

ASHWELL AND BASSINGBOURN PATIENTS GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1st MAY 2024

PRESENT: Rachel Capay, Tessa Cathcart, Peter Chapman, Jo Coleman, Bob Davis, Dr Matt Jarvis, Harry King, Graham Lee, Tracey Potter, Katie Prince, Ruth ten Hove.

APOLOGIES: Wendy Kitchener

1. The committee welcomed new member for Ashwell, Ruth ten Hove. Ruth is a physiotherapist with strong connections to the NHS so will bring considerable knowledge and experience to the group. Ruth replaces Mike Pearch who has retired. He was thanked for his long service. The group also sends its best wishes to Wendy who is recovering after treatment.

2. **MANAGER'S REPORT:**

Katie reported that we were back to full strength following a new appointment to our Reception team.

3. **TOTAL TRIAGE (TT):**

There was a long discussion how the new appointments system was functioning and about our capacity to respond to requests. Not knowing how much daily demand there would be, initially appointment requests could only be made during a limited period. However whilst this proved manageable for the doctors carrying out the triage, it resulted in considerable frustration for patients who were not slow in voicing their dissatisfaction. A sub group from this committee swiftly met Katie and a number of changes were made including extending the period during which it was possible to submit applications and publicising services which could be booked on the phone. Katie and Dr Jarvis explained that a daily limit was necessary to avoid overload for the triaging doctor which could have safety implications. It was noted that some patients were saying they had not been phoned back as promised. Jo pointed out that this was often due to the fact that they were not on the "preferred number" given in their patient record. They had possibly changed phones but had not alerted the surgery. Jo and Katie emphasised that our Reception team are required to ensure that the Accurx* letterbox is empty at the end of each day. There was discussion about how patients might be reminded about keeping contact details up to date. It was pointed out that TT had been in place in Baldock for some years and worked very well. Things seem to be working much better in our practice since the changes. The hope is that, once it becomes embedded here, patients will appreciate the efficiencies TT is expected to deliver.

4. **NEW PHONE SYSTEM:**

This appears to be working well. The call-back facility is generally appreciated.

5. **TV IN WAITING ROOM:**

This continues to give out of date information. It is programmed by an external provider and making changes is not straightforward. Katie and Jo to investigate.

6. **GUIDE FOR NEW PATIENTS (Annual Plan objective):**

Rachel explained how she had been comparing NHS procedures and those followed by our practice. She has adapted our form to incorporate the best of both, making it more helpful to patients and surgery staff. Katie to study and implement.

7. PATIENTS GUIDE (Annual Plan objective):

Katie (in consultation with a sub group of this committee) has produced a new "Surgery Pamphlet" which includes much of the information a Patients Guide might contain. This is very welcome. We will examine it closely to see if any supplementary material could be added. Peter asked for this document to be shared electronically and to be put on the website.

8. ANNUAL SURVEY (Annual Plan objective):

Given the newness of TT and the new phone system it was felt desirable to wait before launching this year's survey. There was discussion about using "Survey Monkey". In the meantime, Katie has introduced monthly spot checks, contacting patients immediately after appointments using the NHS "Friends and Family" format to see how they got on. Results have been favourable. At the committee's request the website now has a section "Compliments and Feedback" in addition to "Complaints".

9. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES (Annual Plan objective):

A sub group will be convened to work on this. Rachel will provide some starting points.

10. VIRTUAL PPG (Annual Plan objective):

Some PPGs have a central committee plus a wider group which can be used as a sounding board to gain views or to test ideas. We will be considering this.

11. OUTREACH (Annual Plan objective):

Links have now been established with Ashwell and Bassingbourn Primary Schools. Ashwell pupils are now regularly providing attractive "Welcome" collages in the surgery lobby. Ashwell Guides and Brownies are developing their own garden area on surgery grounds at Ashwell. The "Greening Ashwell" group have plans to improve the environment at Ashwell. Jo is soon to meet Bassingbourn Over-60s Club.

13. AOB:

Ruth asked for details of the Annual Plan.

Tessa reminded the group about the Health Awareness talks which were held in the past. One of the original aims of the group was "Health Promotion". Thought will be given about how best to do this.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

To be confirmed.