

Patients Group Committee Meeting Notes 25 August 2020

Present (via video conference facility): Tony Morris (Chair), Cathryn Bovingdon, Lynda Isaac, Janet MacCulloch, Amanda Oliver, Philip Pritchard, Liz Smith (Treasurer).

1. Apologies for absence – none received.

2. Matters arising from the meeting on 14 January 2020

- **Aspirin and paracetamol changes for repeat prescriptions** – these are judged on a case by case basis. Patients can buy these quite cheaply without a prescription and it saves the NHS a lot more money if they do, so this is encouraged. However, if taking them regularly, the practice should be notified to ensure GPs are aware.
- **Gaps in group therapy options** – the pandemic meant a review was impractical, but it was reported that a smoking cessation group was meeting with the use of video conferencing. It is hoped to use this technology for other group therapy options in future.
- **Dementia support** – the pandemic also put the dementia awareness training and dementia friendly coffee morning on hold. It was confirmed that dementia support was still available from Sage House via the telephone.

3. Impact on the Practice of Covid19 – there have been significant changes with all patients being telephone triaged by GPs or other clinicians to establish if a face to face appointment is necessary. The eConsult facility is proving popular and is a good way of avoiding the telephone queue. Concern was voiced about telephone waiting times, but it was confirmed that triage calls do not use telephone lines provided for calls to reception. Questions were also asked about clinics and services that were put on hold because of the pandemic. They are gradually being resumed, but they may be delivered in different ways.

It was suggested that it would help patients if more information about any changes could be provided on the website and in the newsletters. A facility called MJog, which allows the practice to communicate with patients via text messages, may also be used to improve patient information.

Action: Cathryn

4. Winter flu vaccine plan – to ensure social distancing, numbers will need to be reduced for each clinic, but there will be more clinics. Patients will need to book appointments, rather than time slots, and it is hoped that bookings can begin soon. To help avoid long waits when booking, a separate number will be used for booking flu vaccine appointments.

5. Financial update – unfortunately, the pandemic has prevented normal fund-raising methods since March, but £181.45 has been received since the last meeting. With previous funds, that enabled the purchase of another medical couch for the practice and leaves a balance of £191.55.

6. Patient suggestions & concerns – a request was received for a mirror in the patient toilets. There was one previously, but this was broken. The committee was sympathetic, but this was not seen as a priority in the current situation.

7. Any other business – Liz advised that she is planning to move from the area, so would then be unable to continue on the committee. She was thanked for her invaluable contribution, since the group was formed, and for her superb fund-raising work.

8. Date of next meeting and AGM options – it was agreed that an AGM was impractical in the near future, but this should be kept under review. A proposed date for the next committee meeting to be circulated by the Chairman. **Action: Tony**