SANDWICH MEDICAL PRACTICE

Patient Participation Group

**Notes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 23rd February, 2022**

**at Sandwich Medical Practice**

In attendance: Suzanne Myers (Practice Manager) SM

Carol Bore (Business Manager) CAB

Mr Francis de Souza (Chair) FdS

Mr Michael Edinberry ME

Mrs Gill Cross GC

Mrs Brenda O’Neill BoN

Mrs Natalie Baker NB

Mr Robert Marshall RM

FdS welcomed everyone to the meeting. The previous meeting was held in September 2021. Covid and the Omicron variant had delayed an earlier meeting in December.

1. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from John Bateson and Sharon Dunn.

1. **Covid Update and Workload**

At the last meeting, the practice reported a lot of abuse directed against staff and FdS asked whether the situation had improved. SM and CAB were able to report that this is much less of a problem now and the number of complaints has decreased.

Given the change in Government policy from 24th February, GC asked how this will impact on the practice. We have received no up-to-date guidance as yet, and will continue with current arrangement for infection control (i.e. face masks and social distancing) which is expected to remain for healthcare settings for some time.

SM gave an update on the current situation with regard to workload and the appointments system. There are no plans to drastically change the current set up of appointments. The doctors prefer to keep more telephone appointments, and convert these to face to face if necessary. RM commented that patients often find these more convenient.

NB shared her positive experiences of using eConsult and encouraged others to access this alternative method of consultation via the website.

SM shared some statistics of recent activity. In the last 4 week period, there were a total of 5,332 appointments, which comprises 3,164 face to face, 2,168 telephone consultations, 4 video calls and 117 home visits (across all healthcare professionals). Our activity levels have increased significantly compared to the same period last year.

In terms of the vaccination programme, Saga are now working at a much reduced level and have relocated premises to a smaller site in Thanet. There is some uncertainty about the booster programme going forward. Further boosters may be recommended In the Spring for high risk patients and in the Autumn for those who are vulnerable (patients in care homes, those who are immunocompromised, and those aged 75 years and older). We await further guidance on this.

CAB informed the group that Dr Tom McWilliams is leaving today and although we do not have a replacement doctor, we have recently appointed an Advanced Clinical Practitioner, so our workforce is not impacted. Emma Mullins started with the practice in January. She is an excellent practitioner and a prescriber, who sees patients with minor illness. Dr Barclay is also due to return from maternity leave in April.

CAB gave an update on the extension project. There is currently a delay due to Land Registry boundary issues which are being resolved by the various parties involved. This has been a very complex project to bring to fruition, with many stakeholders involved. However, we are confident that we will soon have a start on site, hopefully towards the end of March. The project should take approximately 8 months to complete and will provide additional consulting rooms and admin space, with a training room on the first floor. This will also involve the closure of The Butchery Surgery and will allow all staff to work under one roof. Post meeting note – floor plans and elevations are available to view. Please speak to CAB if you would like to see these.

1. **Online Access to Medical Records**

We are currently promoting the use of online services to patients, to give them greater access to their medical records. Full access enables patients to view their hospital letters and consultations, test results and investigations, in addition to booking appointments and ordering repeat medication. This will empower patients to take more control of their health. We have a dedicated member of staff (Jasmine) who acts as our Online Services Co-ordinator, and in one month she has helped more than 800 patients access their detailed coded record.

Jasmine has produced some helpful information for patients, including a guide to online services and template text message (attached). She is happy to be contacted directly to help with any issues around registering for and using online services. Her email address is [jasmine.quittenden@nhs.net](mailto:jasmine.quittenden@nhs.net)

Members of the PPG were asked for their help in getting more people signed up to the service, by attending the practice and talking to patients in the waiting area. BoN, NB and GC were happy to support this project and a meeting will be arranged with Jasmine to run through the process.

1. **Nominations for Vice Chair**

FdS had previously invited nomination for the position of Vice Chair. BoN kindly put herself forward and the group unanimously agreed to this appointment. BoN will meet with FdS to discuss expectations in this role.

1. **Any Other Business**

**PCN** - BoN asked about the Primary Care Network (PCN). As each practice within the PCN has its own PPG, they will all have individual projects on which to focus. The merits of working together and sharing best practice on a network level were discussed. This doesn’t have to be a meeting, but can be done by email. CAB will discuss at the next Practice Managers Network meeting, to find out how the other groups are set up, and whether there is any interest.

**Newsletter** – it was felt that we should resurrect the idea of a quarterly newsletter. This would be useful to keep patients up-to-date with the latest news, campaigns and to promote services. BoN felt this should be produced by the group, rather than create additional workload for the managers. Further thought needs to be given to the content, and how and where it should be distributed. FdS will try to find a copy of the old Butchery editions.

How we share information with patients, in particular the harder to reach groups, is always a challenge and the group will give some thought to this.

1. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 25th May at 6.10 pm.