

Higham Ferrers Surgery
Patient Participation Group Meeting
9th May 2024
Minutes

Attendees: MG, DG, DW

Apologies: SR, CB, MD, KL

Agenda Items

Introduction: MG advised to the present members that as only two members have attended, our new ToR states that we should postpone the meeting to another date. MG asked the current two members if they wished to do so or to carry on. DG and DW both agreed that as they are here to carry on, the other members can catch up in the minutes that will be posted. MG gave apologies for those members that sent them in advance. MG handed out the Agenda to DG and DW.

CBT: MG advised the surgeries new telephony system has now been installed since the beginning of April and that patients and staff seem to be a lot happier. The telephony features callback which means patients don't need to sit and wait in the que, the system will call them back when they get to the front. Specific departments are only open at specific times and the new system states this as the patients call. The new system also has closing times so will not let patients call OOH. The practice will also only be dealing with triaging and booking patients appointments in the mornings. Any patients who call for results or admin/prescription queries between 8am and 9am will be told to call back at the appropriate and relevant times later in the day. These times are:

- Test Results: 1pm – 3pm
- Referrals: 10am – 12noon
- Insurance: 10am – 12noon
- Prescription Queries: Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri; 1pm – 4pm. Weds; 9am – 12noon

Appointments: MG advised that DR Umrao has now returned so the surgery now have a lot more appointments. The surgery is also at full capacity with reception staff so are now answering more calls and directing patients to the best care via utilizing hub appointments, using pharmacy first and using their care navigation skills to direct patients to other alternative healthcare sectors.

Online Services: MG went on to advise that Anima has been up and running since December now and seems to be going well. Anima is used for minor illness and admin requests, the surgery have within several days to respond to requests coming through and the surgery have a clinician and admin team that action requests daily. MG went on to advise that patients seem to find Anima useful as they can track their request, they usually get a response the same day and saves them having to que on the phone. The negative about the system is that when being asked triage questions about medical (non admin) requests, there are a lot of questions and can take quite a while to get through them.

As previously brought up in past meetings MG advised NHS England and the PCN are still trying to encourage more patients to sign up to the NHS App where they can see their own care records, so patients can do certain requests themselves i.e. look up blood test results, request prescriptions etc without the need to keep contacting the practice.

MG advised that he has now been appointed the role of NHS Ambassador at Higham Ferrers Surgery, meaning if patients have issues using online services (i.e. Anima, The NHS App) then he is able to book patients in with himself and help them with these issues.

Appointments with MG need to be requested at reception, MG will then contact the patient himself and book them to his diary. MG will see patients by appointment only.

ENPA: DG spoke, that he attended the ENPA meeting in March and the main discussion is about funding. DG advised that the ENPA are now requesting a donation from every PPG member at every surgery within the East Northants area of £1 per member per annum to fund the ENPA for things like events & information tables etc

DW asked what our community will see from this funding, and where these information tables would be placed, DG advised that the only information table the ENPA have mentioned would be in Oundle and that nothing has been mentioned about what the ENPA would do for each community.

MG advised he will email the president and vice president of the ENPA to find out more and bring the information to the next meeting.

DG advised that the ENPA have stated that if a PPG do not pay their donation fee then their membership will cease with the ENPA. MG advised that this could be a risky move from the ENPA as they aren't seen to exist as far as NHS England are concerned as the Patients Associations around the UK were disbanded back in 2012 when the NHS changed everything, the reason the East Northants Patient Association is still about is because they clung on to their group and were offered a free venue by the local 'Serve' Centre. Demanding money from volunteer groups of practices could result in the ENPA losing practice PPGs attending altogether.

MG advised that at the moment our concentration should be on Higham Ferrers PPG, getting members in and sorting out what our PPG should be doing to benefit our practice and community and establishing ourselves first.

Spring Covid Vaccinations: MG advised the spring covid vaccinations for 2024 have begun, so far we have completed about 79% of our patient eligibility with care home and housebound patients being completed and around 50% of our over 75's being done. MG advised that we do still need to do a few more clinics but it is getting the appointment slots as our HCA is on leave and our Nurse is part time.

However eligible patients can get their vaccinations from other NHS healthcare services i.e. pharmacies, if they wish to have the vaccination.

Shingles Vaccinations: Shingles Vaccinations are available, however there is an eligibility factor.

Patients can only have the vaccination if:

- They are 70-79 (or over 80 with a weakened immune system).
- 50 or over with a weakened immune system.
- They turned 65 on or after 1st Sept 2023. *This does not mean patients who are already over 65 before this date.*

NHS Health Checks: NHS England are offering free NHS health checks to carers, all they need to do is enquire at reception. This does involve a blood test and then a physical check. All other patients are eligible if:

- They are between 40-74.
- They have not had an NHS health check in the past 5 years.
- They are not already diagnosed with:
 - Stroke or TIA
 - Heart Disease or Heart Failure
 - Kidney Disease
 - High Blood Pressure
 - Atrial Fibrillation
 - High Cholesterol
 - Heart Attack

Summer Newsletter: MG asked present members if they have any ideas for this Summer Newsletter about any events, medical information they would like to see more of or charity information etc and to please let him know in the next few weeks.

AOB: MG advised that Rushden Medical Centre is no longer within the East Northants PCN, due to differences they have been removed. MG advised this won't have any impact on our PPG but does mean that the PCN has taken a cut in funding and that the practice and PCN no longer liaise with RMC on matters concerning the East North Hants area.

Date of next meeting:

Thursday 8th August 2024

DW advised that when MG sends out the minutes of the meeting then maybe he could send out a meeting invite to remind PPG members of the date and time as this can be saved in calendars and as reminders on phones, MG agreed.