

**PPG Meeting
24th January 2024
Held in the Surgery**

Attendees

PPG: Mike Etkind (Chair), John Deakin, Bob Cox, Alice McMurdo (Minute taker) & Caroline and Mary (potential new PPG members)

Surgery: Dr Rebecca Mallard-Smith & Laura Russell

Apologies: Jackie Walker, Gita Kadirgamar & Allan Cairns

Meeting Minutes:

1. Welcome, apologies, resignation, minutes from last meeting.

Mike opened the meeting and led introductions.

Leslie and Lorraine have both now resigned from the PPG. As well as Caroline and Mary considering joining there is another person who was not able to make tonight's meeting.

2. PPG survey results and surgery response

Mike summarised that from the results patients are not aware of all the services that the surgery has to offer and asked if the PPG could help change this.

Laura explained that the website does have a link to the PCN, which explains who they are and what they offer.

Mike suggested that the services on offer be continually reinforced to patients through various means, including newsletters, SMS, and notices. Bob suggested that this includes services that patients can self refer to and including this on the website.

20% of patients said they would expect a face-to-face appointment anytime and the PPG responded by reminding that the surgery must make clinical decisions. Dr Mallard-Smith thanked Mike for this.

Patients also fed back frustration at the length of the telephone message. Laura said she was happy to review it and advised that they were waiting confirmation as to whether they were getting a new phone system. It was agreed the PPG would offer feedback on any changes made to the current message.

Patients also asked for a reminder for any upcoming annual tests. Laura advised that the invitation to book the appointment serves as the reminder. Mike stated he would further explore the comments made on this due to the number of them.

3. Alternative to SMS texts for contacting patients.

The NHS app can only be used to message patients if they have sent a message through it, which is contrary to what the ICB had advised. The surgery has not found a free alternative and they must remain mindful and strategic in their use of messages as the ICB currently fund this. It was agreed Mike would explore further with the ICB communication through the NHS app and Laura would share with him the EMIS communication regarding it.

4. BOB draft Primary Care Strategy

Mike shared that this strategy and the integrated neighbourhood teams will be coming to Bucks by the end of 2026 and shared his concern that it would result in more travelling for patients as bigger areas will be supported by it.

5. Patient reaction to access to patient notes.

Dr Mallard-Smith explained that past medical history is summarised in the notes but if you have not had an appointment since November there will be no information. The notes and results for any appointments from November will be there though. Feedback has been good so far and the surgery are surprised by the number of patients using it. A link can be sent via SMS to those who want to get set up.

John asked if any patients had said they don't have a smart phone. Laura answered that there has been one so far. Patients can also access their notes through the website and this was explained to this patient. Currently over 75% of patients over 18 have online access, which is good.

Mike reminded that those patients who can not access their notes online for whatever reason must not be excluded. Dr Mallard-Smith advised that they could print out the notes for those that request it and Laura added that proxy access can be arranged too and the Social Prescribers can also help with this.

Laura went on to state that the PCN want to champion digital access and if the surgery can facilitate it have drop-in clinics. Mike offered to help try and find people who could help with this training and suggested this could be linked to the talking café, which is moving to The Pantry next month.

The role of the Social Prescribers and the talking café were summarised for Caroline and Mary.

Mike reported that there has been some discussion around the Social Prescribers wanting to train patients to support them and he awaits further updates on this.

Improvement grant

The work is not finished but Laura showed the work that had been done. The grant covered two thirds of it and the partners paid for the remainder. Another clinical room is needed though.

6. AOB

John asked if there was any update on finances and if there was still money available in the PPG fund. Laura advised that come April there will be subscriptions to pay so this will need to be reviewed but currently was OK.

Mike reported that the local councillors have raised their concerns over service levels at Hughenden Valley and Chequers surgery with the Chair of the ICB. Dr Mallard-Smith added that they are being overseen by the ICB to get back on track and they have advised that our list can remain closed till the end of March when Chequers will hopefully be stable.

The GP patient survey, which is run by NHS England, is out now and the results will be shared early summer.

Junior Doctors Strike

John shared his concern over the strikes and the impact it could have and asked if there were any communications regarding it the surgery could send out. Dr Mallard-Smith reassured that during the last strike the surgeries workload did not increase.

Newsletter

Mike raised that the newsletter is 19 pages long and queried if there were any volunteers who could help look at it and suggested asking for students to help. Laura stated she would welcome help with it.

Actions

- Mike to explore further with the ICB communication through the NHS app and Laura would share with him the EMIS communication regarding it.
- Mike to explore the comments from the PPG survey regarding reminders for annual tests/appointments and feedback to the surgery.
- PPG to offer views on the telephone message if it is changed.
- Laura to review the PPG fund.
- PPG to explore if any students could volunteer to look at the newsletter.
- Alice to arrange next meeting to be held in May in the Surgery
- Alice to supply photograph to update PPG board in the surgery and website.