

PPG Minutes 1st November 2022

1: Welcome and introductions

Attendees: Margaret Kember, Pauline Dewberry, Geraldine Burlington (patients)

Helen Hatfield & Kate Porter (practice staff)

Apologies: Hugh Wilson

2: Ground rules – Constitution:

A copy of the Constitution was handed out to all attendees.

3: NHMC Brief update:

- Helen updated all attendees on what's new in the surgery. We are now offering Polio Vaccinations to all under 10, this has been in surgery and out of hours.
- We have also been running Covid & Flu clinics in surgery and have ran weekend appointments.
- We now offer a mixture of appointments which include telephone calls and face to face appointments. *It was noted by attendees that face to face appointments were not always offered by staff and that desired outcomes were often dependent on which staff member assisted you. Consistency will be addressed with the team. Face to face appointments do get booked up quickly so in some instances, this may be why they are not offered, as there may not be any available at the time.*
- Helen explained the role of Duty doctor, which means that appointments are opened at 8am each day for on the day URGENT issues. If available, patients will be offered either a telephone consultation or face to face appointment with the duty doctor if the issue is deemed to be urgent.
- We now have a new pharmacy referral service for minor illnesses treatable with over the counter pharmacy medication.
- E-Consult has now been replaced by AskFirst, this is online or accessible via an app, and it will triage you by asking questions and then allow you to book appointments directly. Patient access is still available and can be used to re order prescriptions.
- We have an enhanced hour's access service, with hub appointments between 6:30pm and 8pm, these can be booked through reception, where you can book to see GP's, Nurses and dressing appointments. Unfortunately our medical system does not have access to these appointments yet due to an error. The issue is being investigated urgently by our medical system provider.
- Helen updated everyone on our use of social media we have our updated website and we use Facebook to all updated. Our new website is www.northumberlandheathmedicalcentre.co.uk

4: Surgery Updates:

We currently have 3 Partners, we have 10 GP's in total. We have 5 receptionists on at all times, which is 2 on the front desk and 3 answering the phones in the back office. We also have 3 secretaries, 1 admin staff and 3 in our data team who deal with all correspondence, we also have some new job roles which includes 2 care coordinators and now have mental health nurse with us once every two weeks. Plus we have 2 clinical pharmacists, 1 nurse practitioner, 2 practice nurses, 1 nursing associate and 2 HCA's. The Practice Manager is Sue Flanagan, Assistant Practice Manager Beverley Russell and Data Manager Helen Hatfield.

With the ever expanding team we are hoping to expand and get an extra room built. We currently have just under 15,000 patients and we offer a variety of appointments.

5: Suggestions and comments from the PPG patient members submitted before the meeting:

Q: You can book an appointment online to see a nurse but you can't book an appointment online to see a diabetic nurse. Why is this? And is this going to be addressed?

A: Yes you can book an appointment online using AskFirst, It will just require you to answer all the questions correctly to choose the correct appointment.

Q: The phone lines: one talks about new phone systems and to bear with them but that was from July 4th. Can this be changed?

A: This will be changed soon

Q: The repetition of the message whilst on hold can this be changed?

A: Unfortunately not, the only option would be to remove all messages as this system only allows the messages to be repeated or no message at all.

Suggestions from these questions was can a call queue number be added, so patients have an idea of how long they maybe be waiting. It was also mentioned that when calling at a busy time the phone lines can be engaged before getting dialling tone. Helen advised that we are looking into getting a new phone system but not date as of yet for installation.

5: Election of Chair and Secretary

No volunteers just yet for these roles.

6: Agree areas for discussion/involvement at next meeting and increasing membership numbers

PD would be happy to distribute a PPG leaflet in local library and pharmacy to help promote the next meeting.

KP asked if they would like a survey to be sent out before the next meeting, all members took a copy home to look at to amend questions to make it more suitable for patients to complete.

7: Any other Business

It was suggested can the PPG fund something, by possibly running a raffle or quiz.

Can photos of all the staff and days they work be added onto a board in the reception area, KP will look into making this up with staff approval?

Could a meet the team be arranged possibly with tea and cake, or perhaps a talk from a doctor on a chosen subject to make awareness, such as a well man's clinic?

GB asked if a leaflet could be placed in the reception area with all updated staff names and services provided etc, as some patients may prefer a paper option to the online option available on our website.

8: Date of next meeting & time

PD requested could next meeting be a slightly earlier time to avoid school run time.

Next meeting was agreed to be in the New Year, around the beginning of February, date to be confirmed.