

Beechwood Medical Practice Patient Group Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 18th April 2023 at 6pm

Attendees: - John Lawrence; Sue Lucas; Sylvia Rae; David Rowe, Sarah Monteith, Sarah McKay

Apologies: - Alan Pound; Pat Foster; Tricia Jackson; Barbara Davies

1. Welcome to the meeting, introductions and apologies.

- Noted.

2. Matters arising from the last meeting

- PPG UK News newsletter – David Rowe now on the circulation list. SMon has also forwarded onto rest of the PPG for information. The same organisation have publicised a link to an appointments data tracker. At high level it gives information on national appointment trends in general practice. You can drill down to our practice if you would like to but you may need to download the large spreadsheet onto your local PC to be able to do this. Comparing practices is difficult, as we all call appts different things and have different timings. There is some standardisation creeping in, so it is likely that comparison of data in the future will become more meaningful.

Interesting to see the number of GP practice appts has gone up nationally, registrations have gone up, but practices as viable businesses have gone down. Face to face appt numbers were also back up.

DR asked about reduction in the number of practices and asked about ownership of GP practices. SMon explained that the traditional model has been GP partnerships running their individual businesses with the NHS as their main contract and source of income. Some GP Partnerships also subsidize their business by having private contracts with other businesses such as the MOD, or for providing occupational health services for large companies.

Charlotte Keel Health Centre has been run by our out of hours provider, Brisdoc, since the GP partnership gave their contract back about 8 years ago. Their contract has recently ended with the contract now being won by a company called Medicare so this is an incidence whereby a private company are taking on an NHS contract and all the GPs and staff will be employed by Medicare. We also clarified that all the staff at Beechwood and the two salaried GPs, Dr Murdoch and Dr Cole, are all directly employed by the GP partnership and not by the NHS.

Number of appts was mentioned in the statistics – For last reported month of Feb 23 there were an estimated number of 27,300,000 appointments made nationally (for all types of practice clinicians) of which 24,978,733 were subsequently recorded as attended. 1,227,888 were recorded as actual “did not attends” and there were 1,0050,726 where the outcome of the appointment was not recorded, so this may be a DNA or not.

- Appt DNA's – it was suggested we report them weekly – we currently report them monthly and as a fair bit of work to produce weekly, we will leave reporting to monthly for time being. We have added a slide to our telescreen to illustrate how much a private GP appointment would cost if they were not available on the NHS and asking for patients to please use the NHS wisely.

3. Update from Healthwatch/ One Care PPG representative

- Pat Foster not present tonight.

4. **Feedback/Discussion items from patients**

- SMon asked if anything anyone would like to discuss that was not on the agenda?
SL – lots of publicity in media telling patients to “see a GP if worried”. i.e., bowel cancer and shingles – seem to suggest see your GP if concerned, without specifics – wanted to know if that has affected us. SMon advised if we know about a breaking news story or a national campaign (i.e., Female hormones might put you at higher risk of breast cancer) GPs did more research and we might produce a text message with info/ link to YouTube video – so we could give this to any worried patients first and then ask them to call back if still concerned afterwards.

5. **Practice updates**

New GP contract changes for 23-24 – we have a 5 yr. contract agreement with NHS England, we are currently in year 5 – This year we have had changes in the contract unilaterally imposed by NHSE even though they were not agreed or accepted by the BMA. We have received high-level notification of the changes but no detail around how we are expected to deliver many of the changes.

Some of the highlighted changes to the contract are *“Patients should be offered an assessment of need, or signposted to an appropriate service, at first contact with the practice.”* Smon asked the group what they understood this would mean. Those present had not heard this and were not aware of some of the headlines that had come out in the media around the GP contract changes. We were concerned that media reporting may be misleading and lead patients to believe this means we should always offer a GP appointment at first contact with the practice which is not appropriate or deliverable. This goes against many of the principles we have been encouraged to develop around using the wider healthcare team and using reception navigation skills to offer the most appropriate service for each patient’s particular needs.

Prospective Access to Medical Records – new target to get this “turned on” by 31st October 2023 – however, nothing has really changed around the reasons why many practices are cautious about implementing this access. There are unresolved concerns about patient safeguarding and an increase in workload around this process. We understand that some practices who have already implemented access have subsequently raised concerns with the Information Commissioners Office.

Mandated use of cloud based telephones. Requirement to have phone systems that provide data usage reports, can be integrated with our clinical system, provide call recording and call queuing. Our current phone system is a hybrid cloud based system that already provides the above mentioned services. We will be reviewing the phone system in the coming year to ensure that we are fully compliant once more detail is provided. We also believe we will have to purchase systems and services from an NHSE approved list of suppliers rather than being able to scope our own phone providers. This may mean when we come to renew contracts we have to change system even if we are happy with the current provider.

Pharmacy Services –Boots Fishponds have stopped offering a repeat prescription ordering service for patients. Our understanding is that they have not communicated this particularly well to patients and the first some patients have heard of this is when they go to Boots to collect a prescription and it has not yet been ordered. SMon had a meeting with Boots managers last week to encourage better communication to patients about planned changes in the services they are offering.

How to access medical care outside of our opening hours - We had a discussion around what you might do if you need medical services when the surgery is closed. Evenings and weekends, if urgent need to call 111, they will triage the call and may then signpost you to a pharmacy, give you an appt to see a GP at a designated Out of Hours site, or advise you to attend A & E – obviously if life threatening call 999 at any time of the day or night.

There are also walk-in centres at:

South Bristol NHS Community Hospital, Hengrove Promenade, BS14 0DB, Tel 0300 124 6260, 8am - 8pm, seven days a week including bank holidays

Yate Minor Injuries Unit, West Walk Surgery, 21 West Walk, BS37 4AX, Tel 01454 315 355, 8am - 8pm, seven days a week. (X-ray opening times 8am – 7.30pm weekdays and 9am -5.30pm weekends and bank holidays)

Services are for patients aged 1 and over.

Spring/summer covid booster campaign – Campaign is for over 75's and people with severely compromised immune systems only - new vaccine this year – Sanofi vaccine – called VidPreDtyN Beta. We have currently invited all our 83-year-olds or older and are working our way down the eligible age groups.

Autumn booster and seasonal flu campaigns – Sue and Sylvia have offered to help with tea / coffee / stewarding around building this year - SMC advised dates planned for our Saturday Flu/Covid clinics later in the year start on Sat 23rd Sept/ 7th Oct/ 28th Oct and 11th Nov.

DR helps with Marmalade Trust, a charity that practically helps people who are experiencing loneliness and also raises awareness of loneliness. – SMon advised she was happy for DR to pass on our contact details if the charity would like to promote their services at a Saturday flu clinic.

SR was looking for ideas of which charities we may want to support this year. – so, any suggestions pass them to Sylvia - Marmalade Trust and Childrens Hospice South West also suggested.

6. AOB

- SL -asked are we likely to have appnts available to book online again? – we are hoping to expand the current choice of appointments to book online again although we need to be very prescriptive about what the appointments are for, as historically we had a lot of appointments booked inappropriately eg – an online blood test appointment slot being booked by someone wanting a contraceptive implant – which might then mean they have been booked for the wrong clinician, wrong amount of time allocated, and they will need counselling first before the procedure can be carried out
- SMon wanted to clarify that the NHS nurses and doctors' strikes is affecting NHS employed staff and not GP staff. If the strikes lead to improved pay awards this could be divisive as any improved pay awards will not necessarily be affordable for GP staff. This in turn could affect the business viability of some practices. Our GP Contract increase in central funding for this year is 2.1%. This is well below the cost increases for most of our bills including salaries, premises costs, IT systems, consumables and drug costs.

Date for next meeting –Tuesday 25th July 2023 – 6pm in the Seminar Room, Fishponds Primary Care Centre.