**PPG Minutes 20th June 2023**

**1: Welcome and introductions**

Attendees: Geraldine Burlington, Jo Smith, Margaret Kember, Hugh Wilson, Muna Johnstone, Beryl Fletcher, Victoria Smith, Pam Jaganath, Ian Goodwin and Hopelyn Goodwin (patients)

Helen Hatfield & Kate Porter, Jess Wilson (practice staff)

Apologies: L Richards, N Ahmed, P Dewberry, L Denham

Helen introduced the staff present at the meeting. Informed everyone that this is our third meeting since forming again since Covid.

**2: Ground rules – Constitution:**

A copy of the Constitution was handed out to all attendees. Explanation given that the PPG is to work through issues and not for complaints, but for constructive feedback.

**3: Medical Secretary – Jess Wilson talk/answer questions:**

Jess was here to talk about the referral process.

Start by booking an appointment with a GP

If you need a referral there is three types Routine Referrals, Urgent Referrals or Two Week Wait.

Routine – can take 2-7 days to be processed by the secretarial team.

A referral will either dictated by a GP or they leave notes for the secretaries to then type up letters, the secretaries then know which team/hospital to send the referrals over to, this is done electronically. Please note some services do have long waiting lists, such as ENT is a 2 year waiting list. It is not unusual to not hear anything about a routine appointment for up to 6 weeks, if after 6 weeks you have not heard anything you can contact the secretaries to chase to find out when an appointment is.

Urgent – Is dealt with on the day

It is not unusual for an urgent appointment to then be changed to a routine appointment once the hospital has received the referral as they may not deem it as urgent.

An urgent referral can still be up to a 6 month wait to be seen.

2 Week wait – Is dealt with on the day, this is for suspected cancer referrals.

These appointments will be within 2 weeks of your appointment, please prioritise these appointments, as they are very quick you will either receive a text or call to confirm your date/time/place of appointment.

Please note that if you have preference to be seen in a certain hospital please let this be known at you initial appointment or contact the secretaries after the appointment to let them know. To contact the secretaries you choose option 3 on the GP surgery telephone number. But this option is not for booking appointments it is only for referral queries.

Once you have received your appointment letter with date, time and hospital, if you want to make changes you will need to contact the hospital that sent you the letter directly, numbers should be on the letter sent.

If you have been for an appointment and then not heard anything, please wait for the date to pass that the hospital had said you will next hear from them, once this date has passed please contact the secretaries who can then chase these appointments.

After you have had an appointment at the hospital, it is not appropriate for the GP to analyse your results, this must be done by the consultant you went to see at the hospital.

Others points to note are the NHS are out sourcing some services, one example is PML which is for Cardiology, also if you have a school aged child who may require a ADHD or Autism referral this needs to be done via the child school.

Please remember that the secretaries are bound to guidelines set by the NHS and must follow the rules set.

The secretaries can be contacted via option 3 on the phone lines but they cannot help with prescriptions or blood test results this must be through calling and speaking to the reception team.

**4: NHMC Brief update:**

Missed appointments - The month of May had 176 missed appointments, this is advertised on our Facebook page. It was suggested can we also get Instagram, we will look into this.

To cancel an appointment you can call or email in to cancel. Patients get reminder texts of appointments. At the end of the day, the clinic lists are gone through, those who have not attended appointments are then contacted via text that same day to inform them that they did not attend a booked appointment.

The PPG asked if a possible for a red flag system could be put in place for missed appointments, and if so many missed appointments can they be removed from the practice patients list. Also it was asked if data can be showed as to why patients do not attend, to try and improve the missed appointments.

Updates form NHS England - NHS England have announced plan for recovering access to primary care, part of this will include a new phone system which will be implemented by the end of the year, this will be a cloud telephone system with a better call queuing system and data will be able to be retrieved from this new system. Helen explained we have been waiting for funding from NHS England, and we are next in line to receive the system. Our current telephone provider’s contract expires in October.

Staff – Priya Mistry one of our clinical pharmacists left at the end of May. We have two new Clinical Pharmacists joining the surgery. We currently have four locum GP’s, two are new locum GPs. Helen explained that we ideally would prefer salaried staff as this will mean that they are more likely to stay permanently.

It was mentioned by the PPG that they have seen an improvement since the refurb of the reception area and that the new design looks more professional , also the joining of new reception staff has been an improvement as all the receptionists now all answer the phones with their own names, they wear their badges with their names on.

It was noted that video calls is no longer offered as an option, this is because now that Covid is over we have now gone back to offering face to face appointments. Helen explained that the reception team follow a triage system when answering the calls to see what type of appointment and with who and how (via call or face to face) would be most suitable for the patient.

Hub – A question was sent in prior to the meeting to ask why Drs at the Hub cannot access medical records, this was an issue when the service opened but this issue has now been resolved and if you come to the Hub after hours they will now be able to view your medical records.

NHS 75 Years Tea Party – The NHS turns 75 on Wednesday 5th July 2023, to celebrate this we will be having a tea and cakes in our waiting area from 10am till 2pm, we will also be holding a raffle all to raise money for NHS charities.

**5: Surgery Updates: Including updates from last meeting**

The Staff photo Board for reception was shown at the meeting and will be going up in the waiting area soon.

It was asked at the last meeting if all GPs working hours could be advertised in the waiting area, after a discussion with management this was not deemed suitable as all of the GPs do work part time hours an there working days can change due to holidays and staff arrangements so would not always be up to date.

Booking appointments are now available in most cases to book up to 4 weeks in advance.

**6: Discuss Patient Questionnaire**

We was running short on time to discuss the survey in full, and this will be discussed again at the next meeting. A copy of the results was handed out to everyone who attended. Helen also updated that a friends and family survey is also sent out to patients via text, and this information is fed into the clinical system. Helen gets a monthly report of this, which goes on to NHS England.

**7: Any Other Business**

Blood tests: If a blood test result is marked on your records as normal no action you will NOT be contacted to let you know this result. If a Blood test result is marked as needs action, you be sent a text or letter to book an appointment with a doctor to discuss the results.

Patients now have the option of booking blood tests via reception, phlebotomy clinics run on selected days at the practice. The phlebotomy service is still available at Erith Hospital and appointments can be booked in the usual way, via telephone number/online which can be found on the blood form.

It was requested if possible for the jobs roles to be listed on the website in a flow chart view.

It was asked if Covid Jabs will be offered to everyone, currently the spring booster has only been offered to 75 and over and those in care homes, and we have to be very strict on these rules.

Health checks, Do they need to call in or will they be written to? Invite letters will be sent to those who are eligible which can be those aged 40 to 74, you will then need to call to book an appointment, and this will be a 30 minute appointment with a Health Care assistant.

Those in the meeting who have attended a diabetes check-up appointments wanted it noted they have been very helpful having every 6 months.

Our website has now had a new update a now looks more like other NHS pages. [www.northumberlandheathmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.northumberlandheathmedicalcentre.co.uk)

For our next meeting it was asked if we could have part of the meeting to be on the computer to show members of the PPG how to log on to sites such as patient access, AskFirst and NHS App

**9: Date of next meeting & time**

Next meeting will be for end of October 2023, date to be confirmed.