

# **Grosvenor Medical Centre: Patients Participation Group**

## Minutes of the PPG AGM held at 6pm on 27 June 2017 at the GMC

Present: Tony Whitehorn (Chairman); Kevin Dunne; Tony Pawson; Anne Horne; Mike Hardy; Paula Gamage; Dr Julian Barnaby; Dr Daniel Grace (Item 6)

Apologies: John Franks.

### 1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed those present to the AGM.

### 2. AGM 2016 Minutes

The Minutes of the AGM held on 26 April 2016 were agreed and there were no matters arising.

### 3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that the previous year had seen many changes, most notably the forthcoming merger with the Practice at St James Medical Centre. The PPG had undertaken considerable work in support of the Practice and the CCG. He drew attention in particular to the projects on reducing Medical Waste and in the Musculo-Skeletal field. The PPG had also produced a helpful practical guide for carers, the "Carers Help Guide".

The CCG had offered payments of £100 for active PPG support to projects. To qualify, the PPG Chairperson must attend at least 80% of the Chairs meetings. The Chairman stated that he had attended 90% of the PPG Chairs meetings and was awaiting the £100 due from the PPG's involvement with the Medical Waste initiative.

More generally, the PPG had done its best to support the Practice over the past year and, in conclusion, he would like to thank all the Committee members for their support as well as the Doctors and staff of the Practice.

### 4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the bookcase initiative had generated a profit of £194 since the previous AGM. As a result, the PPG account stood at £324.79 in credit. On behalf of members, the Chairman thanked the Treasurer for all his hard work over the last year.

### 5. Election of Officers

The following Officers were duly elected:

Chairman: Tony Whitehorn  
Secretary: Tony Pawson  
Treasurer: Mike Hardy

The Chairman informed the meeting that the members of the PPG Committee remained unchanged, being Kevin Dunne, Diana Nash, Anne Horne and Kate Griffiths. He understood that the Practice attendance would continue to be Dr Julian Barnaby together with Paula Gamage or Sue Stewart.

## 6. Any Other Business

- a. Dr Barnaby updated the meeting on progress with the merger of the Grosvenor and St James Medical Centres. Patients would be unlikely to see any significant changes until the computer systems had been merged, which was necessary to enable patients to be seen at either site. This was currently scheduled for the end of September. Meanwhile, work was continuing on establishing joint protocols and staff familiarisation.

The following points were made in discussion:

- The CCG had agreed that the catchment area for new patients joining the merged Practices would be the existing GMC area. This was a critical issue given the traffic situation in Tunbridge Wells and the extensive new developments in this area. It was therefore an excellent outcome.
  - The financial aspects of the merger were satisfactory, including support from the CCG.
  - Recruitment was continuing to find a suitable replacement for the Partner retiring from the St James Medical Centre
  - Overall progress on the merger was satisfactory; the new arrangements were likely to take a full year to settle down completely.
- b. The Chairman drew attention to the traffic difficulties being experienced by the specialist Community Heart Practice Nurse who covered the Tunbridge Wells area but was based in Sevenoaks and Tonbridge. Occasional use of a suitable room in the town for her consultations would enable much more effective use to be made of her time. He would write separately to the Practice about this.
  - c. Members wanted to record their gratitude for the hard work and dedication of the Practice and the Chairman of the PPG, which was much appreciated.

## 7. Presentation by Dr Daniel Grace on "Signposting"

Dr Daniel Grace explained the concept of "Signposting", which was also known as "Reception Plus", and which had been successfully introduced in other Practices. When patients first contacted the surgery, they would be asked more questions about their problem in order to help direct them to the most appropriate member of staff. This would not be a triage-type discussion, nor a clinical assessment or treatment advice. At present, receptionists arrange appointments with a nurse/HCA and give out test results. With the merger and potentially more healthcare professionals being employed, this extension of the receptionist's role would be a natural development. It would improve efficiency, give faster access to the right service and should reduce waiting times for a doctor's appointment.

The following points were made in discussion:

- Patients may feel that a receptionist was being too inquisitive or was seeking to reduce the availability of access to a doctor. A good patient experience was essential to the success of signposting. Presentation was therefore very important, including in the training of receptionists and the phrasing of the questions that they would ask.
- With on-line booking being increasingly used to make a doctor's appointment, the new system would only help with appointments made by a proportion of the patient population. However, as there were some 30-35,000 visits a year, the introduction of extended signposting would still make an appreciable difference. Looking further ahead, intelligent software could help with the signposting of on-line appointments.
- The initiative was supported by the CCG and the meeting also agreed to give the PPG's support.
- On the most appropriate time to inform patients of developments, this was likely to be sometime in the next two months, depending on progress. In view of this and the upcoming holiday season, it was agreed that the PPG Committee would seek to agree any informative material by telephone and email.

Concluding, the Chairman thanked Dr Daniel Grace for his work and presentation on this valuable initiative. He noted that his time as a Registrar with the Practice was coming to an end shortly and, of behalf of the meeting, wished him well for the future.

8. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the PPG Committee will be scheduled for early Autumn with the actual date to be decided in the light of progress with the merger.