

MERSEA ISLAND MEDICAL PRACTICE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MINUTES

10TH SEPTEMBER 2024

IN ATTENDANCE

Maureen Phillips	Nigel Hinderwell	Alan Tucker
Martin Westley	Pam Wright	John Tasker
Linda Westley	Barbara Peter	Roy Chamberlain
Jane Morgan	John Akker	Teresa Webster (guest)
Susan Rhys Jones	Alan Mogridge	

Guests from Mersea GP Practice : Dr Patel and Ms K Culmer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

David Cooper, Christine Cheetham, Hubert Siefer, Jayne Taylor, Malcolm Ede

Anthony West – Head of Primary Care for the Integrated Care Board (ICB) sent his apologies that the team were unable to send someone to this meeting, but has promised attendance at the November meeting.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

MP welcomed everyone to the meeting, including two of our new Mersea Town Councillors Nigel Hinderwell and Teresa Webster. MP acknowledged that the guest councillors might not be able to answer questions, but hoped they would relay any concerns to the council for a response at a later date.

MP reminded members about meeting etiquette, listening to each other, asking questions when speakers had finished, that the PPG role is to represent all patients and that personal health issues need to be addressed to the practice directly.

MINUTES FROM 14TH MAY MEETING

These were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting

ACTION POINTS FROM THE MINUTES

NHS App query regarding being unable to order a repeat of batch prescriptions on the NHS App when the batch comes to an end. This is not currently something the App can do, but it is an issue the development team are working on. When a patient opens the App they will see a “?” at the top right hand side of the screen, by pressing on this you can send a question to the NHS App Team

KC continues to work on the Practice Website and asked if anyone saw anything that needed to be updated or ideas for additional information on the website to let Maureen know.

MP had been working with two other PPG Chairs on looking at developing a Colte wide PPG, but there are only a small number of active PPGs locally, so we have put this on hold for the time being.

PRACTICE UPDATE

There are no vacancies at the Surgery at present. The staff all seem happy and work well together. There has been quite a lot of training taking place over the last few months.

- One of the practice HCAs, Megan, is undertaking Nurse Associate training, Megan is attending University one day a week and she will be in the practice three days a week. This is a two year course and at the end of her training she will be able to undertake additional nursing duties.
- Two members of staff have completed the Care Co-ordinators course and a third is about to start. They have all found the course really interesting.
- Practice nurses have been doing immunisations courses and flu updates.
- HCAs have also been doing flu updates

There will be a practice shutdown on **16th October** when the practice will be doing some inhouse training and general updates as well as providing an opportunity for staff to discuss any concerns within the practice.

Flu Vaccinations : young children and pregnant ladies will have their vaccinations starting beginning of September and continue with over 65s from **3rd October**.

RSV vaccine will also be offered to pregnant ladies and people aged 75-79 years, which is for respiratory protection.

Practice Nurses are now carrying out COPD reviews face to face, and Karen (Practice Nurse) doing a lot those.

The surgery have a new service. If a patient has got a mole or something like that they will be sign posted to this new service instead of seeing a GP first. They use a special camera linked to a mobile phone that takes an in-depth picture of the mole and this provides more information than just a visual review. It's a very new service, and at the moment the information is sent to the practice for the GP to action once the picture is taken. In time, as the service develops, they will be able to do a fast track cancer referral directly to the hospital clinic when necessary. Currently when a patient contacts the surgery about a mole, they will be provided with a number to ring to be seen. We can also put this information on the practice website so that patients can self-refer.

The surgery has now become a Daffodil standard practice. This is a standard developed by Marie Curie and the Royal College of GPs to signify excellent practice in palliative/end of life care for GP surgeries. Mersea is amongst a small handful of practices that has achieved this accreditation.

Complaints and Compliments: There have been compliments on the improvements on the phone system and positive comments about reception staff. There has been a lot of training taking place, which all staff feel has been valuable.

The two new receptionists have settled in very well and they are continuing to have training. They will be undertaking some work on prescription training on the shut down day.

The practice are still waiting to hear back from the ICB on plans for the practice moving forward.

There was a safeguarding meeting last week when practice policies and procedures were reviewed and this went very well.

Dr Patel asked if people were aware the practice is a Parkrun Practice. Parkrun is a world wide thing, so its really huge. On Mersea you can do a 5k walk or run, it's timed and completely free to take part

(apart from parking cost). It takes place at Cudmore Grove and the practice are hoping to have another one in late November. It would be great to see as many PPG members who are interested coming along to take part or to help. You can go online before-hand, get a barcode and take part. The organisers on Mersea have been doing it for years and it's a very friendly and accessible group, open to everybody. There's always a tail Walker, so you will never be the last one. Dr Patel was timekeeping at the last one, the first person came in at 16 minutes. That's pretty impressive. Parkrun was set up a few years ago and it is really a way to help the Practice with community engagement and supporting healthy lifestyles. The practice will keep the PPG informed about dates and hope to see some of you there.

Question : when is the RSV vaccination going to start.

Answer : we are starting slowly as the packages are quite large and our fridges have the flu vaccine in at present. We will start sending texts to eligible patients in the next couple of weeks.

There was a general discussion about the change of planning that has allowed the developers to seek a change in use for the area designated for the new Health Centre on the Brierly Paddocks site. The developers have been granted permission to build six small homes that will be gifted to the council for social rental to local people through an Alms House charity. The remainder of the land will be used to build an additional 12 houses for sale on the open market. It was felt that if the developers could do this, why could they not have built a medical centre instead and gifted it to the council.

MP has a catch up meeting scheduled with Anthony West at the Integrated Care Board later in the week to follow up on progress.

Dr Patel acknowledged it was a very tricky situation and it all comes down to money basically. Where will the funding come from and who will be liable if things change. The practice are waiting to hear back from the ICB regarding proposals for the options to develop the site at Barfield Road, where they currently rent two rooms. Dr Patel discussed the issues regarding service charges that often come with rented premises and how many practices are struggling with the issue. The partners have grave concerns around signing a long lease as this makes them personally liable for costs, rental, maintenance etc for a long period of time. Also, there are no guarantees that funding reimbursement will remain the same. It's a level of personal risk that many GPs are uncomfortable with and this is an issue for a number of practices across the country.

The practice is in a strong position with staffing, but other areas are not so lucky. The issue for Mersea is one of not having the rooms needed for treating patients. The current rooms at Barfield Road are not really fit for purpose, cramped with poor insulation and poor soundproofing. If any building work is undertaken, there is still an issue of how the practice maintains a service whilst this takes place. So a lot of issues to be considered.

The practice had a meeting with the ICB week before last and are waiting for a response and hope to have another meeting shortly. It is their hope that there will be more news soon. Dr Patel reiterated that the practice had not wished to close their list as they see themselves as a community practice and want to be open to everyone in this community, but they felt they had no choice.

There was a very wide ranging discussion about the different projects that had taken place over the last 25 years to attempt to address the need for a new GP Surgery/Health Centre and the various reasons these actions had not been successful. It was acknowledged that this has been very frustrating for everyone concerned.

There was unanimous support expressed by PPG members for the GP Practice and it was agreed that there was really no option but to close the list to new residents if there was to be any hope of getting support for increased provision for the Island.

It was agreed that the PPG must be involved to represent patients and to work collaboratively with the practice as a community on this matter moving forward.

Dr Patel felt this was the most progress they have seen in the last few years towards improvements in the provision of health care on Mersea.

There was a general discussion about the s106 monies and the confusion on what is available and how it can be accessed. Some money is ring fenced for health care provision and some is more generally available for use within the community, this could do with greater clarification, hopefully from the local council.

One of the councillors is going to raise the issue to invite the practice in to a meeting to understand the needs and how to work with the practice.

There was some discussion regarding different options for building work.

PPG UPDATE

MP reported that the PPG will have a table at the Community Event taking place at the MICA hall on 19th October, where various community groups will be providing information about their work. The event will be open to the public from 10am until 2pm. MP encouraged members to come along, and perhaps lend a hand in talking to visitors about the PPG. In addition to promoting the PPG, it is planned to promote the NHS App as well.

NHS App Funding: The PPG has been successful in its bid for some additional funding to support patients in using the NHS App and two sessions are planned to take place at the Mersea Library, on 24th October and 28th November, these will be advertised locally and patients will be able to book a 20 minute slot for one to one support.

The PPG are currently designing a new leaflet to promote the PPG and when completed it is hoped this will be delivered to every home on the Island. This is in an effort to build the membership to become more representative and include some younger people in our group.

Carers – there has been a lot in the press recently about carers and their healthcare. Looking after someone can result in failing to take care of oneself. Therefore, it is really important to let the GP practice know if you are caring for someone else, so that they can be aware of issues such as making sure to offer a flu vaccination to carers if needed.

Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag – this enables all working in health and social care to add a digital flag to a patients notes if they need reasonable adjustments to access healthcare. This is to ensure that those caring for patients are aware they may need extra time, eg for those with learning disabilities or Autism who may have difficulty in expressing their needs or need more time to get used to a member of medical staff and feel comfortable being examined. This is part is expected to be implemented across the whole of health and social care by December 2025. It is not currently a contractual requirement, but the general feeling is that it will become one eventually. Training is being made available for practice staff and there will be an advertising campaign in the near future to promote patient understanding.

MP is a member of the PPG Chairs Collaborative for North Essex and Suffolk area and one of the areas of work this group is undertaking is supporting newly formed PPGs by sharing information and good practice across the group.

MP has been invited to attend the East of England Cancer Care Alliance Patient Participation Group and will report back at the next meeting. This group is looking at working with PPGs to promote patient awareness of such issues and symptom awareness and diet.

MP has attended a couple of online courses specifically for PPGs to share ideas about the role of PPGs and how this can be developed. Both have been very interesting and useful with lots of ideas. If anyone else is interested in some free online learning specifically for PPGs, contact Maureen for details.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12 November 2024 - the planned online meeting has been changed to a face to face meeting at the Community Support Hall 5.30 – 7pm.

There will be a talk on the Ambulance Service, First Responders and Keeping Well in Winter.

We are also expecting a member of the Integrated Care Board Primary Care Team to attend to provide an update on plans for our GP Surgery.