

Chair's Report for AGM Tuesday 15th February 2022 at 6.00

Our last AGM was held on 14 March 2020, and it has been a challenging time in the intervening two years.

Strawberry Hill Medical Centre has now been open for six years and our new Practice manager has been with us for two years. The Patient Participation Group has been running in its present form for five of those years.

Membership is open and free to all registered patients and employees and is made up from those who have registered an interest in taking part. Contact is by email or text or, where there is no other contact available, by post. All those registered make up a virtual group who are informed of updates, newsletters etc and may be contacted for specific information relating to their experience of the Medical Centre.

A coordinating Committee is formed from members of the patient group and any patient may nominate themselves for election to the Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

We try to encourage a cross section of representation and would like to include a more diverse membership of both the virtual group and the organising committee.

Our aim is to be a voice for patients by providing a forum for patients to give feedback & comments. We support the communication of health messages and where appropriate liaise with relevant health professionals and organisations.

There are 13 members of the Organising Committee and meetings are also attended by the Practice Manager and a GP representative. We have met five times since our last AGM all via Zoom.

We use feedback from patients to take forward ideas and suggestions about potential improvements with the Centre, e.g. by annual survey. We are involved in the CQC inspection process and were last inspected on 2nd May 2019 when we received GOOD overall and OUTSTANDING for being Well-led.

We have received updates on surgery developments, new staffing, changes to the NHS. complaints and difficulties experienced, for example staff recruitment and patients not attending appointments.

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Currently there are 22047 patients registered with the Practice with an age profile similar to national averages. Patients from the practice are mainly White British with a small percentage being from other ethnic backgrounds.

This year has been particularly challenging with Covid 19. The practice manages 6 Care Homes across Newbury, and this was particularly difficult in the early days.

GPs were conducting telephone consultations and called back to patients where there has been a need for a visual consultation. Initially it seemed that patients found remote consultations helpful with appointments available easily. Some still do, however as time has gone on there have been complaints made about the lack of face-to-face appointments and the triage system.

There were 7,481 Patients assessed through the Triage system for October 2021, 8009 November 2021, 6349 December 2021, 7123 January 2022

The National advice is to move towards more face to face consultations although the current triage system, where patients fill a request form will remain, either online or through a receptionist if a telephone call.

Each GP has 30 x 10 minute appointments a day – a mix of telephone and f2f. In addition they will review all the letters, prescription requests and triage all the request for appointments that come in via the online forms (total around 50 a day per GP) that have been sent to them for review from the admin teams then do all the follow ups and referrals required. There is admin on top that has to be done by the GP that also can't be delegated.

There are still changes to the way the NHS is organised and funded, the most significant for us is the move to Primary Care Networks. We are part of the A34 Primary Care Network (PCN) which brings Eastfield House, DownLand Practice and SHMC to work together where appropriate, which has been the case for Covid Vaccinations and organising Boosters in Care Homes and for patients in their own homes.

We have a few posts that we are recruiting for: We need 2 more reception staff and a practice paramedic. We are still coping with staff shortages due to sickness/ childcare whilst self-isolating, etc. All staff who are not unwell themselves but who need to isolate can undertake some tasks from home following risk assessments.

At present we have:

- 10 partner GPs
- 2 new locums who are dealing with mainly face to face consultations
- 15 Receptionists
- A new Practice Nurse – a total of 6 nurses
- Two new Healthcare Assistants. Training for delivering injections, health checks, dressings etc.
- An Extra Administrator joining the team of 13
- A Care Coordinator (PCN role)
- 2 Physician Associates (PCN role)
- A Social Prescriber (PCN role)
- A Clinical Pharmacist - to whom reviews on Prescriptions maybe referred (PCN role)
- Practice Manager and Deputy Practice Manager
- A PCN manager coordinating all 3 Practices to share best practice across the PCN roles (Our PCN is called A34)

Nationally, GPs have been asked to be more efficient. They have been asked to set up systems so that patients can be directed straight to other services that may be more appropriate other than a GP. In our surgery we now have a breadth of experience and the triage system to try and make this work. SHMC staff can now refer patients to pharmacies, and patients can self-refer to talking therapies (counselling and mental health help)

Upskilling training for admin staff is ongoing so details go to the relevant GP's for attention. The number of letters from patients/hospitals averages 50 per day (over 1000 a month) plus they process 7000-8000 appointment or prescription requests a month which would be overwhelming for GPs to deal with alone.

Medication reviews are taking place where necessary but dates on prescriptions are not necessarily up to date. It might be necessary to have face to face with the pharmacist, but this would depend on the medication.

Patients have been contacted for flu and covid jabs but there has been considerable difficulties in contacting the over 80s age group which number some 800 patients, many do not have mobiles, or they may be put away in a drawer which means texting is not possible and many main line calls made instead.

Blood Pressure Monitors have been loaned to Patients where there is a health concern but there is a problem in getting them returned, causing unnecessary admin work and making them unavailable for other patients.

Car parking continues to be a problem particularly where visitors to the Pharmacy are using the Practice Car Park. The PPG has been consulted and made suggestions how this may be tackled. Some cars have been left all day and notes have been placed on windscreens. Cameras could be used but difficult to know where to put them because of the shared entrance.

We now have a new phone system, Surgery Connect introduced in February 2022. There have been a few problems nationwide, and some glitches are still expected. At present the system is being used by over 600 practices and in our area, Thatcham and SHMC will both be using this new system, which will provide various statistics e.g. busy periods. Three new receptionists have been appointed to answer calls and waiting time is to be monitored. If a patient is tenth in the queue their place is kept and Reception will ring back which will save having to stay on hold. If a patient prefers to hold the call, they will be able to listen to all the latest information from the surgery.