

Flitwick Surgery PPG Meeting Minutes:

Wednesday, 26th October – 6 to 7.30 pm – The Dave Law Sports Pavillion, Park Crescent, Stewartby, Bedford, MK43 9NN

Attendance: Sally Law (Chair), Lionel Yarde (Vice Chair), Penny Luker-Brown (Practice Manager) and Dr Diyanah Rafiq.

Apologies: Due to a clerical oversight it appears that a reminder message was not sent to all PPG members although the date and location of this meeting had been agreed at the last PPG Meeting.

Approval of Minutes from 10 August 2022 (AGM):

These were approved by the Chair.

Matters Arising:

Bank Account: Richard Pardoe agreed to approach Julie to organise for new named signatories. Action: SL to follow up progress with Richard Pardoe.

NAPP Membership: This is dependent on resolving access to the PPG bank account.

Chairperson Report

Whats App PPG Group:

SL suggested that a PPG Whats App group be formed to help members of the PPG with the organisation of meetings and sharing information. This was agreed in principle. PLB uses her personal mobile number and would like to keep this number for private use. She unfortunately would not be able to join the Whats App group until she gets a business number.

Christmas:

It was agreed that the PPG would try and meet up at Christmas in Steppingley. Action: LY to circulate details to PPG members.

Practice Manager Report:

Proposed new total triage system for GP and Minor Illness Appointments.

This had been prompted by the realisation that demand for GP and Minor Illness appointments had not stopped post covid. Whilst the practice had managed to recruit and maintain staff levels how resources were used needed to be reviewed.

The partners were currently finalising plans for bringing in a new appointment request system whereby all patient requests to be seen by a GP or for Minor Illness would be directed to a triage GP.

That Triage GP would review the request and decide the best way to manage the patient enquiry according to clinical need. Patients would then be offered an appointment, either face to face or telephone with the appropriate clinician. Patients would also be able to indicate the preference for how they wish to be seen. In some instances, an appointment may not be needed and the patient response could be managed by an alternative pathway, such as a direct referral to a Physio or specialist.

This would be supported by the use of an online triage form for making patient enquiries called AccuRx. This is currently being used in other Amptill practices. The GPs and staff have visited a practice in Milton Keynes who are running a similar system to get advice. The current systems used at other practices allow for booking on the day or next few days. Booking appointments in advance will be reviewed to see if it can be incorporated.

The use of the online request form is to try and improve and help patients access the surgery. As both administrative and medical enquiries can be made in this way, it is hoped to reduce the pressure on the telephone lines and avoid the need for patients to call from 8.00 am to request an appointment. The aim was to make sure that those patients who needed to be seen were prioritised rather than those who were able to get through on the telephone system. Patients have been using repeat dialling apps which were causing a problem as they blocked the lines. At the moment the only way to stop these is to block the telephone number which was not considered to be safe. Unfortunately, the practices existing telephone contract would be extortionate to end and move to a different telephone provider. Upgrading the current system was also not feasible.

The feedback from the PPG was positive if the system introduced prioritised access to services due to need, prevented the waste of GP time and ended the 8.00 am phone call system. However, they would like to see a return to being able to arrange appointments in advance.

They suggested ways to inform patients about the change such as local newspapers such as Flitwick Letters, Stewarty Parish newsletter (deadline 5th November for copy), Oracle which is delivered to all houses in Flitwick, Parish Cllrs newsletters, Steppingley Village What's app group.

Treasurer Report: matters regarding the bank account raised under matters arising.

Locality: The Practice were still awaiting details of the allocated space planned for the development on the old leisure centre.

N.A.P.P: Nothing to report as reliant on resolving the bank account issue.

AOB:

None put forward.

