The Brimington Surgery

Patient Participation Group Notes - DECEMBER 2023

1. **Attendees** – Sue Hague (SH - Chair); Chris Hudson (CH); Sheila Wetton; Joan Bramley; Paula Elliott (PE - Practice Manager); Dr Rupert White.
2. **Apologies** –*Margaret Breeds; Sandra Bridge; Lynda Hewitt; Martin Liddle; Pam Smiley (PS); Pamela Wright*
3. **Matters Arising from last notes not on the agenda:**
4. **Pt feedback - (standing item)**
5. Family & Friends – this continues to be predominantly Good to Very Good with 86% of responses September to November falling into these categories.
6. PCN Survey from Flu day – this was a bit lengthier than anticipated but as it is PCN wide we could not alter it. This was reviewed on the screen.
7. **Dealing with winter pressures –** There is always increased pressure due to winter bugs. There are waves of influenza around the globe in addition to all the other work. We used to be less busy at other times of the year however GP surgeries are busy all year round!

Long term conditions are exacerbated by the cold, wet weather.

Dr White updated those present about the lack of a Winter Hub (last year we could refer suitable patients into this and they were seen centrally, reducing pressure on practices) and that practices are not receiving winter pressures money to increase capacity as there was last year.

We are trying to find ways to find those who really need our assistance and a large part of what is needed is patient education so that patients ask for what they need not what they want. We don’t want people to stay away, we want them to learn when they need to come.

We promote the Community Pharmacy Programme to help support patients as, whilst the default is "go see your GP", this is not always the most efficient pathway due to capacity and the nature of some ailments.

We have to prioritise; lots of what the GPs see now is very complex and generates more work – the more we do the more there is to do eg liaise with several different departments make increasing referrals, ordering more tests….

1. **Wearing masks at surgery ?** Query was raised regarding the recent text about this and why staff are not wearing masks. It was explained that the SMS stated that, " we encourage patients with respiratory symptoms to continue to wear a face mask". Staff will sometimes wear them if they are feeling unwell**.**
2. **Surgery News – (standing item)**

Staffing: we have 2 GPs on maternity leave and a third will join them in February; We have a GP on medium term sick leave.

A member of the Patient Support Team is on maternity leave and our GP Assistant goes on maternity leave next week.

We have Locum GP's (Dr Mark Blagden, Dr Jonathan Smith; Dr Emma Withycombe; Dr Jenny North) covering however, it is not funded "like for like", nor can the work be split in the same way - however we continue to do our best for all our patients.

Our List Size continues to grow and it is at an all-time high of 8,627. Some of this is due to the new builds locally and some is due to patients moving to us as they are not happy with their current practice. Whilst we get paid per patient it is not sufficient to increase staffing levels.

GP Improvement Programme (GPIP) – this is a supportive 13-week programme for someone to come into the practice and identify any ways we might be able to work smarter and maybe release some capacity. We constantly alter how we work and are often early adopters of new systems, but we hope that a pair of outside eyes may spot something we have not.

1. **Social prescribing walking group update** – PS is now helping train some more "home grown" leaders
2. **Discussion around practical help?**

We have to re-run the PCN Survey in March – whilst we will use various methods to do this, we would really appreciate some volunteers to come into practice to directly approach patients. Thank you to those who did round 1 in the flu/Covid clinics.

We have to do an audit of our website via a mobile phone – CH kindly agreed to do this for us.

Best Practice Guide – We reviewed the first 10 pages and plan to continue this in future meetings. From this group members may pull the most useful information to make a new member pack.

It was decided that at the March meeting we would discuss ideas for reasonable practical help that the group might provide. Initial ideas are: Newsletter; letter for head teachers; the March survey requirements

1. **Any other business**

Invite SPLW Karin to the next meeting.

SH offered to bring some information re Mental Health services from her other role

There was a discussion around ears – GPs do not routinely undertake ear syringing. It costs to go to a private provide which is one option. There are also some safe self care options such as using olive oil and bulb operated self-syringing kits.

SH has the information on the Joint PPG meetings and can share that with anyone who might like to attend. Currently we have no representation.

Live Life Better Gym referrals: Queens Park has an extremely long waiting list!

1. **Date of next meeting:** *6th March 2024 10.30*