PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP (PPG) MEETING MINUTES – Wednesday 19th April 2023

*Posted on May 26th, 2023*

**HAMPTON HILL MEDICAL CENTRE – MINUTES OF THE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP MEETING**

**Wednesday 19th April 2023 @ 18.30 hours**

**Present:**

PPG Members – Robert Piper, Shara Ross, Anita Fox, Chris Saul, Alison Young (Chair)

HHMC – Doctors/HHMC Partners Anjlee Sekhon and Babeeta Staples

Apologies – Richard Venables (PPG); Deborah Murphy and Rosemarie Page (HHMC)

**PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The previous Minutes were accepted.

**TARGETS SET FOR HHMC**

* These are set by NHS UK, based on standardised practices and are aimed at providing better care outcomes for patients. They provide the minimum standards for HHMC to aim for, also the key targets to be achieved by our PCN. These targets are set annually with some being measured monthly, some quarterly, with a review at the end of the year (at HHMC level and also across the PCN).
* The latest results for HHMC are very good and we agreed key points could be published on the Powerpoint Slides in the Waiting Room, and on the HHMC Website annually.
* The one target that HHMC finds it more difficult to meet (compared to other local practices) is the take-up of vaccinations (in particular MMR and Child Immunisations). Over 90% of patients who are eligible for vaccinations DO have them, but this still falls short of what is expected and there is a need to understand why – and to take appropriate action to encourage more people to participate. Ideas needed!

**COVID UPDATE**

* There is a Spring initiative to give Covid boosters to the over-75s, the immune-suppressed patients, Care Home patients & Housebound patients.
* Although a ‘new’ strain of Covid has been reported in the Press, there is no information about it.
* There was praise for the Long Covid Group and the help that they provide, with a 6 week series of sessions available via Community Care (see information on the HHMC website).

**FRIENDS AND FAMILY SURVEY (AND OTHER PATIENT FEEDBACK)**

This is a ‘rolling’ review of patient satisfaction with their experience of using HHMC’s services, with a random selection being sent a link to the survey, via a third party provider. **The majority of those who respond to the survey are positive** – and their written comments reflect this. This should be celebrated – we suggested that the results should be published in the waiting area each month, via the Powerpoint Slides in the Waiting Room.

However, there were a few negative responses, (a) about specific areas (eg the length of time waiting at Reception, or on the phone) and (b) on specific days in the week when the latest survey was run – the reasons for these perceived issues need to be explored, with appropriate action taken (if at all possible).

* Chris and Alison reiterated that it’s difficult to get a booking for a regular blood test, even when this is directly linked to being able to get a prescription, and it was suggested that this process needs to be reviewed – as a minimum, on the patient’s record there could be a ‘repeat prescription’ for the type of blood test that’s recorded at the HHMC end, so that Reception staff can see what is needed when allocating a phlebotomy appointment. Potentially keeping back some appointments for those who need regular tests could also be helpful.

**Along with celebrating the good things that are said about HHMC, we suggested** **a regular Agenda and Newsletter item about issues raised** via the Friends & Family Survey and other feedback mechanisms, with (where deemed necessary) the actions taken to make improvements –**along the lines of ‘You Said – We Listened’**

**ONLINE TRIAGE SERVICE**

It was acknowledged that the waiting time for the telephone to be answered can be long (depending on how many staff are available and also the day and time of day). **Online Triage (available via the website) is the best/quickest way to seek urgent help, because messages are read shortly after receipt, prioritised, and assigned to the person best qualified to take action**. The patient will be contacted as soon as possible, by phone or by text, (in line with the urgency of their query) and this could include a direct call from a doctor or an appointment for a telephone or in-person consultation.

Progress on actioning telephone triage messages is kept under review throughout the day, to ensure that (a) urgent action is taken where appropriate and (b) each enquiry is handled within the appropriate timeframe allotted to it (according to its urgency and the resources that are available – the aim being to do this within 2-3 days, and usually sooner. The benefits of online triage include:

* It saves patients’ time and also frees up appointments as it may not be necessary to see a doctor – it may be more appropriate to have a telephone appointment with a GP, nurse or pharmacist.
* It eases pressure on the phone line so that people without internet access can contact the practice without having to wait too long.
* Patients can submit queries/requests from the comfort of their own home, or if they’re out and about – wherever they may be.
* There is an electronic trail of all queries/requests made by patients, in their own words, saved to their medical records. This leaves very little room for error, and also prevents any important information getting lost.
* All of the hard work and admin Hampton Hill Medical Centre is carrying out behind the scenes is efficiently mapped and displayed on the system.

**STAFFING MATTERS**

Recruiting and retaining staff, of all kinds, remains a key issue within the NHS and also at HHMC! We were very sorry to hear that Dr Gulati is leaving in May and asked that she be told how very much we have valued her professionalism and care while she has been here: she will be missed!

**FAILURE TO ATTEND APPOINTMENTS**

Too many patients do not attend their booked appointments (whether for a blood test, to see a GP, or with a nurse) and this not only wastes money but means that other patients miss out on the appointments that they need and have to wait longer. This is simply not fair, especially when HHMC’s resources are under so much pressure already. The average number of Did Not Attends (DNAs) is currently 40 per week! We suggested that this topic could appear as a regular item on our agenda and in the Newsletter.

There is a process to follow up with patients who fail to attend even two appointments – we suggested that regular offenders who fail to attend phlebotomy appointments, without good reason, could be booked with Ashford Hospital (our phlebotomy providers) in future.

**OUT OF HOURS SERVICE**

* For anything other than an injury or a dire emergency (for which dial 999), patients should call the 111 service, or use 111 Online, through which they may be given a telephone consultation, advised to contact HHMC in the morning or via the online triage service, or (in a serious emergency) told to dial 999 or go to A&E.
* All 111 doctors can access patient records for the local area.
* NB Teddington Hospital continues to provide a walk-in service for minor injuries on 7 days a week, but this is only open until 20.00 hours.

**SUPPORT FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

There is continued reliance on charitable organisations for supporting patients with mental health issues rather than getting this through the NHS who, it would seem, can take too long to see people and may refuse to help. This lack of NHS support is a huge issue – there is a 2 year wait for adults with autism to be seen, and it can take 18 months for children to get a first appointment.

There are a number of charitable organisations that patients can either be referred to or can contact. Hampton Hill Medical Centre has a great section/tile on their Websites Home Page, dedicated to Mental Health Support, available for anyone to access.

Hampton Hill Medical Centre have also recently had a Mental Health Support Worker join their team, available to talk to any patients who want to review their mental health or are struggling, via an appointment at the Surgery. We suggested that there could be lunchtime and/or evening talks on topics such as Coping with Anxiety, and that these could be split into a session for younger people and another for parents.

**LUNCHTIME TALKS FOR 2023**

Aim for 4, with ideas for topics including: prostate, gut health, staying safe in the sun, sleep problems, pain management, unexplained medical symptoms, recognising a TIA (and what to do next)

The next PPG Meeting is yet to be confirmed, and will be advertised once a date has been agreed!