was noted in the minutes of the March 2024 PPG meeting that we would review the possibility of merging both PPGs after the merger of the two GP practices. It is felt that the time has come to merge both groups into one.

### Any other business

- a) *Car parking for disabled patients at immunisation clinics* – A member asked why the car park was closed during these clinics. The manager explained that it was a health and safety matter. Given the large numbers attending and the rapid throughput it would increase the risk of collisions with cars entering and leaving the car park onto Telegraph Rd. She did say that disabled patients could request weekday appointments, when the car park would be open.
- b) *RSV vaccinations* – Text messages have been sent to patients advising them to take up this vaccine offer but there has been no further information as to when the sessions would take place. The manager explained that the problem is due to shortage of refrigerator space due to the current flu vaccine programme. The practice is considering increasing refrigerator capacity.
- c) *PPG role in promoting vaccine uptake* – a member suggested that the group could help in promoting uptake.
- d) *Annual health review* – It was explained that this was for patients with existing conditions, otherwise it is a five yearly review. Patients with unstable illnesses will be seen more frequently than yearly if considered clinically necessary. It was felt by some that the system is confusing re eligibility, time scales etc & it was suggested that there should be explanation on website.
- e) *NAPP* – It was agreed that as the National Association for Patient Participation does not seem to be an effective organisation we should withdraw from it. The group could consider what the Patient Association has to offer as this seems to be the patient body favoured for consultation by NHS.
- f) *Recruitment to PPG* – It was noted that previous attempts to recruit a younger age group have not been successful. One member has seen how a practice in another part of the country has approached the problem. That practice sent out text messages targeted to a particular age group. The practice manager present was willing to take this approach. Discussion then took place on how the group might function with a larger membership.

Date of next meeting

18 November 2024, 6 pm (Zoom)