

Patient Participation Group Zoom Meeting

19TH AUGUST 2021 - 10am to

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

Present:	Brenda Greaves Penny Whitney Hazel Finch	Virginia Grundman Barbara Powell Ros Matthews	Kate Gard-Cooke Pearl Dunn Barbara Marsh
In Attendance:	Joanne Gordon	Deborah Hirstwood	
Apologies:	Karen Sherlock Chris Lightfoot Julie Jones	Margaret Curry Pamela Wildgoose	Valerie Gunn Paul Jones

The meeting was chaired by Joanne Gordon, Operations Lead, Imperial Road Surgery.

Joanne explained that should patients need to be seen who are high covid risk they are referred to the red hub – the closest to the surgery being at Ashgate. The community room at the surgery is used as an in-house red hub, used mainly for children.

Members were also informed that the practice currently has 42 patients who have tested positive for covid this week and that Derbyshire Dales has 256 per 100,000 positive cases.

Are flu, shingles and pneumonia jabs going ahead as usual?

When can we book flu vaccines?

In the main, yes. There is currently a limited stock of shingles and pneumonia vaccines and so invitations are currently limited.

5000 flu vaccinations are on order with the first delivery scheduled for 13th September. The first flu clinic takes place on Saturday 18th September and are scheduled to take place during September, October and November on Saturdays and weekdays. Patients are being invited by text or letter. 150 text messages are being sent out per day as there are no extra staff available and therefore the receptionists are having to organise the flu appointments on top of their usual daily jobs. Patients do not have to wait for an invitation to ring up and book their vaccine.

Joanne also explained that there is currently an international shortage of blood bottles and urine sample bottles with no indication of when this is likely to end. This is thought to be due to a shortage of plastic, getting items into the country after Brexit and the delay of the ships in the Suez Canal.

Members were also updated on the covid booster situation. Guidelines change daily, sometimes up to three times a day and no information had been issued about a timescale for the covid booster. As of yesterday (18.8.21) we were notified that children at risk or with a household member that is at high risk will receive their vaccines – hopefully next week. NHS England then expect to concentrate on getting all 16 and 17 year olds vaccinated. This has therefore delayed the booster vaccine. There is no timescale as to when the booster vaccine will take place, nor what vaccine it is likely to be. It is expected that General Practice will take part in the booster vaccination programme but it is not yet known if this will be done at the surgery or at Newholme Hospital

Is it possible to have our vaccine record available on Patient Access?

Immunisation records are currently available on Patient Access. However, patients do need the NHS app to show the covid vaccination record as this has the QR code required for travel and possibly in the future for entry into large events.

Joanne advised members that she is currently spending around 9 hours of her working week dealing with vaccine queries from people wishing to go abroad and whilst this is not something that the surgery has to do she is trying to help patients as much as possible.

Has the surgery had to make any changes to accommodation the increasing population in Matlock?

Not as yet. As some members may have seen Dr Emmerson posted on our Facebook page that we have applied for a grant to modify and change the layout of the building to accommodate more consulting rooms.

We are very conscious that we have three "more mature" GP's who we may lose in the next two or three years. As a practice we have always been successful in the past for recruiting GP's whilst being aware that other local surgeries have struggled.

We are a training practice and therefore have registrars. We usually have one registrar at a time but this year we have been lucky enough to recruit 3 registrars who are all at different levels of training. They started at the beginning of August and we are already noticing that is helping out with patient demands.

Has there been any change in the age range of patients at the surgery?

No, not really.

We currently have 7700 patients of which 1844 are aged 50 to 64 and 2249 are aged above 65.

We are aware that the population is increasing in Matlock and that we have found the majority of new patients registering are from the older age ranges.

In light of official recommendations are there any plans to improve the ventilation in the waiting areas? Is it possible to have a notice explaining the reason for the increased ventilation?

The surgery seems to be in a no-win situation with the ventilation of the waiting room. For every patient that asks for the windows to be open there will be more patients complaining, often abusively, that they are cold. The main doors are generally left open for both ventilation and hygiene reasons. The windows in the waiting room are opened on hot days but kept closed on cooler days.

It is not possible to put signage up advising patients why the waiting room should be ventilated as official guidelines at the start of the pandemic stated that all notices should be removed from the

surgery and that any that had to be displayed must be laminated and wiped down daily. We are therefore keeping the number of signs/posters in the surgery to a minimum.

Does the surgery feel that it is user friendly for both new and confused patients? It is not entirely clear where patients should go if they need to see the nurse, have bloods taken or require other procedures. It is not always easy to get this information on arrival or to get the attention of a receptionist.

Are there any plans to have a welcoming face to greet people on arrival? Rather than the present rather impersonal arrangement which predates the pandemic.

Joanne explained to members that we had recently taken on a new receptionist to cover maternity leave and that towards the end of her three month training she had left due to personal circumstances as she could no longer fulfil the hours required (20 hours per week) which means that the reception team are currently running short staffed. There are currently 8 receptionists all of whom chose to work part time and all have 5 weeks holiday per year meaning that the if two receptionists are off at the same time the remaining staff have to pick up between forty and fifty hours per week to ensure there is full cover. Therefore staffing on reception can often be very tight.

It is not possible to meet people at the door for not only staffing reasons but also safety reasons. Many of the receptionists have elderly parents and having a receptionist out with the patients is putting both themselves and their elderly parents at risk of infection of other diseases, not only Covid. There is also the issue of abuse towards the reception staff which has increased and is not always simply verbal. Joanne gave examples of patients vomiting in the reception area, throwing things at reception, psychotic patients coming into the surgery and one occasion of a patient coming in to the surgery to hide from people the patient owed money to. There has also recently been occasions when the door from reception to the public areas has had to be locked due to some patients causing a potential threat to staff.

The Covid rates in the area are also getting worse, as detailed earlier in the meeting and is expected to increase again when the children go back to school in September. Therefore the plastic screens at reception will remain and the staff will remain in non-public areas for their own safety.

With regards to having signs around the waiting room area directing people to certain areas of the building, this was explained earlier in the meeting. Barbara Marsh suggested that a sign could be positioned outside the door with arrows guiding patients to reception and upstairs to the nurses. This is not feasible as all patients need to come to reception to check in – the touch screen arrival board is not currently in use due to Covid and there are no plans to reinstate it for the foreseeable future.

Further questions asked by Members

Barbara Powell – are the covid boosters being done with the flu vaccinations.

No. As was covered earlier in the meeting there are delays with the covid boosters as NHS England are currently concentrating on vaccinating children aged 12 and over. It was decided by all the surgeries in the area not to delay the flu vaccinations and therefore these are going ahead from next month.

Pearl Dunn – what should patients do if they have a positive lateral flow test? Can the locations of the covid testing centres be put on the practices Facebook page?

Should a patient have a positive lateral flow test, or have Covid symptoms, they should ring 119 to arrange for a PCR test either by having a test posted to their home or by making an appointment at a Covid testing centre.

It is not possible to put the locations of the Covid testing centres on the practice's Facebook page as these change daily dependent upon staffing levels at the individual sites and we are not provided with this information. It is possible to put a post advising patients to contact 119 should they either display Covid symptoms or have a positive lateral flow test.

Pearl Dunn – are patient's immunisations available to be viewed on the Patient Access site?

Yes. However, immunisations prior to 2004 may not have been coded on to the computer system.

Barbara Powel – is it not possible to ban abusive patients from the surgery?

Joanne explained that it is not quite as simple as that as NHS guidelines have to be followed to remove a patient from the practice list.

Next PPG meeting and Ashover PPG

The PPG for the Ashover practice has suggested a joint PPG meeting. They have the use of Ashover village hall and so a socially distanced meeting could be held. This would mean members travelling to Ashover and would possibly be held in an evening. This could be arranged for early Spring 2022. Deborah will email members to gauge interest in this.

The next PPG zoom meeting will be held in December and a date will be confirmed nearer the time. Should there be anything that Joanne feels the PPG needs to be made aware of before this date a short PPG meeting can be arranged.

The meeting ended at 10:39.