

Colchester Medical Practice Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 16th Sept 2024

Present: Peter Dennis (PH) Jennifer Smith (PH) Martyn Bunn (PH) Russell Watterson (PH)

Apologies: Alan Murrells (SE)

Present -CMP Dr Ali Ahmed (GP Partner) Joe Oxley (Business Manager) Alasdair McEwan (Digital and Transformation Lead)

- 1 Dr Ahmed introduced himself to the meeting, he is a partner based at Wimpole Road who has a special interest in Diabetes and Out of Hours Care
- 2 Minutes of last meeting-no issues were raised, adopted as record of the meeting
- 3 Creating a new PPG. Joe Oxley (Business Manager). Joe informed the meeting that we had received a number of expressions of interest by e mail for new members to attend the PPG. This was in response to a targeted SMS communication that had been sent to 2,500 patients. In the event one new patient was present at the meeting, which was slightly disappointing as we had hoped for around 8 additional attendees.
- 4 Joe Oxley outlined the NHSE requirement to host a PPG in General Practices and the Governance issues around this, including the Terms of Reference, aims and objectives, the role of the PPG as a "critical friend". It was agreed that a minimum of 4 members need to be present for meetings to be Quorate. There are a number of documents around this, including signing sheets for members, these will be circulated as appropriate for future meetings.
- 5 Joe Oxley went round the room to ask members for any of their ideas and concerns. The issue of communication with patients came up, with a suggestion for QR Codes / Cards to be given to patients in the event that they need to be sign posted to use the service correctly. It was noted that often patients will attend Open Access with inappropriate issues (such as prescription queries) thus taking up valuable time and space unnecessarily. Another issue was communication between third parties such as Specsavers and the Hospital, with an example given of miscommunication having taken place. Dr Ahmed spoke of his experience as a GP and with Out of Hours, he agreed that communication in such cases is extremely important and that we rely on Specsavers to be accurate and prompt in their reporting of contact with patients. In regard to Open Access, it was noted that different sites can and do have different scenarios taking place and examples were given of differences at the Wimpole road site. Dr Ahmed spoke about the pressure on Out of Hours services and the difficulties that patients at other practices have in getting seen. Although patients at CMP may sometimes have wait to be seen in Open Access, there is an implicit outcome that if they arrive at the correct time in the morning, they will be seen on the same day. Many patients in the locality do not have anything like this level of access. We will await the onset of winter and the increased pressures that are likely to arise.,
- 6 We discussed the NHS App. This is a clear NHS England priority to increase its use. Members reported differing experiences in using it and some feel it is not very well developed in a technical sense. Nevertheless, it is the direction of travel and this will continue to remain as a practice and PCN priority to increase uptake. At the moment around 52% of patients are signed up, however, very few are actually using it and most got it to get Covid Vaccination Certificates in electronic form.

7 We agreed to circulate the PPG terms of reference and signing sheets to any new joiners and if necessary will meet separately with new members to go through these rather than repeat with existing members. The Practice Team will go away and look at how communications (as discussed above) can be enhanced by use of cards / QR codes, and communications between the practice and third parties can be monitored and enhanced.

6 Any other business

We discussed forthcoming winter pressures and the 'Flu Immunisation Season

7 Date of next meeting
Monday 18th November