



FALKLAND HOUSE SURGERY

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Minutes of the PPG Steering Group Thursday 28th November 2024 between 6-8pm at Falkland House Surgery

Present: Jan Bergstrom (JB); Margaret Booth (MB); Rachel Cadman (RC); Hilary Dawson (HD); Mike Dyson (MD1); Jean Gater (JG); Nigel Gater (NG); Enid Hirst (EH); Pearl Woodward (PW)
For the Practice: Zoey Hall (ZH)

1. WELCOME (MB)
MB welcomed all.

2. APOLOGIES (MB)
Meg Crook (MC); Mandy Dakin (MD2); Nigel Dakin (ND); Pat Dale (PD); Mark Wheen (MW).

3. INPUT FROM THE PRACTICE (ZH)

New Telephone System – This is now in operation as well as the new call back system which some patients are using. It is possible to phone the surgery, ascertain what number you are in the queue and opt to be called back when that position is reached. This allays the annoyance of hanging on to the phone until your number is reached. The new phone system also enables the surgery to change their pre-recorded messages, thus keeping these up to date.

Flu, Covid and RSV vaccination programme – The vaccination programme has now been completed. The RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) vaccine took priority with the surgery inviting eligible patients. The Flu and Covid vaccines followed, both being offered at the same time. Some patients opted to have only one at a time. PPG members also were on hand to guide patients in and out of the surgery. Comments were made as to how welcoming PPG members were. Patient surveys were given out. A minority of patients still had difficulty getting out of the surgery down the steps despite the hand rail sited at the exit. Unfortunately, it is not possible for another hand rail to be fitted at the exit due to the layout of the steps; to alleviate this problem anyone having difficulty can exit the building by being directed back through the entrance door.

Waiting Room Improvements – The new floor has been laid, is easy to clean and adheres to safety floor regulations (the surgery has warning signs which are displayed when cleaning is taking place). New window blinds have also been fitted. This has updated the waiting area and is more welcoming. Mention was again made about no facility for displaying children's books/toys. This is to avoid cross- contamination.

Surgery Facebook Page is now in operation. Patients are also being encouraged to sign up to the NHS App. These reduce the need for, and costs of emails sent from the surgery. Facebook provides another means of communication with the public (ie vaccination dates) however, its popularity remains to be assessed.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 16th September 2024
The Minutes were approved by MD and seconded by HD.

5. MATTERS ARISING NOT ADDRESSED ON THE MAIN AGENDA (MB)

None were raised.

6. TREASURERS REPORT (RC)

RC circulated the **Financial Statement** prior to the meeting, showing a surplus of £808.24 as at 17th November. She reported that Lloyds Bank is intending to make a monthly charge of £4.95 for handling a current account. **RC** is investigating other sources and has discovered that the Co-operative Bank has a "Community Direct Plus" account which has no costs. She will pursue this further to check if we qualify for this account, which won't be used whilst the Christmas Quiz is running. This new account has the advantage that only one signatory is required, however, a preference for two signatures was decided.

7. COMMUNICATION OFFICERS REPORT (PW)

PW circulated her report outlining activities since the last meeting, these included the production of the Autumn Newsletter, updating the Waiting Room Screen and Notice Board as well as S2 Foodbank information sheets and PPG recruitment sheets. She further explained her progress with the Patient Information Booklets. One area highlighted for concern is the future of the Newsletter. As there are now less patients frequenting the Waiting Room the circulation of the newsletter has been greatly reduce (since COVID the Doctors are only seeing 1 in 9 patients), although the phone call communication has vastly increased. Vaccination sessions remain the ideal opportunity for handing out newsletters. The PPG is not allowed to have contact details of individual patients to send copies out. **ZH** suggested that she could request Reception Staff to hand out copies, especially to older patients who it would seem favour paper over IT. She further suggested that Wall Holders could be put up to house the Newsletters. It was decided that a tally be kept of the number of Newsletters taken up and distributed, with a view to reducing the quantity and printing costs.

8. Progress with the main PPG activities for 24-25 year.

Patient Guides (MB, PW, ZH)

Due to **MB** being out of circulation, no further decisions had been made regarding leaflet 1; this will now be prioritised with a January deadline when it will be trialled by the Acting members before going into production. **PW** has worked on leaflet 2, "Primary Care Services that are available". This is intended to be produced by May 2025. It is unrealistic for leaflet 3 to be completed by the next AGM.

Both the Hollies and Greystones are showing interest in our leaflets and could come on board.

Evaluation Project and Practice Inspection (MB, ZH.)

Now completed, results collated by **MB** and checked by **NG**. **ZH** will clarify a couple of points before the final report is completed.

A brief summary of the results will be published on the Patient Participation Group page of the FHS website and a copy of the complete document will be available for patients to see in late January in the Surgery. Many thanks to the 242 patients who completed the survey; this was helped by there being only five questions to answer.

Summary of the results:

Major plus points the same as in the previous survey were:- The value of the Surgery being small and local; the staff team being supportive, caring, concerned, welcoming, professional and organised.

Patient concerns highlighted were not observed overall as being negative, but had not appeared in the previous survey, some of these were:-

The restraints of operation of the Practice, recognised as being out of the direct control of the doctors, was nevertheless affecting the patients.

The Hub was highlighted, whereas it was recognised as a necessity, it was to some inconvenient (a number wanted to be seen by a doctor who knew their history; others found the Hub surgeries inconvenient to get to).

Phlebotomy was also highlighted. Many asked why they could not have their tests at the surgery and also with the inconvenience and cost of travelling to the Hallamshire Hospital or getting to the drive-in centre? **ZH** mentioned that patients can now get appointments at Carterknowle Surgery but it is still the Hallamshire which takes priority. Taking bloods at the surgery is seen by the NHS neither cost effective or time efficient. The understanding of other patients was sympathetic to the Practice.

ZH reported how funding has become a major issue giving the following examples:

Funding to surgeries across the city is different depending on the perceived degree of affluence of an area. Money allocated to a surgery can affect the level of staff wages offered – e.g. our reception staff, who operate at a highly responsible level, are only on minimum wage with the results in difficulties with recruitment and maintaining employment levels.

Age of patients is not taken into consideration; FHS has a very high proportion of elderly patients who have multiple health needs, which cost more to maintain. The Surgery receives a set allocation of money per patient, regardless of these issues.

Due to the recent changes in the employer's National Insurance contributions, this will greatly increase the surgery costs, which could affect future staff employment with resulting operational difficulties.

She also mentioned the problem of some verbal abuse by patients when speaking to reception staff. It is recognised that when a patient is feeling ill, they might react in a way other than their normal behaviour, but this is not acceptable for shows of abuse/intolerance towards staff members, who are trying to do their best. It was decided this would be addressed by the PPG and will be a priority item at the next meeting when more members should be present.

Links with Practice Team. (MB).

It was decided to discuss this matter at the next meeting.

Christmas Quiz 2024 (EH).

The sub-team members (**EH, MB, MC, MD2, ND, PW**) met to finalise arrangements. It has now been compiled, printed and circulated round the usual sales venues with the addition of Dish Restaurant on Ecclesall Road. The outlets of O'Brien's and Dore Moor Garden Centre have been removed. **EH** gave further quizzes out to some Group members. Nearer the time **EH** will circulate a reminder for the collection of completed quizzes and monies.

It was suggested that next year, following some comments made to NG during the Patient Survey, a more local charity should be a recipient of funds.

PPG Organisation and Management. (MB)

Due to time constraints this will be carried forward to the next committee meeting.

It was suggested that information regarding the PPG could be given to new patients when they join the Practice. **ZH** will follow up.

9. BRIEF REPORTS ON OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Garden Project. (JG)

JG had circulated her report prior to the meeting. The troughs and pots have been emptied of summer bedding, and planted for winter. Purchases were compost, violas, bellis daises, crocus and narcissus totalling £83.39. In the back garden vine eye screws have been drilled into the wall for training the pyracantha. Clearing of leaves, cutting back of hedging near the entrance to the front drive, weeding and path scraping have again taken place. Another session in December is planned when the garden can be put to rest until spring. **JG** thanked the sub group for all their invaluable efforts.

S2 Foodbank support. (MB)

As **MB** has been in a period of recovery, no further progress has been made. She is now hoping to resume.

PVPCN Developments (MB)

No progress appears to be taking place which she will follow up. The Hollies and Greystones surgeries are keen to promote PPGs. **ZH** reported that Rustling's Road Surgery are keen on establishing their own PPG.

National PPG update (JB)

Since the last meeting there is no further news, apart from it appears that the National organisation is still losing members

10. AOB.

There was no other business.

JG wished to have it recorded in the Minutes the appreciation of the members to **MB** for all her work on the Patient Survey.

11. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2025.

Monday 27th January

Tuesday 8th April

Wednesday 11th May + AGM

Thursday 18th September

Monday 17th November

All to take place 6pm – 8pm at Falkland House Surgery

Nigel Gater 8th December 2024