



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG) OF WATERSHIP DOWN

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6TH APRIL 2022, BY TELECONFERENCE

PRESENT:

Brian Elkins	Chair, based in Overton	"BE"
Susie Altmeyer-Ennis	Business Manager of Watership Down	"SAE"
Sarah Arnold	Practice Manager of Watership Down	"SA"
Lucy Richards	Patient Representative, based in Kingsclere	"LR"
Lisette Kay	Patient Representative, based in Oakley	"LK"
Hazel Solomon	Patient Representative, based in Oakley	"HS"
Ian Pryce	Patient Representative, based in Oakley	"IP"
Abigail Compton-Burnett	Patient Representative, based in Oakley	"ACB"
Brian Langer	Patient Representative, based in Overton	"BL"

APOLOGIES:

Fiona Ferguson	Patient Representative	"FF"
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1 Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the PPG held on 16th February were agreed as a true record.

2 Matters arising

Item 4b. Review of membership and number of members. The following key points were made:

- It is useful for the PPG to reflect the profile of the patients that it represents, eg age, ethnicity, disability, geography, services accessed.
- The PPG would benefit from some younger members, eg parents with younger children, students.

Action: SAE and SA will put together an advert to recruit new PPG members, which will be posted in the surgeries, on the practice Facebook page and on community Facebook pages.

Item 4c. Review of working methods and, in particular, how to appoint a Chair and secretary. Brian Elkins will stand down as Chair at the next PPG meeting, so suggested that a new Chair be appointed at the AGM on 8th June. The members of the PPG thanked Brian for his valuable work as Chair.

It was noted that the PPG does not currently have a Secretary.

Action: PPG members to inform the Chair before the AGM on 8th June if they would like to take the role of Chair or Secretary. PPG members to appoint the new Chair and Secretary at the AGM.

3 Update from WDH Practice Manager on staffing and operational matters

There are currently over 70 staff in Watership Down/Primary Care Network:

16 GPs (plus 1 vacancy)

4 Nurses

1 RMN who helps with Duty (employed by Southern Health)

1 Proactive Care Nurse

1 Practice Nurse inc. long term conditions (vacancy)

1 Care Coordinator for Respiratory conditions, including Asthma

1 Care Coordinator for Dementia, Learning Disabilities and Severe Mental Health conditions

1 Care Coordinator for Diabetes (vacancy)

1 Proactive Care Coordinator

1 Paramedic/ACP/ANP (vacancy)

2 Community Midwives (not directly employed)

3 Clinical Pharmacists and a 4th has been advertised

2 Pharmacy Technicians

4 Healthcare Assistants/Phlebotomists

2 Red Cross Community Connectors/Social Prescribers

1 Social Work Practitioner

1 Youth Mentor

1 Health and Wellbeing Coach (Physical Health)

1 Health and Wellbeing Coach (Mental Health)

6 Admin Team (inc. medical secretaries) (inc 1 vacancy)

1 Business Manager

1 Practice Manager

2 Assistant Practice Managers

1 Finance Manager

1 Patient Services Manager

1 Reception Team Leader

16 Receptionists

SAE noted that:

- The practice was in “a good place” regarding staffing. Demand remains higher than before Covid.
- Three new admin staff and two new receptionists have recently joined the staff team.
- Mrs Pam Myers will retire as Medical Secretary after 39 years of excellent service. A new Admin/Medical Secretary will be appointed soon.

Staff absence due to COVID remains high, with an average of 10-12 staff absent over the last month. Staff have to remain off site until they have 2 negative lateral flow test results. The practice now has a good supply of laptops to enable staff to work from home, but home-working is restrictive as the Team cannot see patients face to face. The government currently has no plans for spring COVID booster vaccinations for NHS staff.

4 How to handle verbal abuse to staff

Practice staff have received an increasing amount of verbal abuse over the past few months. This has caused significant distress to several staff members. The key factors include:

- Unrealistic expectations, e.g. test results available within 24 hours, a non-urgent call-back within a few hours, an appointment on a specific day/time. Not accepting appointments offered to patients.
- Frustration about appointment availability, e.g. a few weeks' wait for routine appointments, inability to book appointments on-line.

Action: SAE to explain the best way to contact the practice and realistic expectations in terms of call-backs, etc in the May Newsletter. SAE to contact Andy Jones, the PCSO for the area covered by Watership Down for advice regarding how to handle abuse of staff, particularly if it escalates.

5 Target date for return to prebooked appointments

SAE made the following points:

- COVID-related staff absence had made it very difficult to make clinics available on-line and, therefore, when staff are sick appointment slots have to be rearranged.
- It is hoped that the amount of staff absence would soon decline sufficiently to plan clinics with greater certainty and, therefore, to reopen the on-line booking facility.
- The new appointment reminder facility via MJOG that enables patients to cancel appointments using their smartphone has started to reduce the level of Did Not Attend (DNA)s. NB in March we had 155 DNAs.

Action: SAE to agree with the practice partners when the on-line appointment booking system will reopen. Partners have agreed to open telephone appts on-line from the beginning of May.

6 Second Booster programme

IP confirmed that spring COVID vaccination boosters were being provided for over 75s. Watership Down and Jameson House are emailing, texting or calling patients on a weekly basis, once 6 months has elapsed since their most recent COVID vaccination. Government funding is currently only available to provide spring boosters for people born before 1st July 1947.

7 Any other business

Flu vaccination: Watership Down has already ordered flu vaccinations for all patients over 65 years or with additional health needs that qualify them for a flu vaccination.

Fluid motion, which is an artist in residence, will visit the 3 surgeries to talk to patients and create artwork for the surgeries. This initiative has been a huge success at other practices.

CQC visit: IP agreed to represent the PPG at the forthcoming CQC visit.

AGM attendees: it was agreed that SAE would post a notice on the surgery website to invite patients to participate via MS Teams.

Econsult: Watership Down no longer uses Econsult because:

- It did not achieve the key objective of getting the patient to where they needed to be as soon as possible.
- Patients often completed econsult forms, then sent an email and then 'phoned, so the practice received 3/4 separate communications regarding an issue, rather than one.
- A huge amount of paperwork was generated by Econsult. Around 8-10 pages of information were generated for every issue and this paperwork had to be added to clinical records.
- It was very expensive and provided limited benefit to the practice and its patients.

Econsult has been replaced by patients being able to raise a query to a doctor/practice or Reception via the Watership Down Health web site – www.watershipdownhealth.com

May newsletter: ACB will send a draft newsletter to all PPG members for comment. BE will circulate the final version of the newsletter.

CCG PPG: IP confirmed that IP and ACB attend the CCG PPG. At every CCG PPG meeting, one practice presents an overview of the practice and the work of its PPG. These presentations help PPGs to understand new ways in which they can support their practice and other PPGs.

Estate: Lack of space is a significant issue at all surgeries, but there are currently no extra funds for IT and accommodation.

- Oakley has had two additional consultation rooms put in place through funding by WDH.
- Overton: Spirometry can be done again if suitable ventilation is in place. The practice is awaiting a new ventilation system in one of the clinical rooms.
- Kingsclere: Some additional electrical work is on going to enable more room for PCN staff. One store-rooms have been made into consulting rooms.

8 Dates of next meetings

The remaining PPG meetings for this year will take place via MS Teams at 5pm on:

- 8th June
- 3rd August
- 5th October
- 7th December