

PARKLANDS PATIENT FORUM

MINUTES OF MEETING: 6th MARCH 2024

Present: Alison Collier (Chair), Linda Pibworth, Susan Twitchings, Raymond Wood, Michael Wright, Peter Wright, Mandy Hack (for Parklands Surgery).

Apologies: Karen Martin, Christine Murdin, Elaine Yates.

Minutes of last meeting

Agreed.

Matters arising from the Minutes

None.

Staffing

- Dr Ellis joined the Practice as salaried GP from February 2024.
- The practice will be recruiting an Assistant Practice Manager this year as part of the forward planning process. This will be a new role for the practice. Due to the demand on services, together with collaborative working with our Primary Care Network, the practice manager role has changed significantly over the 7 years Mandy has been in post. The person specification will be for someone wanting a career in practice management, so that when Mandy decides to reduce down hours / retire, in around 5 years there will be a natural progression into the role from Assistant Manager.
- Advanced Nurse Practitioner Jane has semi-retired. She is now working 2 days a week in the community with our housebound and elderly patients. Sophie, our other Community Nurse Practitioner therefore works some sessions in house dealing with minor illness alongside our other 3 Nurse Practitioners and some sessions in the community.
The group were interested in hearing more about the role of the Community Nurse Practitioner and what this involves. Mandy will ask if either Nurses would like to attend a forum meeting or provide written details of what their job involves.

Anima: care enablement service

The practice will be using the Anima communication platform from May 2024. This will replace the current online consult system and will allow patients seeking care / wanting to contact the GP to submit their request online. This is a service the practice is offering in conjunction with the Primary Care Network. Anima is free for patients to use, they will just need to sign up to submit their requests. The practice has recruited a Health Care Practitioner, JJ, who has previously worked in the community with the paramedic service and completed minor illness training, to monitor and navigate patients through Anima. JJ will triage and navigate the patients to the most appropriate service.

If the patient's issue falls within JJ's clinical remit he will call / see the patient that day. Alternatively, the patient can be booked an appointment with a GP, Nurse Practitioner, or navigated to the appropriate PCN or Pharmacy service.

Patients can also submit administrative requests via Anima. These will be monitored by our admin team and responded to within 2 working days.

This will give patients another way of contacting the practice. As clinical and administrative requests can be submitted 24 hours a day, this should be of benefit to those patients who aren't able to contact the practice during opening hours.

We plan to hold some coffee morning tutorials for those patients wanting to know more about Anima, helping them to register. The group agreed this would be of benefit as it is often "the fear of the unknown" that prevents people from utilising a new service.

Patients can still continue to book their appointments or make enquiries by telephone or in person, this platform just adds in another option.

Pharmacy First Scheme

Patients can now get treatment for some common conditions directly from their pharmacy, without the need for a GP appointment or prescription.

This scheme was launched by the government and NHS England in January 2024 to give patients quick and accessible care, thus easing pressure on GP services.

Community pharmacists can now supply prescription-only medicines, including antibiotics and antivirals where clinically appropriate, to treat seven common health conditions without the need to visit a GP.

- Sinusitis
- Sore throat
- Earache
- Infected Insect bites
- Impetigo (bacterial skin infection)
- Shingles
- Uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women.

Usual prescription charges will apply for these conditions and patients that are exempt from prescription charges will still be exempt.

Patients can get treatment for these conditions by walking into the pharmacy or contacting them virtually. Our receptionists can also navigate patients to this service.

At the moment, patients are somewhat resistant to using the service, but it is hoped this will take off as it will certainly give our GPs the appointment time to see patients with more complex conditions.

Primary Care Network (PCN) Hub Clinics

Patients are continuing to use the services provided in the evenings and at weekends at Harborough Field Surgery, our PCN Hub site. The Saturday menopause and cervical smear clinics have been particularly popular, as well as the respiratory clinics, where our very own Dr Barber has been helping with some clinics over the winter.

Appointments: 2 weeks in advance

As part of the General Medical Services Contract patients should be offered an appointment within 2 weeks. If the need is urgent, they will be assessed and given appointments on the same day. If it is not urgent, appointments should be offered within 2 weeks. Mandy explained that due to the 2023-24 contract changes appointments for our GPs are no longer booked further than 2 weeks in advance. Whilst this can be frustrating for patients, this is contractual. Mandy explained the practice had hoped that this would reduce the need for patients to book "on the day" urgent appointments, however, this is has not proved to be the case.

Training Practice

Mandy was excited to inform the group that Parklands has now been approved as a Training Practice, with Dr Shamim taking the lead as Educational Supervisor. The practice has been advised the first GP registrar will be placed at Parklands in August 2024.

GP registrars are fully qualified doctors who have had at least two years of post-qualification experience prior to joining General Practice. They will spend between 6 and 12 months working at the practice while they undertake their professional exams.

Registrars can see patients and prescribe for them independently, so patients will usually notice no difference when consulting with them. They may have slightly longer consultations to begin with and they may have another GP sitting in with them when they are being assessed.

Consultations may be recorded for their communication skills examination. Patients will be asked to consent before the recording takes place and are under no obligation to say yes.

This is part of Parklands forward planning, as it is hoped to retain some of the registrars once they qualify as General Practitioners.

Vaccinations

The practice will be participating in the Covid Spring Booster campaign. This will run from April to June 2024. Patients aged 75 years of age and older, as well as those at risk, will be offered a vaccine at the practice. Our Nurse Practitioners will visit housebound patients and those living in our care homes.

The vaccine is likely to be Moderna, but as with previous campaigns the practice can only use vaccines delivered to our PCN site and clinics will be arranged around delivery dates and the amount of vaccines available.

Telephone system update

The ports have now been installed for our Surgery Connect telephone system and this should be in place by the end of May.

The practice hopes this system will be of benefit to patients and improve their experience. Patients will be given details of the number they are in the queue. If they are caller 10 or above they will be given the option of a call back. The system then sends a texted link which patients can click on to watch their call move up the queue. When their call reaches number one in the queue, the system dials the number and connects the call to a receptionist.

East Northants Patient Engagement Group - feedback from Elaine / Susan

Unfortunately Elaine wasn't able to join us for this quarter's meeting. She sent the ENPA annual report, which the group reviewed.

The group wondered if they need to write a report for the next annual review and asked for this to be carried over the the next meeting to discuss.

Did Not Attend

53 patients had booked appointments this quarter, which they subsequently did not attend.

Compliments, comments & complaints

- Mandy has received many compliments about JJ, the practice's Health Care Practitioner.
- Compliments were received from the group for Dr Freeman and Dr Aleem.
- There have been no complaints with a common theme.

Any other business

- Nursing: The group asked Mandy to explain the difference between the treatment room Nurses and the Chronic Disease Nurses. Mandy explained that all are Practice Nurses and non-prescribers. Treatment room nurses: Kirsty, Charlotte and Lisa, deal with dressings, vaccinations, travel clinics and cervical smears. Chronic Disease Nurses: Andrea, Suzanne and Laura deal with our patients with asthma, COPD and diabetes, holding clinics for annual reviews. These nurses also cover our treatment rooms when the other Practice Nurses are on leave.

- King's diagnosis: Michael asked if more patients have been contacting the practice with concerns about prostate cancer, since the King's diagnosis. Mandy explained there has been a slight increase in patients requesting blood tests and prostate examinations. However, the practice ran a prostate cancer campaign in 2023/24 as an enhanced service. This targeted men between the ages of 50 to 70 and had a very good uptake.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING
Wednesday, 5th June at 6pm, Parklands Surgery