**Patient Forum Minutes –10.06.2024**

**Attendees: William Graham, Maureen Graham, Iris Connaughton, Judith Hardy, Mary Venables, Bill Venables, Linda Chapman, Jackie Carey, Christine O’Sullivan, Edwina Russell, Marion Vause**

**Rebecca Seaman– Practice Manager**

**Angela Hill – Quality Coordinator – Minute Taker**

**Apologies: Michael Emson, Steven Mahoney, Colin Hartley, Sue Falconer, Sheila Harris, Adrian Rudge, Patricia Thomsett-Jones.**

1. **Matters Arising from the last meeting:** Nothing to discuss from Becky or the members.
2. **Rebuilding General Practice – Speaker, Michelle Baker from the Kent Local Medical Committee (LMC):** Michelle introduced herself to the group and explained what the LMC is. She gave an overall review of General Practice and the difficulties we are facing with a lack of GPs and lack of funding. They are asking the Government, patients and colleagues across the NHS to join together in building a long-term patient centred vision for General Practice that will help to unite a fragmented NHS. She encouraged the group to contact their MPs with any issues and to tell them about what they valued about General Practice but advised that they would not reply until after the General Election.

Some of the issues Michelle told the group were that practices cannot close their list even when they have a lack of GPs, General Practice received 8% of the total funding even though they provide 90% of the care. Practices are seeing more patients than ever, but the workforce is depleting and the funding is reducing. Practices receive £160 per patient per year regardless of how many times they have an appointment or receive care.

GPs are just as frustrated as patients are; they want to see and treat their patients. Many GPs are retiring early due to burnout or leaving the profession altogether. We want all of healthcare to work together and present a united front. We need the government to invest in General Practice and help us to retain our doctors.

1. **Update on current situation at Balmoral Surgery:** We are at present fully doctored with a full clinical team. Dr Puthoor had joined us as salaried GP and we also have Dr Dey who is salaried. Dr Camm is going to become a GP Partner on 01.07.24 which adds stability to the practice. We have already had some really good feedback from patients who have seen Dr Puthoor. We also now have a minor illness team consisting of an ACP (who can prescribe) and a paramedic. They are additional staff for the practice. They triage all of the eConsults that come in and assess whether the patient needs to be seen by them on the day or whether they can go to the pharmacy or whether they need to be seen by a GP. They will also assess how soon the patient needs to be seen. If there is anything outside of their scope they will pass it to a GP, This system is working really well. We also have two PCN Clinical Pharmacists working in the practice. They can assist with seeing patients regarding their medication review, heart failure, cholesterol or high blood pressure. For continuity GPs can now book their own appointments if they want to see the same patient again. We have increased the number of staff answering the phones at 8am; this came from a suggestion in last year’s National Survey. We have also increased the number of staff in the afternoons.
2. **Patient Annual Survey:** A copy of the patient survey was given to all the members present for them to look at and see if they are happy with the questions or if they have any other suggestions. They can email Becky or Paula if they do. The members can also complete the survey today if they wish. We plan to hand out the survey in July/August. It will also be available on our website.
3. **Enhanced Access:** Enhanced Access replaced Extended Hours and at the time the practices in Deal & Sandwich PCN did not have the capacity to provide this in-house 8-8 so it was subcontracted to CHA and they delivered the service out of Deal Hospital. From 01.04.24 the practices took this contract back and we are all delivering the service in the evening and on a Saturday morning. The appointments are to see a GP or a First Contact Physiotherapist. The appointments are bookable via your own practice but you may go to one of the other practices to be seen. You will be seen by one of the GPs from that practice. These appointments are for acute issues only and not for long term diseases. First Contact Physios are a triage service for any musculoskeletal problems. They can refer you on for further treatment to a local physio or for an x-ray or other imaging. This service helps to free up GP time.

**AOB**

1. **Ear Syringing:** We were offering this service but the member of staff left. We have another member of staff interested in doing this but you now have to have a mentor who has completed the course in the last three years. We are still trying to get this sorted out so we can provide the service.
2. **Facebook:** The practice now has a Facebook page that we use to try to get information out to our patients around the flu campaign and half day closing etc.
3. **Reception Survey:** We carried out a survey with our receptionists and one of the questions was based on what they would like to be called. The reception role has changed a lot over the years. 100% of staff said that they would like to be called Care Navigators. We are trying to promote this.
4. **Patient Access:** One PPG member said that they were having difficulty with Patient Access. Becky will ask Nikki our Online Champion to call her.
5. **Learning Difficulties:** One PPG member was very impressed when her son had his yearly appointment with ACP Sarah Claydon. She said that the appointment was very inclusive. We will pass this positive feedback to Sarah. She has a keen interest in learning difficulties and we always try to have staff doing the work they are interested in and have experience in. She will be doing all of the practice’s learning difficulty annual reviews.
6. **Practice Top Floor:** We do have a third floor in the building that is a basic shell. If this was to be made into a useable space, the Partners at the practice would have to sign a new 25 year lease, and pay additional rent for this space.
7. **Appointments:** Patients have a choice of whether they want to be seen face to face or if they would prefer to have a telephone call. We still offer a variety of ways that you can book an appointment or contact the practice; eConsult, telephone or online. You can also come in and make an appointment face to face. In some practices you cannot telephone to make an appointment. It is all via eConsult.
8. **Flu:** We would like to encourage our patients to have their flu vaccination at the practice. In recent years we have more and more patients having their vaccination at the pharmacy. One of the reasons for this was they could have their COVID vaccination at the pharmacy at the same time but also because patients knew how busy we were they thought they were helping us out if they went to the pharmacy but the practice is losing a lot of money each year which we use to fund other things if patients have their flu vaccination elsewhere. We are also hoping to be able to give patients their COVID vaccination this year.

**The next meeting will be 21.10.24 @ 1.15pm**